



**CROWN OF LIFE** | LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

**December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

*Third Sunday in Advent*

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## **A Service of Worship and Praise**

### **We Gather in God's Name**

#### **GREETING**

#### **OPENING HYMN**

#### **African-American Heritage Hymnal 188**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

**Minister says:** We begin our worship in praise the same way we were baptized: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation says:** AMEN

### **We Prepare our Hearts**

**M:** As believers in Christ, we are called to repent of our sins and forgive one another. In the book of James, we are told, "Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for one another, so that you may be healed." As one body in Christ, we unite our hearts in prayer:

**C:** Lord, I pray to You because I am suffering. I have cut myself off from You and others by the sin in my life. I need Your forgiveness so that I may find healing for my wounded life and for the wounds I have caused others. Today, in the name of Jesus I pray, forgive me, and by the power of Your Holy Spirit, renew my heart. AMEN.

**We sing:** *Change My Heart*

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

|: You are the potter; I am the clay.

Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God, may I be like you. :|

**M:** We take comfort and find confidence in the words of Jesus, "He has sent me to announce forgiveness to the prisoners of sin and restore sight to the blind, to give mercy to those whose lives are shattered by sin, to announce the favor of the Lord." God gave His only son, Jesus, to die for our sins and rise from death to give us eternal life. We are forgiven. We live in the favor of the Lord.

**C:** AMEN.

**We sing:** *Lord I Lift Your Name on High*

|: Lord, I lift your name on high. Lord, I love to sing your praises.  
I'm so glad you're in my life. I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from Heaven to Earth to show the way;  
from the Earth to the Cross, my debt to pay;  
from the Cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky;  
Lord, I lift Your name on high. :|

### **WE PRAY TOGETHER**

**M:** Almighty God, you are eager to grant your goodness...

**C:** ...and joyful in sharing your grace.

**M:** You invite us into your presence...

**C:** ..to worship you with all our hearts.

**M:** Breathe your holy Spirit on us...

**C:** ...so that our tongues are eager to shout your praise!

**M:** Breathe your Holy Spirit on us...

**C:** ...so that our mouths are ready to proclaim the good news of Your Son.

**M:** Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C:** AMEN .

## We Listen to God's Word

### FIRST LESSON

*Zephaniah 3:14-17*

<sup>14</sup> Sing, Daughter Zion;  
shout aloud, Israel!

Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,  
Daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup> The LORD has taken away your punishment,  
he has turned back your enemy.

The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you;  
never again will you fear any harm.

<sup>16</sup> On that day  
they will say to Jerusalem,

"Do not fear, Zion;  
do not let your hands hang limp.

<sup>17</sup> The LORD your God is with you,  
the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;  
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
but will rejoice over you with singing."

**We sing:** *Shine Jesus Shine*

Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory!  
Blaze, Spirit, blaze! Set our hearts on fire.  
Flow river flow! Flood the nations with grace and mercy.  
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

Lord, the light of Your love is shining,  
In the midst of the darkness shining.  
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us;  
Set us free by the truth You now bring us.  
Shine on me. Shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory!  
Blaze, Spirit, blaze! Set our hearts on fire.  
Flow river flow! Flood the nations with grace and mercy.  
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

## **SECOND LESSON**

*Philippians 4:4-7*

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

*PLEASE STAND*

## **GOSPEL LESSON**

*Luke 3:7-18*

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"  
<sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.  
<sup>9</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."  
<sup>10</sup> "What should we do then?" the crowd asked.  
<sup>11</sup> John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same."  
<sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"  
<sup>13</sup> "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.  
<sup>14</sup> Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—  
be content with your pay."

<sup>15</sup> The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in  
their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup> John  
answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more  
powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not  
worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

<sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and  
to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff  
with unquenchable fire." <sup>18</sup> And with many other words John  
exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

*BE SEATED*

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

### **Christian Worship 11**

*Comfort, Comfort, All My People*

### **SERMON**

### ***Like John, We Rejoice in Sharing the Good News***

*Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11*

**61** The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners,<sup>[a]</sup>  
<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> and provide for those who grieve in Zion—  
to bestow on them a crown of beauty

instead of ashes,  
the oil of joy  
instead of mourning,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
a planting of the LORD  
for the display of his splendor.

<sup>10</sup> I delight greatly in the LORD;  
my soul rejoices in my God.

For he has clothed me with garments of salvation  
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,  
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

<sup>11</sup> For as the soil makes the sprout come up  
and a garden causes seeds to grow,  
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness  
and praise spring up before all nations.

## **NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one being with the Father. Through Him, all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, He came down from Heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake, He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day, He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory

to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who, in unity with the Father and the Son, is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. AMEN.

**OFFERING**

*Instrumental*

**THE SACRAMENT**

**M:** Our Lord Jesus has given us a holy supper in which we receive His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith. In this supper, we celebrate the gift of His redemption, we bear witness to the fellowship we share as confessors of the truth, and we proclaim His death until He returns.

**C:** Now have come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory, forever and ever.

**We sing:** *Glorify Thy Name*

Father, we love you; we worship and adore you.

Glorify thy name in all the earth.

Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,

Glorify thy name in all the earth.

Jesus, we love you; we worship and adore you.

Glorify thy name in all the earth.



Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,  
Glorify thy name in all the earth.

Spirit, we love you; we worship and adore you.  
Glorify thy name in all the earth.  
Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,  
Glorify thy name in all the earth.

**M:** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat: this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

**M:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: AMEN**

FOR ALL OF US: Paul instructed in I Cor. 11:28: "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup." Questions like these help us examine ourselves:

- Am I sorry for my sin?
- Do I trust that Jesus has lived and died to save me from my sin?
- Do I believe that Jesus's body and blood are truly present to assure me of forgiveness?
- Do I intend, with God's help, to live a more God pleasing life?

