

the grass withers,  
THE FLOWER FADES,  
but the word  
OF OUR GOD WILL STAND FOREVER.  
-isaiah 40:8

Third Sunday of Advent

**The purpose of our Community is:**

**“Building Committed Followers of Jesus Christ”**

**Prelude**

*Pianist: Shirlene Everhart*

**The Invocation**

*Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**People: Amen.**

**The Confession of Sins and Absolution**

*Pastor: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.*

**People: Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for.**

*Pastor: This Advent Season, 2020, as we prepare to observe our Lord’s coming to save us,*

**People: We confess our sins, for the Lord is gracious, compassionate, and rich in forgiveness.**

***(A moment of silence is observed for personal confession)***

*Pastor: Let us then confess our sins together unto our gracious Lord.*

**People: Lord, You have blessed us so that once again we are preparing to observe and celebrate Your coming into our world. Forgive us our impatience at times, when we do not trust You enough to wait without undue anxiety for Your will to take place in our lives. Forgive us when we are afraid to use Your gifts or feel they are inadequate. We have not always trusted You enough, so that we willing to risk much as we have sought to be faithful to You, to help our neighbor, and to heal our world.**

*Pastor: Because of substitutionary person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true human, who died physically and spiritually on our behalf, thus making payment for our sins, I therefore, as one of the servants of Christ in this place, announce unto you the forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**People: Our sins have been paid for by the promised Messiah. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## **Hymn of the Day**

*Comfort, Comfort Ye, My People, #15*

## **Children's Sermonette:**

*"What Lasts Forever In Our Lives?"*

*Pastor Beryl Droegemueller*

## **We Worship Through Our Giving**

*We express our gratitude to God as we give to support the work of the church so that more people may hear the Good News about Jesus. Please ask an usher if you need an envelope.*

## **Offertory**

## **We Worship Through Speaking and Hearing the Word of God**

We read the Word of God to strengthen, encourage, and challenge us for the week ahead.

## **Old Testament Lesson**

*Isaiah 40:1-8 (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup> A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. <sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." <sup>6</sup> A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. <sup>7</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

*Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.*

**Everyone: THANKS BE TO GOD.**

## **Epistle Lesson**

*I Thessalonians 5:16-24 (NIV)*

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray continually, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not treat prophecies with contempt <sup>21</sup> but test them all; hold on to what is good, <sup>22</sup> reject every kind of evil. <sup>23</sup> May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

*Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.*

**Everyone: THANKS BE TO GOD.**

(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)

## **Gospel Lesson**

*John 1:6-8,19-28 (NIV)*

*Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.*

**Everyone: GLORY TO YOU, O LORD.**

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>19</sup> Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup> He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup> They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>22</sup> Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" <sup>24</sup> Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" <sup>26</sup> "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." <sup>28</sup> This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

*Pastor: This is the Gospel of our Lord.*

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **We Respond to God's Word by Confessing Our Faith**

*As we recite together the words of the Apostles' Creed, we join the worldwide chorus of followers of Jesus, who, for centuries, have confessed their faith through this simple declaration.*

**(Everyone) I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;**

**And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.**

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



## **Communion Hymn**

*Angels We Have Heard On High, # 22*

### **We Worship at the table of the Lord's Supper**

*Communion — If you prefer grape juice instead of wine, please hold up 2 fingers when you reach the person with the cups.*

*Everyone who confesses Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior is welcome and invited to join us. Together we receive anew the love and grace that God pours out to us through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Come hold in your hands and taste on your lips the love He poured out for you.*

*Pastor: The Words of Our Lord...(Consecration of the Elements)*

**(Everyone) Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen!**

Distribution

### **Benediction**

*A blessing we receive to send us out into the world once again.*

## **Sending Hymn**

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly, # 36*

*Pastor: Go in Peace and Serve the Lord.*

**(Everyone): Thanks be to God**

### **Postlude**



## **Things going on during the week:**

Please pick up Food Bags today to use or to distribute to others.

