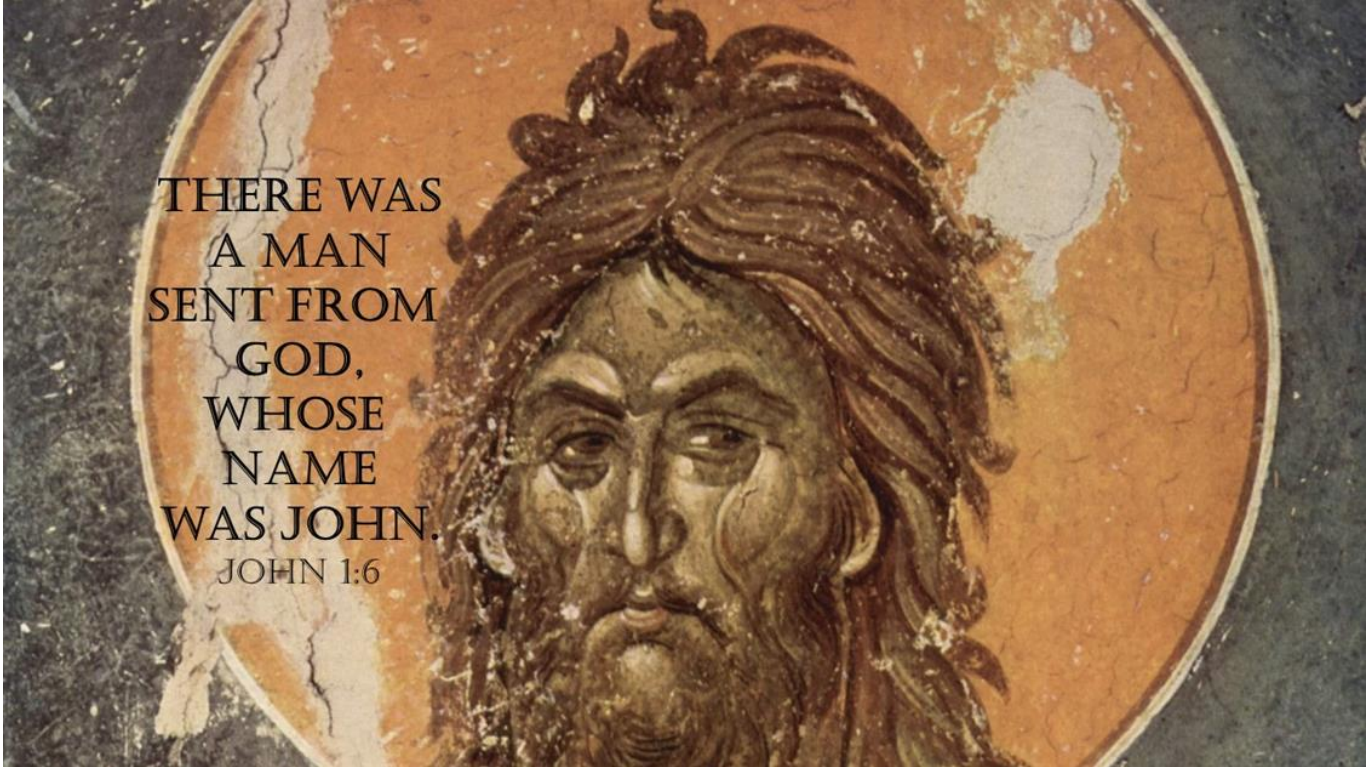




THERE WAS
A MAN
SENT FROM
GOD,
WHOSE
NAME
WAS JOHN.
JOHN 1:6

NEW LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pearland, TX

Worship at 10:30 AM

Third Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion

December 17, 2023

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

GATHERING SONG

God With Us

Who are we
That You would be mindful of us
What do You see
That's worth looking our way

We are free
In ways that we never should be
Sweet release
From the grip of these chains

