#### REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Serving Absecon - Galloway Township Rev. Heidi Link – Pastor Brian Conover - Music Director

### Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / 10:00 AM

### \* CALL TO WORSHIP

L: The time of waiting and watching is here! Are you ready?

P: We are waiting for the Lord of peace to open our hearts.

(singer sings part of "Prepare")

L: The Lord of Peace comes to you this day to free you from your sins.

P: We are ready to receive the precious blessings of God.

(singer sings part of "Prepare")

L: Come, let us worship God who loves us dearly.

P: Let us praise God for God's blessings in our lives. AMEN

(singer sings part of "Prepare")

https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/1856/classic-worship-connection-december-3-2017 words and music for "Prepare" by B. Conover

### \* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.** 

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires. *Silence is kept for reflection*.

Loving and forgiving God,

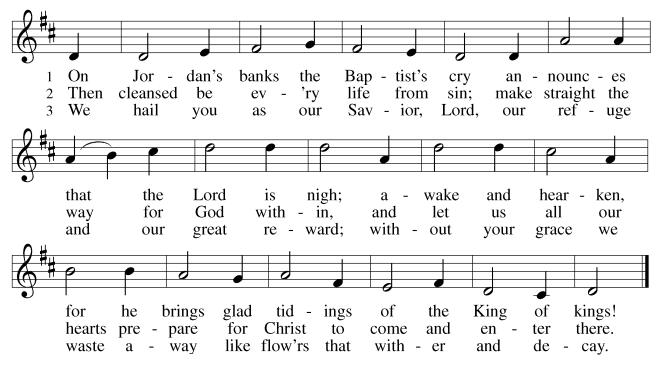
we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, + comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** 

<sup>\* -</sup> Congregation Stands (If for any reason you are unable to stand during the service, please remain seated.)

#### \* OPENING SONG

## On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry



Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

### \* GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

### And also with you.

Let us pray: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.** 

#### FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

(for text of reading, see back of bulletin)

### **RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

- <sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your land, O LORD; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.
- <sup>2</sup>You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out | all their sins.
- <sup>8</sup>I will listen to what the LORD God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

# <sup>9</sup>Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.

- <sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
- <sup>11</sup>Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
- <sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.
- <sup>13</sup>Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

# Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



### BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

**P:** The second candle symbolizes faith and is known as the candle of Bethlehem as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

Let us pray: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. John the Baptist calls all people to prepare the Lord's way for the kingdom of heaven is near. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Baptize us with the fire of your Spirit, that we may be a light shining in the darkness welcoming others as Christ has welcomed us, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever. **Amen.** 

### \* HYMN OF PRAISE



### \* THE WORD OF GOD: Mark 1:1-8

A reading from the Gospel of Mark:

(for text of reading, see back of bulletin)

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

### **SERMON**

#### CONGREGATIONAL SONG

# Comfort, Comfort Now My People



- 1 "Com fort, com fort now my peo ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
- 2 For the her ald's voice is cry ing in the des ert far and near,
- 3 Straight shall be what long was crook-ed, and the rough er plac es plain!



Com-fort those who sit in dark-ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load. call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the king-dom now is here. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits his ho - ly reign!



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim God's par - don waits for them! that Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! for God a way! Now pre - pare glo - ry For the of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er. Let the val - leys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him! and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1611–1684; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829–1878, alt. Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

### \* 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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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

God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. We pray especially for . . . (*current local, national, or international issues of peace or justice may be named*). Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work (*especially Nicholas of Myra*). Make their generous lives an example for all. 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.

### SPECIAL MUSIC

### \* OFFERING SONG - "WE ARE AN OFFERING"



### \* OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray: Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **Amen.** 

### \* THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

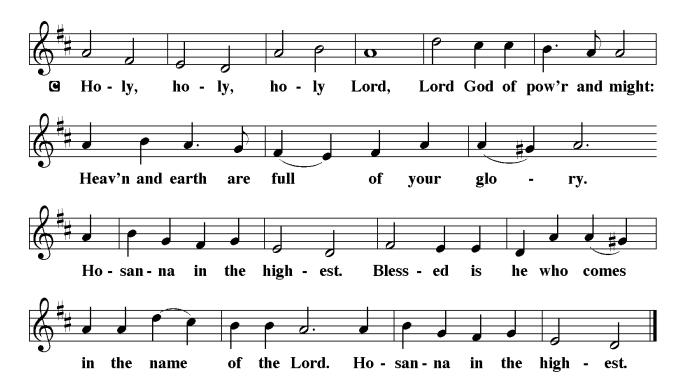
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

### It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary...(Here the minister continues with the preface appropriate to the day or season, concluding:) we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



### \* WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### \* 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

### \* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here. Come, eat and drink.

We come.

### DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

(BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS who believe that the risen Christ is present in the Eucharist to forgive sin and renew life are invited to share at your pew. Please remain there, kneel as you are able, and receive the elements using the communion packet you were given. If there are other special needs, please speak to an usher.)

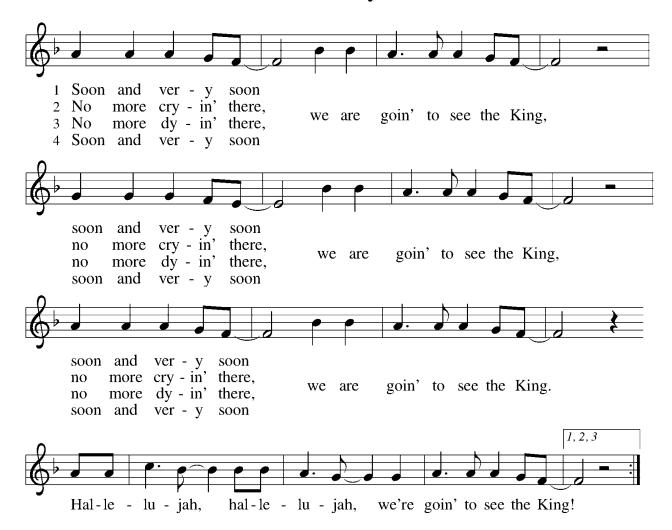
#### \*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

### \* POST COMMUNION HYMN

### Soon and Very Soon



### \* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray: Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.** 

#### \* BLESSING

And now a Blessing: The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, + now and forever. **Amen.** 

### \* CLOSING SONG

# Fling Wide the Door



### \* SENDING

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

### Thanks be to God.

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