

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Today we especially remember:

Kimberly Armino; Bertie Black; Steven, Sarah, Anderson, & Abella Barre; Residents of the Bradley Home; Jeanette Burgess; Robin Coon; Alana Daley & family; Jack Gade; Charlie Gardinier; Charlotte Gardinier; Jerry Gianakos; Linda Gianakos; Terri Herteux; family of Joey Hummel; Doreen Jenkins; Stephanie Kershner & family; Richard Kibwassali; Danielle Luft; Gail Magnuson; Rit Marrero; Kevin Matt; Maureen; Cindy McCarthy; Susan McCue; Paula Mehmel; Sherri Phillips; Ann Phipps; Bill Preuss; David Ray; Doug Schultz & family; Annette Sprude; AT; RT; Mary Yurian; those who are suffering during the pandemic; and those and those we name aloud or in our hearts.

Make your Church a place of refuge and healing. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Sunday Worship – Advent 3B

Sunday, December 13, 2020

Lessons and Prayers

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (NRSV)

^{61.1}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;

²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³to 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.

⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁸For 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.

⁹Their 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.
¹⁰I 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.
¹¹For 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.

Psalm 126 (ELW)

^{126.1}When the LORD restored the for- | tunes of Zion,
then were we like | those who dream.
**²Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue
with | shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done
great | things for them.”**
³The LORD has done great | things for us,
and we are | glad indeed.
**⁴Restore our for- | tunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses | of the Negeb. R**
⁵Those who | sowed with tears
will reap with | songs of joy.
**⁶Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves. R**

John 1:6-8, 19-28 (NRSV)

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as
a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.
⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and
Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed
and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹And they
asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are
you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²²Then they said to him, “Who
are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you
say about yourself?” ²³He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’”
as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him,
“Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor
Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with
water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who
is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.”
²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was
baptizing.

Prayers of Intercession

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this
weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need. (*A brief silence.*)

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church
with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of
bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all
people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship.
Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for
all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered
animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the
rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of
righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the
leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of
righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through
their actions. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We
pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire,
flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World
Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief
organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.