*WELS and ELS members may come and receive Christ's body and blood. Proceed up the center aisle as directed by the ushers.*

FOR OUR GUESTS AND VISITORS: *You may find that we regard Holy Communion with much greater seriousness than most churches today. The Bible teaches that communion is, among other things, a public statement of intimate unity and spiritual agreement with a church's teachings. Therefore, if you are unaware or unclear about what we teach and believe, you will want to compare your own beliefs with ours before communing with us. We are eager to establish this fellowship with you and look forward to your inquiry on how to enter into fellowship! Pastor Kramer is happy and ready to speak with you!*

**DISTRIBUTION**

**African-American Heritage Hymnal 257**

*There is a Fountain*

**THANKSGIVING**

Give thanks with a grateful heart.

Give thanks to the Holy One.

Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ His Son.

|: And now, let the weak say, "I am strong",

Let the poor say, "I am rich"

Because of what the Lord has done for us! :|

Give thanks!

**C:** Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised You here may glorify You in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of Your Son may long for His coming again, and that all who have received in His true body and blood the pledge of Your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN.

**PRAYERS AND LORD'S PRAYER**

**BLESSING**

**M:** Brothers and Sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

**C: AMEN**

## CLOSING HYMN

## Christian Worship 14 *Arise, O Christian People*

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<b><i>Serving at Col:</i></b>	<b>Today</b>	<b>Next Sunday</b>
Music	Karis, Elijah	Katherine, Elijah, Pastor
Ushers	Seth, Keith	Lee, Mike
Reader		Elijah
Altar		
Streaming	Noah	Noah
Refreshments		
Cleaning	Quiana	Quiana
Mowing		

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday	7:00 PM Online Bible Class
Thursday	10:30 AM Bible Class at Timeless Grace, Carriere, MS
Thursday	12:00 PM Confirmation Class, Picayune, MS
Sunday	10:00 AM Bible Class, Sunday School
Sunday	11:00 AM Worship
Today	12:45 PM Council Meeting, Ladies Guild
Dec 24 <sup>th</sup>	6:00 PM Christmas Eve Service
Dec 25 <sup>th</sup>	11:00 AM Christmas Service

### CAMM November 2024 Newsletter

The Lutheran Mission Rural Health Centre (Mwembezi) in Zambia has been providing both physical and spiritual help to both the clients and patients in its 63 years of existence. It is the hand of God that has brought us this far. God established this work through His missionaries and their wives who were serving this area at a time when it was most difficult to live in Africa. Today the clinic stands tall with its ever-increasing population which has grown significantly since the 1990's. The area has witnessed growth in both population and infrastructure since the area was declared a district in 2011 by the President at that time. There would have been even more growth in population and infrastructure had the President lived to see his vision through.

The clinic serves eight separate areas within our catchment and was seeing about eighteen thousand eight hundred people per year. In 2023 The Zambia government built two new health posts within our catchment area. These health posts were designed to provide people with a clinic closer to their homes rather than travel to Mwembezi. The Mutombe health post is located about eight kilometres from our clinic and the Shikatende health post is about twelve Kilometres from Mwembezi. Each health post was given a population of around five thousand people to serve thereby lowering the population served at Mwembezi by around 10,000. However, it did not work out that way. People prefer coming to Mwembezi over the health posts for reasons such as "at the Mwembezi clinic they pray to God" and "offer Bible reading" (devotion), they have drugs and at the centre there are

“Doctors” available (Doctors in this case meaning medical staff in white coats). True to the peoples’ words, we are vessels of God sent for the sake of providing physical and spiritual help to our brothers and sisters in that area. As a team, we believe that the clinic is a Christ-centered facility. We treat, but Jesus Christ heals.

I am grateful to hear how people in the area praise God and mostly I hear them saying “Leza alelekwé pakutupa chibadela cha Lutheran” meaning that “May the name of God be glorified for giving us the Lutheran clinic”. Hearing of the nice comments reminds me of the favour of God in our lives and how we ought to be grateful to Him. We are grateful for everything that God allowed us to see and do this year and remain grateful to all who pray for and support the Clinic. Let’s encourage each other to live for God and be grateful to Him, especially around this time.

As children of God let’s remember what He has given us despite the many challenges we face. There is an example of two people travelling in a public bus, one passenger (a woman) accidentally spilled something on a smartly dressed passenger (a man) who was seated next to her and his clothes became dirty. It was expected that this smartly dressed man would get angry at the woman. But to the surprise of everyone the man smiled and said, “It’s okay my sister, I will be dropping at the next station and home is near.” The point is, let’s not stress too much on the issues beyond our control, rather we hand over everything to God and be grateful for what He has given us.

With prayer and believing in God’s promises it was possible to establish the clinic that does His work now as it did 60 years ago. The God our forefathers served is the same God today. The clinic serves as a ready platform to extend God’s grace to His people, showing the love of Jesus to all who come. Our hope is that more will praise God for his salvation through Jesus as well as being grateful for the medical care given at our clinic. Thank you for your time.

Written by Alisad Banda, [CAMM](#) Clinic Administrator in Zambia.

<b>OFFERING</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>%Budget Met</b>
Last Week	\$1,860.00	\$2,548.40	73.0%
December	\$5,577.00	\$11,043.08	50.5%
Qtr-to-Date	\$34,243.05	\$33,129.25	103.4%
Year-to-Date	\$127,315.93	\$132,517.00	96.1%



*“...give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”  
II Corinthians 9:7*

