

**Sunday, December 15, 2024**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

*Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a*

*winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.*

**WELCOME!** We are glad to have you join us in worship today. Here are a few notes to help you feel more at home participating in our worship.

**Worshiping.** Today's service is printed in this bulletin. Parts in **bold** indicate responses by everyone in which you are invited to participate.

**Communion:** *Lutheran Christians believe that the Lord Jesus Christ feeds us with his true body and blood "in, with, and under" the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. All baptized Christians who receive Communion in their own churches are welcome to receive the sacrament. Please note that the darker wine is non-alcoholic and is available from the Lector. Communion will be distributed continuously, in procession. Please come forward as directed by the ushers.*

ST. STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
270 South Broadway + Hicksville NY 11801  
Church Office: Monday through Friday, 8am - 2pm  
Church Office: 516-931-0710  
Rev. Dr. Joann Heaney-Hunter  
Christine Goetzger-Sedlak, President of the Congregation  
Mason Griffin, Minister of Music  
Michelle Burkhardt, Parish Administrator (*email [ststephenoffice@msn.com](mailto:ststephenoffice@msn.com)*)  
Church Website [www.ststephenshicksville.com](http://www.ststephenshicksville.com)  
Join us on Facebook: St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Hicksville, NY 11801

## +GATHERING+

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Pause for silent reflection.*

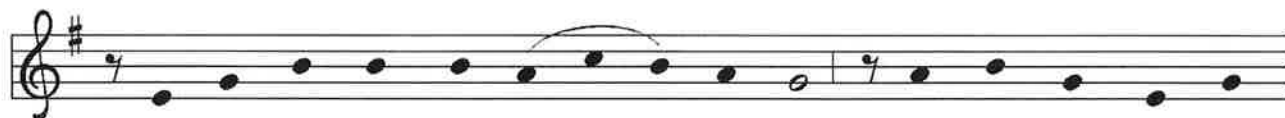
P God of mercy, C we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P God of might, C we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

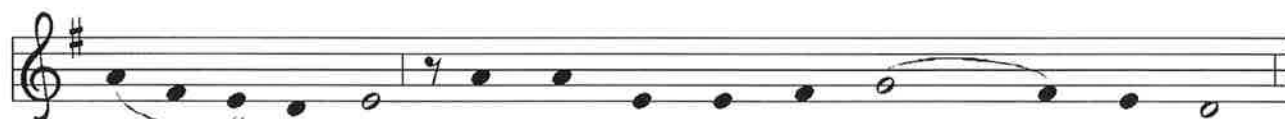
P God in our midst, C we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. C Amen.

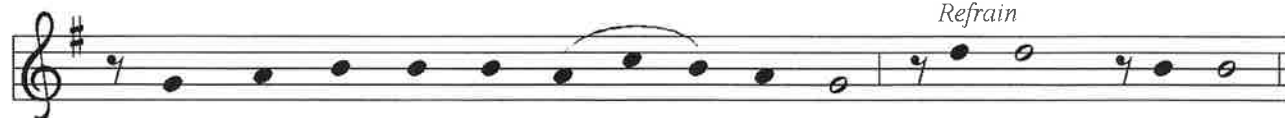
### GATHERING SONG: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (ELW 257) vv. 1-2



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things  
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on  
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law  
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.  
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



## **GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C And also with you.**

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

P Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to remove the judgments from your people, to save the lame, and to gather the outcast. As we light these three candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus. **C Amen.**

**WHILE WREATH IS LIT, PLEASE JOIN IN SINGING *O, COME, O, COME EMMANUEL* vv. 3-4.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C Amen.**

**+WORD+**

## **FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20**

A reading from Zephaniah.

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6**



In your midst is the Ho - ly One of Is - ra - el.

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation.

**With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. R**

And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name; make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted.

**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.**

Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. **R**

**SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7**

A reading from Philippians.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.





an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for  
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is  
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so  
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.  
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;  
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.  
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -  
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -  
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in  
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and  
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to  
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and  
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.  
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

## APOSTLES' CREED

**A** With the whole church we confess our faith.

**C** I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge

the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A The response to today's petitions is: receive our prayer.