Like hinges straining from the weight
My heart no longer can keep from singing

Chorus

All that is within me cries
For You alone be glorified
Emmanuel, God with us
My heart sings a brand new song
The debt is paid these chains are gone
Emmanuel, God with us

Lord You know
Our hearts don't deserve Your glory
Still You show
A love we cannot afford

Like hinges straining from the weight
My heart no longer can keep from singing

Repeat Chorus

Such a tiny offering compared to Calvary
Nevertheless we lay it at Your feet (*repeat*)

*Repeat Chorus (with "**my** debt is paid")*

WELCOME – Pastor Clayton Faulkner

GATHERING SONG *Glory To God Forever*

Before the world was made, before You spoke it to be
You were the King of kings, yeah You were, yeah You were
And now You're reigning still, enthroned above all things
Angels and saints cry out, we join them as we sing

Chorus

Glory to God, Glory to God
Glory to God forever
Glory to God, Glory to God
Glory to God forever

Creator God You gave me breath so I could praise
Your great and matchless name all my days, all my days
So let my whole life be a blazing offering
A life that shouts and sings the greatness of our King

Repeat Chorus

Take my life and let it be
All for You and for Your glory
Take my life and let it be Yours
Take my life and let it be
All for You and for Your glory
Take my life and let it be Yours

Repeat Chorus 2x

Steve Fee | Vicky Beeching
sixsteps Songs; Thankyou Music; Worship Together Music

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

All: Amen.

P: God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Everlasting God,

All: you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

P: Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

All: Amen.

OPENING SONG *Sing To The King*

Sing to the King Who is coming to reign
Glory to Jesus the Lamb that was slain
Life and salvation His empire shall bring
And joy to the nations when Jesus is King

Chorus

Come let us sing a song
A song declaring that we belong to Jesus
He is all we need
Lift up a heart of praise
Sing now with voices raised to Jesus
Sing to the King

For His returning we watch and we pray
 We will be ready the dawn of that day
 We'll join in singing with all the redeemed
 'Cause Satan is vanquished and Jesus is King

Repeat Chorus 2x

Billy J. Foote | Charles Silvester Horne
 © 2003 sixsteps Music; worshiptogether.com songs

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

L: Let us pray. Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow.
 You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us
 as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give
 us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your
 promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders
 near at hand.

All: Amen.



We light a can-dle for joy — and our world that's long-ing for joy

We light a can-dle for joy — and our world that's long-ing for joy

Ho - ly One, — shine with the fire of our lives oh

We light a can-dle for joy — and our world that's long-ing for joy

Words and music by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan
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PRAYER – Pastor Clayton Faulkner

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A: ¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; the LORD 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 the glory of God. 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 God has clothed me with the garments of salvation, and 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.

A: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 126

Please read responsively.

A: ¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

All: 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."

A: ³The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

All: ⁴Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses of the Negeb.

A: ⁵Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.

All: ⁶Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A: ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May that very God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and will do this.

A: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

He came down that we may have joy
He came down that we may have joy
He came down that we may have joy
Hallelujah forevermore

GOSPEL READING: John 1:6-8, 19-28

P: The holy gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: 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 Judeans sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰John 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?" ²³John 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, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON – Pastor Clayton Faulkner

SONG OF THE DAY

Wait for the Lord (ELW 262)

Wait for the Lord

Whose day is near

Wait for the Lord

Keep watch, take heart!

Repeat

Text: Taizé Community | Music: Jacques Berthier
Text and Music ©1984 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications Inc., agent

NICENE CREED

P: Joining together let us confess our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.

All: 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 truly 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, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

A: Fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy as we bear witness to the great things you have done. Give your church a spirit of gladness as we gather and as we are sent. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Let the trees of the field sing your praise. Protect forests, orchards, rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation. Keep us grateful for their gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: You love justice and promise your favor to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, and incarcerated. Grant wisdom and compassion to those who work for public safety and all who work within prisons, jails, and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Give us strength to pray for our world without ceasing and provoke us toward love and good deeds for all who are in need. Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society. Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclamation. Amplify voices of peacemakers, advocates, and especially those whose voices are ignored or marginalized. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: With gratitude we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances, in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death. Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

All: Amen.