**Monday-Friday: 7:15 am to 5 pm** Little Blessings Christian Preschool:  
Theme: Happy Birthday Jesus!; Letters: Nn; Bible: Angels tell the Shepherds

**Thursdays:** Choir, 5 pm

**Thursdays:** **No meetings** until further notice.

## **Birdhouse = Building Fund Donations**

Please place all and any donations for the Building Fund in the Birdhouse. This fund is needed to replace 'The Shack' and build for the future of this church. Being more visible to Mission Avenue we hope to attract Christians looking for a new home and non-Christians looking for what is missing in their life.

## **Mark Your Calendars!**

**December 19, Saturday - Free Food Distribution**--At the Shack from 9 to 10 am. If you know of someone who could benefit from the free food distribution, please let them know. Also, if you can help with set-up, please come at 8:30 am. If you can come later and stay until about 11:00 am to help with putting away leftover food, tables and chairs, your help will be greatly appreciated. *Join us in thanking God for the continuation of this ministry!* The Blue bin on the North wall of the Church is for the collection of can goods for the Food Distribution.

**January 2, Saturday - Normally** Women's Bible Study, 10 am.

**January 16, Saturday - Free Food Distribution**--At the Shack from 9 to 10 am. If you know of someone who could benefit from the free food distribution, please let them know. Also, if you can help with set-up, please come at 8:30 am. If you can come later and stay until about 11:00 am to help with putting away leftover food, tables and chairs, your help will be greatly appreciated. *Join us in thanking God for the continuation of this ministry!* The Blue bin on the North wall of the Church is for the collection of can goods for the Food Distribution.

## **February 7, Sunday - Love Offering ... for Missions**

Once a quarter, we will be collecting a special offering in the 'Missions Giving Box' on your way out of the Sanctuary for our Missionaries. This offering is above and beyond our regular giving. In planning ahead, we will repeat the Love Offerings in 2020 on the first Sunday in February, May, August & November.







# Comfort, Comfort Ye, My People

Comfort, comfort ye My people,  
Speak ye peace, thus saith our God;  
Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Bowed beneath their sorrow's load;  
Of the peace that waits for them;  
Speak ye to Jerusalem  
Tell her that her sins I cover,  
And her warfare now is over.

For the herald's voice is crying  
In the desert far and near,  
Bidding all men to repentance,  
Since the kingdom now is here.  
O that warning cry obey!  
Now prepare for God a way;  
Let the valleys rise to meet Him,  
And the hills bow down to greet Him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked,  
Make the rougher places plain:  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits His holy reign;  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o'er the earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That His Word is never broken.

# Savior of the Nations, Come

Savior of the nations, come,  
Virgin's Son, here make Thy home!  
Marvel now, O heaven and earth,  
That the Lord chose such a birth.

Not by human flesh and blood,  
By the Spirit of our God,  
Was the Word of God made flesh—  
Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child  
Of the virgin undefiled!  
Though by all the world disowned,  
Still to be in heaven enthroned.

From the Father forth He came  
And returneth to the same,  
Captive leading death and hell—  
High the song of triumph swell!

Thou, the Father's only Son,  
Hast over sin the victory won.  
Boundless shall Thy kingdom be;  
When shall we its glories see?

Brightly doth Thy manger shine,  
Glorious is its light divine.  
Let not sin o'ercloud this light;  
Ever be our faith thus bright.

Praise to God the Father sing,  
Praise to God the Son, our King,  
Praise to God the Spirit be  
Ever and eternally.

# Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing,  
Come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

# Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Infant holy, infant lowly,  
For His bed a cattle stall,  
Oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ, the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing,  
Bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ, the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
Vigil till the morning new,  
Saw the glory, heard the story.  
Tidings of a Gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
Praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ, the child was born for you!  
Christ, the child was born for you!