A As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **C Amen.**

## PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always. **C And also with you.**

P Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

## ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS

Bob Maurer 12/18

## BIRTHDAY SONG

*He who began a good work in you 2x*

*Will be faithful to complete it (Clap 3x)*

*Will be faithful to complete it (Clap 3x)*

*He who started the work will be faithful to complete it in you!*

+MEAL+

## OFFERING: *Waiting in Silence* ~ Carey Landry

1-5. Wait-ing in si - lence, wait-ing in hope; we are your

1. peo-ple, we long for you, Lord. God ev - er with us, Em - man - u -  
2. peo-ple, we trust in your love. O Sun of Jus - tice, true Prince of  
3. peo-ple, Lord, we seek your truth. Wis - dom In - car - nate, teach us your  
4. peo-ple, we long for new life. O Key of Da - vid, o - pen our  
5. peo-ple, our hearts thirst for you. Flow - er of Jes - se, bloom in our



1. el, Come, Lord Je - sus,  
2. Peace, Come with your jus-tice, Lord,  
3. way; Show us the path of life, } Ma-ra-na - tha!  
4. hearts. Give us new vi-sion, Lord,  
5. midst. Make us your gar-den, Lord,

### OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray. Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.

Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

#### DIALOGUE

P The Lord be with you. **C And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts. **C We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

#### PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...

### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -




san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -



est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -





san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life...

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P ...We look with hope for his coming. **C Come, Lord Jesus.**

P ...Bring the gift of peace on earth. **C Come, Holy Spirit.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**


P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**C Our Father, who art in heaven...**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Come to the banquet, for all is now ready. **C Thanks be to God.**


**LAMB OF GOD**



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the



world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

**SONGS DURING COMMUNION: *People, Look East* (ELW 248)**



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing  
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is  
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the  
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,  
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,  
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,  
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look  
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look  
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look  
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

***On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* (ELW 249)**



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es  
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the  
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us  
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
 way for God with - in, and let us all our  
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -  
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.  
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray. Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. **C Amen**

### +SENDING+

P The Lord be with you. **C And also with you.**

### BLESSING

P God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✠ bless and keep you now and forever. **C Amen.**

**SENDING SONG:** *Prepare ye, the way of the Lord! Prepare ye, the way of the Lord!*

### DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. **C Thanks be to God.**

## Comments from the Cloud of Witnesses

What needs to be born in you, in us, this Christmas? Have we, as a community, given up on a noble mission because our courage or stamina failed? Has the fervor of our hope in the kingdom already arrived and is now cooling? “The Lord is at hand . . . the peace of God keep you.” There is no person frozen in destructive patterns that the Lord cannot free. Zephaniah’s prophecy commands us to hope: “The Lord is in your midst.” Have confidence. Look into the darkness for the light. It may not resemble the Easter sun; it might be the fragile, yet stable light of a star in the night sky. Christ is our hope even in the face of intimidating, paralyzing odds. He has baptized us in fire, as John prophesied in Luke. We, the holy people of God, can dream of new birth because God’s Spirit dwells in us, powering us to always try anew. *Lawrence Madden, S.J.*

## Upcoming Commemorations

**Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552 ~ Friday, December 20, 2024**

Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

**Announcements for the week of  
December 15, 2024**

*The Sanctuary Candle for December  
is given to the glory of God and in loving memory of **Frank O'Brien** by his daughter  
**Maureen O'Brien.***

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~ **Farewell Breakfast for Pastor Joann** ~ On January 5<sup>th</sup> we will be holding a breakfast in the Pastor's lounge following worship where we can gather to say our goodbyes to Pastor Joann and Greg. We're hoping you'll join us as we express our thanks for all they've done for St. Stephen's and wish them Godspeed as they start on a new path in their lives.

~ **Christmas Giving Program** ~ Wrapped gifts are due **TODAY!**

~ St. Stephen's **cookie decorating with "procrastibaking"** by Paige will be held **TODAY** following our Sunday service.