INSTALLATION OF CHURCH COUNCIL

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

The ministry of New Life Lutheran Church is made possible through the tithes, gifts, and offerings of the people. We encourage you to give as an act of worship today. You can offer a gift by texting to 281.864.3278, adding a dollar amount to the message box, and send. A link will appear for a one time set up. Once it is set up, it takes seconds to give again. You can also give through our website by scanning the QR code on the pew.

OFFERTORY – Barbara Scott

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

All: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

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

All: 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.

P: In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.

Come, take your place at the table.

All: Amen. Thanks be to God.

SHARING THE MEAL

Everyone is welcome to receive Jesus in bread and wine. This is Jesus' table and he welcomes all. Pre-filled communion packets are available in the Narthex if you would prefer to receive communion that way. Everyone else is invited to come down the center aisle maintaining two continuous lines. You will receive a piece of bread with the words, "The body of Christ given for you," and you can respond with, "Amen." Remain on the side of the section of pews you are sitting in. You will receive an individual cup of either wine (red) or grape juice (clear) with the words, "The blood of Christ shed for you," and you can respond with, "Amen." There is a basket available for your empty cup. You will then return to your pew from the side aisle.

COMMUNION SONG

Gifted Response

This is a gifted response
Father, we cannot come to You
By our own merit
We will come in the name of Your Son
As He glorifies You
And in the power of Your Spirit

We have come to something so mysterious
Too deep for minds to comprehend
Through the open door
Where the angels sing
And the host of heaven are antheming

Chorus

And we'll sing the glory of Your name
Celebrate the glories of Your grace
We will worship You
We will worship You
And we'll make Your praise so glorious
Singing songs of everlasting praise
We will worship You
We will worship You

Repeat All

Repeat Chorus

Matt Redman
© 2004 Thankyou Music

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

P: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless
you, strengthen you, and keep you in God's grace.

All: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray. Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed
your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal,
send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

All: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and
forever.

All: Amen.

SENDING SONG

Soon and Very Soon

Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King

No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King
No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King
No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King

No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King
No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King
No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King

Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King

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DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

All: Thanks be to God.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent: December 17

Traditional Worship: 8:00 AM

Children's Christmas Pageant 9:15 AM

Contemporary Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday School on Advent Break: Sunday School at 9:15 AM will take a break during Advent and Christmas and return on January 7, 2024!

Soup Supper and Midweek Advent Service: We are gathering on Wednesday evenings in December for food, fellowship, and worship. Supper begins at 5:45 PM, choir rehearsal is at 6:15 PM, and the service will begin in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM. Sign up sheets for the potluck meals are in the narthex.

Community Christmas Caroling: We have three opportunities to spread Christmas cheer to our neighbors. Thursday December 21 at 2:00 PM at The Landing at Watercrest senior living, Friday December 22 at 6:00 PM at Trinity Oaks assisted living, and Friday December 22 at 7:30 PM in the neighborhood surrounding New Life. Please join us for any or all of these events!

Poinsettia Orders Available: You can sign up for a poinsettia in the narthex. Poinsettias will be displayed on Christmas Eve and can be picked up after the services. Cost is \$10 each.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: We will combine Sunday morning worship on December 24 for ONE service at 9:30 AM.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services: Sunday, December 24 at 4:00 and 7:00 PM.

First Sunday of Christmas: We will combine Sunday morning worship on New Year's Eve, December 31 for ONE service at 9:30 AM.

Today's Worship Leaders (10:30 AM)

Assisting Minister

Lisa Hitchcock-Weber

Communion Assistants

Barbara Flowers, Linda Hudgens

Ushers

Cathy Scott

Technology

Stephen Castillo

*Altar flowers are given in honor of
Allen and Viola's 66th wedding anniversary.*