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**Pastor Ricky Adams**



**“Lighten Our Darkness”**  
**Third Sunday Of Advent**  
**December 13, 2020**

***Whoever you are...***  
***Wherever you are in your JOURNEY OF FAITH...***  
***YOU are WELCOME here!***

## **We Gather In The Presence Of God**

### **“Lighten Our Darkness”**

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

In our Advent preparations today, John the apostle and evangelist adds his testimony along with John the Baptist, holding before us the joy of Jesus as the light who gives to all who receive Him and believe in His name the right to become children of God.

Because of our Lord’s continual supply of grace by His Word and Sacraments, we are enabled with Him to “greatly rejoice in the LORD”; for by His Spirit of righteousness we lead lives of holiness of faith. This holiness continually rejoices in the Lord, prays, and give thanks in all circumstances. With John the apostle and John the Baptist, we rejoice, always prepared by faith to welcome and worship our Lord and Savior, who comes to us daily with healing and deliverance. Thank you for joining us in worship.

### **Opening Sentences – Luke 1:46-55**

**Pastor:** Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice!

**People:** **We rejoice always and pray continually. We give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will!**

**Pastor:** “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

**People:** **for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;**

**Pastor:** for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

**People:** **His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.**

**Pastor:** He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

**People:** **He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;**

**Pastor:** he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

**People:** **He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,**

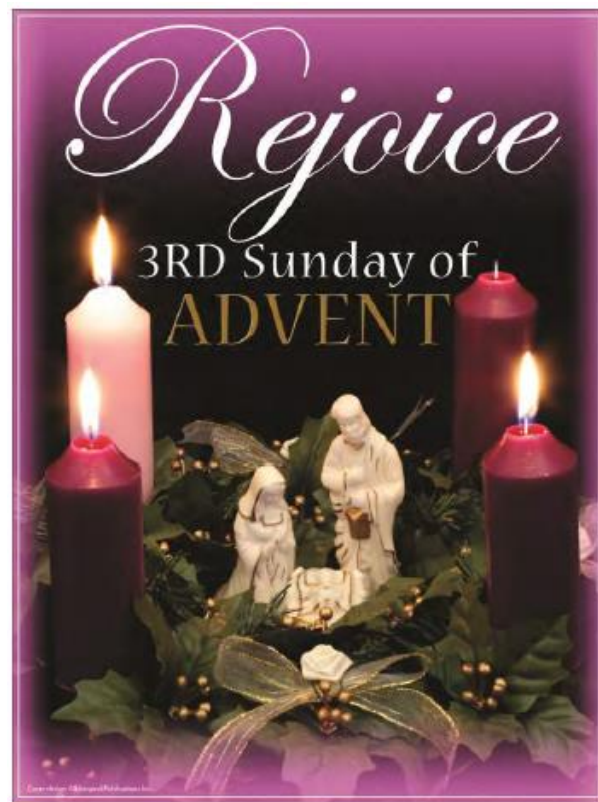
**Pastor:** according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

## Opening Song – Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful we adore thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love!  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,  
praising thee, their sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.

Thou art giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,  
wellspring of the joy of living,  
ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,  
all who live in love are thine;  
teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to the joy divine!

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1933



## **We Are Renewed In God's Grace**

### **Time of Confession and Forgiveness**

Pastor: We look to the left, to the right, and all around us to find the answers to our questions.

**People: We search high and low to find something to fill our emptiness.**

Pastor: We grow impatient, untrusting, bitter, and afraid as we seek satisfaction within ourselves.

**People: Of these sins, we confess.**

Pastor: Lord Jesus, we cannot find the answers to our deepest questions from a university, degree, or job.

**People: We cannot find abundant life in all that we chase on this earth.**

Pastor: We cannot find anything good from within ourselves. Only You, God, are good. Only You, God, are holy. Only You, God, can fill us with Your mighty Spirit.

**People: Only You can satisfy, fulfill, quench, forgive, and love us unconditionally, for You alone are Creator God, holy and true.**

Pastor: Forgive us, Father, for our sins. Forgive us for looking everywhere else but to You. Forgive us, Lord.

**People: In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, amen.**

Pastor: The Peace of the Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you**

## **God Speaks Through His Word**

### **First Reading - Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

Pastor: <sup>1</sup>The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; <sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup>to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. <sup>4</sup>They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former

devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ... <sup>8</sup>For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup>Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. <sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. <sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. ... This is God's Word

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel - John 1:6-8, 19-28**

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

**Pastor:** <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ... <sup>19</sup>This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup>He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup>He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said. <sup>24</sup>Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" <sup>26</sup>John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. ... This is the Gospel of our Lord.