~ **Christmas Altar Plants and Greens** ~ An offering/dedication form with complete instructions are available in the Narthex. Deadline: **TODAY!**

~ **Bible Study** tomorrow on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Join us as we explore of the Art of Advent and Christmas. We will take a look at some famous artwork that tells the story of Jesus' birth.



~ **Tuesday evening** (December 17<sup>th</sup>) we will have a mid-week service at 7:30 pm as we celebrate the season of Advent.

~ **Newsletter blurbs** for the January, 2025 newsletter are due on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. Please email them to [Ststephenoffice@msn.com](mailto:Ststephenoffice@msn.com). Thank you in advance for sharing.

~ **WELCA** will have their next meeting on Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Joanne Heaney-Hunter will be the speaker. Her topic is, "What fig trees teach us about Advent". This meeting will take place at St. David's Church in Massapequa. The meeting will start at 10 a.m. and last for about an hour and a half.

~ Please join us in **decorating the Christmas Tree** after service on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The tree has been donated by the Shurman Family and Janet Muller.



Happy Birthday to all of our December Birthdays!

Barbara Engert 12/3

Brianna Feeney 12/4

Bob Maurer 12/18

Laureen Aiello 12/27

Christine Goetzger-Sedlak 12/30



We hope that Barbara and Kevin Barcavage had a very happy anniversary on 12/13

~ A chart on the lobby bulletin board allows us to designate weekly Sunday service altar flowers or the monthly sanctuary lamp candle as special memorial/in honor of gifts. Use the envelopes provided to forward the gift (\$25.00 for flowers; \$15.00 for candle). Be sure to include information concerning who is being honored/memorialized by your gift as well as your name, address and telephone number. You may also contact the church office at (516) 931-0710.

**PARISH CALENDAR THIS WEEK (December 16<sup>th</sup> - December 22<sup>nd</sup>)**

<b>Today</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>
	9:30 am Holy Communion
Monday	7:00 pm Bible Study
Tuesday	7:00 pm <i>Back to Basics (AA)</i>
	7:30 pm Advent Services
Wednesday	Newsletter Blurbs are due
Thursday	6:30 pm Executive Council Meeting
	7:00pm Church Council Meeting
<b>Next Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	
	9:30 am Holy Communion

**SERVING AT WORSHIP TODAY**

Sunday, 9:30 AM

ASSISTING MINISTER:	Barbara Engert
LECTOR:	Mark Hammaren
ACOLYTE:	Carmine Barone
USHERS:	Tyler LaVorgna & Tyler Musi
ACCOMPANIST	Mason Griffin & Gregory Hunter
GREETER:	Lynn Browning
AUDIO/VISUAL:	Tyler LaVorgna
ALTAR GUILD:	Jane Ebersberger & Beth Feeney

**PARISH PRAYER LIST**

*If you would like to have your name or your friend or family member's name added to the Prayer List, please call the office. Please remember to keep the office updated.*

**PRAY FOR OUR CONGREGATION**

Bill Artus  
Dottie Eberhardt  
Roger Engert  
Ilona Riggers

**PRAY FOR OUR FAMILIES**

Erin Burkhardt (daughter of Michelle Burkhardt)  
Joe DiSalvo (cousin of Maureen O'Brien)  
James Ebersberger (brother of Jane Ebersberger)  
Jim Fritz (cousin of Lauren Artus and John Langbehn)  
William Stanton (cousin of Kellie Barone)

**PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS**

Rich Carlstrom (friend of the Staton family)  
Cheryl Glasini (friend of the Ahlers-Pendas family)  
John Judge (friend of Jane Ebersberger)  
Ellen Motoi (friend of Maureen O'Brien)  
Sarah Motyka (friend of the Maurer family)  
Megan Mudd ( friend of the Staton family)  
Betty, John & Mary Beth Ott (friends of Jane Ebersberger)  
John Sheridan (friend of Bob and Nan Maurer)





## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A The response to today's petitions is: receive our prayer.

A As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression. Lord, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy, **C receive our prayer.**

A Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **C Amen.**



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