THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY Mills River, North Carolina

The Third Sunday of Advent December 15, 2024

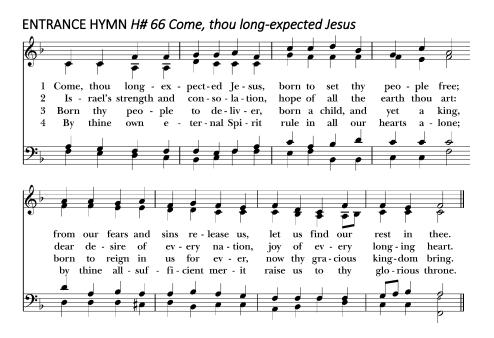
Sacred Place +++ Sacred Space Please observe silence after the altar candles are lit



PRELUDE Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring A bell rings three times; the people stand. John A. Dempsey

Hymns and service music are found in the blue 1982 Hymnals (H) and the purple Glory to God hymnals (GTG) They are in the racks under the chairs.

PRESENTATION OF THE WORD



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH GTG #85 Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah, V. 1-3

Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness. He shall bring salvation to Israel; God fulfills the promise.

Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness. He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.

Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness. Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant	Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People	And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for
	ever. Amen.

COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

SONG OF PRAISE

GTG #103 Come Now O Prince of Peace

Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

Come now, O God of Love; make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

Come now, and set us free, O God, our Savior. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

Come, hope of unity; make us one body. Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant	The Lord be with you.
People	And also with you.
Celebrant	Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen*.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

A reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah.

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

People	Thanks be to God.
PEODE	Thanks be to dou.

CANTICLE 9: The First Song of Isaiah

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Surely, it is God who saves me; *
I will trust in him and not be afraid.
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For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, * and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing * from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say, * Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name; Make his deeds known among the peoples; * see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, * and this is known in all the world.

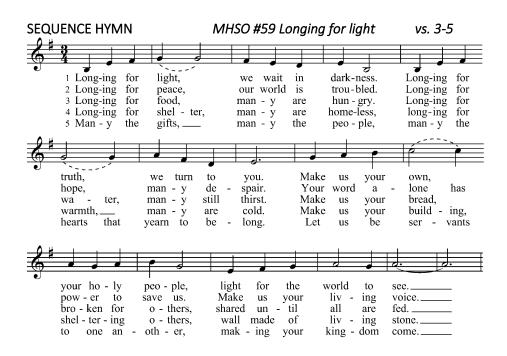
Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, * for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

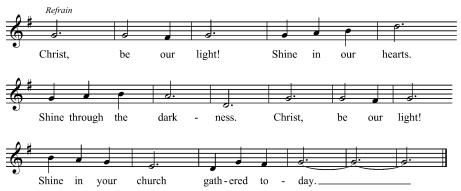
SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Reader	The Word of the Lord.
People	Thanks be to God.





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GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

DeaconThe Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.PeopleGlory to you, Lord Christ.

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unguenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Deacon	The Gospel of the Lord.
People	Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE SERMON The Rev. Tracey Kelly

THE 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,

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader People of God, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Let us pray to the Lord singing,



CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen*.

People	And also with you.
Celebrant	The peace of the Lord be always with you.
THE PEACE	

GATHERING GTG #95 Prepare the Way of the Lord Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord, and all people shall see the salvation of our God.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

OFFERTORY O Little Town of Bethlehem

Craig Duncan

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

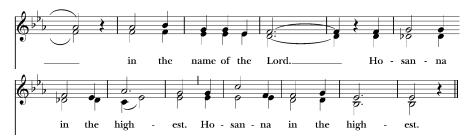
Celebrant	The Lord be with you.
People	And also with you.
Celebrant	Lift up your hearts.
People	We lift them to the Lord.
Celebrant	Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:





We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

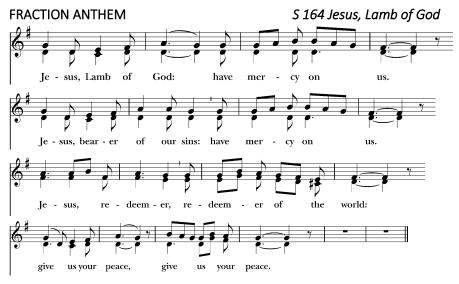
By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *AMEN*.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD



COMMUNION INVITATION

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

(The bread and wine are given to the people. Please indicate that you would prefer a gluten-free wafer by placing your hands with palms together when you come up to receive Communion.)

COMMUNION HYMNGTG #79Light Dawns on a Weary WorldLight dawns on a weary world when eyes begin to see all people's

Light dawns on a weary world when eyes begin to see all people's dignity. Light dawns on a weary world: the promised day of justice comes. The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs; the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing! We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

Love grows in a weary world when hungry hearts find bread and children's dreams are fed. Loves grows in a weary world: the promised feast of plenty comes. The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs; the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing! We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

Hope blooms in a weary world when creatures, once forlorn, find wilderness reborn. Hope blooms in a weary world: the promised green of Eden comes. The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs; the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing! We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, as all the world in wonder echoes shalom

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen**.

H #76 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry RECESSIONAL HYMN On Bap tist's 1 Jor - dan's bank the cry an 2 Then cleansed be ev erv breast from sin; make 3 For thou Lord, art our sal va tion, our 4 То heal the sick stretch out thine hand, and 5 All praise, e ter nal Son, to thee, whose noun - ces Lord nigh; wake and heark - en. 1 that the is a 2 straight the way for God with - in, and let each heart pre 3 re - fuge, and our great re - ward; with out thy grace we forth, and 4 the ner stand; shine let thy bid fall - en sin -5ad doth thy ple free; whom with the Fa - ther vent peo glad for tid - ings 1 he brings of the King of kings. 2 pare where such might - y а home а guest may come. 3_waste a way like flowers that with er and de - cay. 4 light store earth's own true love li ness once more. re 5 we dore and Ho ly Spi rit more. а ev er ø

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Yoga with Kelly, Fri. Dec. 20 10:00 am Advent Movie Series Tues. Dec 17, 5:30 pm Mills River Presbyterian Holiday Party, Sunday, Dec.15, 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service, Tues., Dec. 24, 4:30 pm Christmas Day Service, Wed., Dec. 25, 10:45 am

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