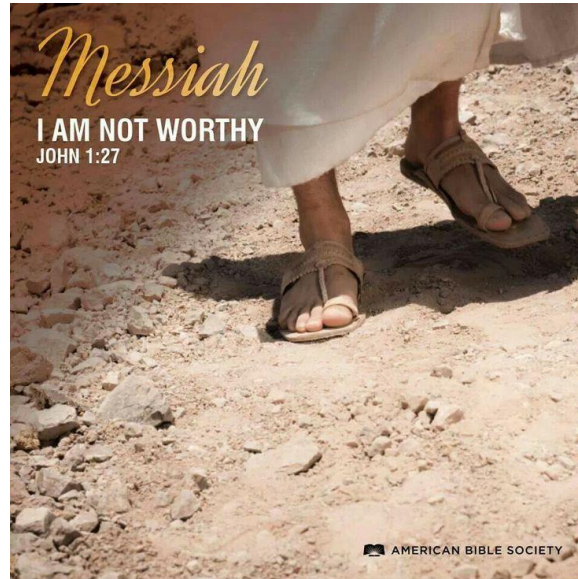
**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **Message Song – On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry**

On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings of the King of kings!

All praise to you, eternal Son,  
whose advent has our freedom won,  
whom with the Father we adore,  
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite



## Message

“Lighten Our Darkness”  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

## We Bring Our Praises, Prayers And Gifts

### Confession Of Faith - Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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

## The Prayers

**Pastor:** Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. — Silent Prayer - For the Holy Christian Church throughout the world and for all who confess the name of Christ, that God guard and defend us from all temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For all pastors and servants of Christ, that they proclaim with faithfulness and clarity the true light of the Gospel in all they do, let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For the government and all who have been set into positions of leadership, that they use the authority entrusted to them honorably and for the good of all people, let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For all who suffer from hunger, homelessness, poverty, or unemployment, that God's great mercy and love preserve and relieve them, let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For those who are sick, that God grant healing to their bodies and strength to bear their infirmities with patience and grace, let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For those who rejoice in the rich blessings of God, that they always remember the Giver of every gift and give Him heartfelt thanks, let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

### Additional Prayers

**Pastor:** let us pray to the Lord:

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People:** **Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

## **Benediction**

**Pastor:** Wherever you find yourselves, whether in a flourishing oasis or a dry and weary wilderness, remember the Lord is with you. He has not nor will He ever forsake you.

**People:** **The Lord brings us peace and comfort. He stills our hearts and minds. We love the Lord Jesus, and rejoice in His name! Amen.**

## **Dismissal**

**Pastor:** Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

## **Closing Song - Joy to the World**

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let ev'ry heart prepare him room  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

He rules the world with truth and grace  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

## **Announcements**

**Information About Peace Lutheran Church** - If you desire to know more about Peace Lutheran Church such as teachings; affiliations, membership or other questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Adams.

Office Phone – (415) 388-2065  
Home Phone – (415) 388-7190  
Email – [pastor@plcmarin.org](mailto:pastor@plcmarin.org)

**Christmas Eve Live Stream** – We will have a live stream worship service on Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m. Please feel free to join us!

**Christmas Eve Live Stream – Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86265155381?pwd=WVRYK0ZjVTNaUEZsZWdsWXRUCWdVQT09>

Meeting ID: 862 6515 5381

Passcode: 515635

**Worship Services** – There are three ways to worship at Peace Lutheran Church during this time of Covid.

**Live Stream - Zoom**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73855305624?pwd=ZEZpQkZNbEx5VmtUYTBKUnlLQjJkZz09>

Meeting ID: 738 5530 5624

Passcode: plcmarin

**Facebook users**

[www.facebook.com/PeaceLutheranMill](https://www.facebook.com/PeaceLutheranMill)

(available beginning 10:00 a.m. Sunday Morning)

**Non-Facebook Users**

[www.plcmarin.org](http://www.plcmarin.org)

Just go to the front page, scroll to the bottom, and click on the video. It is that easy!

**Communion** – After worship from 10:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. You may also call Pastor Adams to make an appointment.

**Calendars** – We are collecting Calendars for 2021 to give to people at the Fireside

**Thank You** – Nancy and I would like to thank Peace Lutheran Church for the gift we received and the reception on December 6<sup>th</sup>. It is greatly appreciated.

## **Weekly Devotional Helps**

### **December 13-19, 2020**

**Morning Prayer**

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

### **Evening Prayer**

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

### **Prayer For The Sick**

By your power, great God, our Lord Jesus healed the sick and gave new hope to the hopeless. Though we cannot command or possess your power, we pray for those who want to be healed. Mend their wounds, soothe fevered brows, and make broken people whole again. Help us to welcome every healing as a sign that, though death is against us, you are for us, and have promised renewed and risen life in Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

## **Scripture Readings Through The Week**

### **Monday – December 14**

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Isaiah 10:15-26  
Revelation 2:1-29

### **Tuesday – December 15**

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Isaiah 10:27-31:9  
Revelation 3:1-22

### **Wednesday – December 16**

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Isaiah 32:1-20  
Revelation 4:1-11

### **Thursday – December 17**

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Isaiah 33:1-24  
Revelation 5:1-14

### **Friday – December 18**

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Isaiah 34:1-2, 8-35:10  
Revelation 6:1-17

### **Saturday – December 19**

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Isaiah 40:1-17  
Revelation 7:1-17

## **Scripture Readings For Next Sunday**

### **Fourth Sunday Of Advent**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

## Commemorations

**December 13 - Lucy, martyr, died 304:** Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

**December 14 - John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591:** John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

**December 16 - Las Posadas:** This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

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