

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. John 1:6

Reformation Lutheran Church

"Gathered by Christ to be and make disciples." 2100 Manor Ridge Dr. Lancaster, PA 17603 Pastor Mark Chavez

> www.reformation-nalc.org Phone: (717) 947-4284

Email: pastor@reformation-nalc.org

Third Sunday of Advent

Dec. 17, 2023



UPCOMING SPECIAL SERVICES

Fourth Sunday of Advent – Dec. 24 (9:00 a.m.) Nativity of Our Lord - Dec. 24 (7:00 p.m.) First Sunday after Christmas – Dec. 31

WORSHIP LEADERS

	Dec. 17	Dec. 24 (a.m.)	
Assit. Min./ Comm. Assit.	Kandi Null	Ivan Wittel	
Lector	Kandi Null	Ivan Wittel	
Ushers	John & Kandi Null	Ken & Joan Hollinger	
Musician	Dcn. Arica Demme	Dcn. Arica Demme	
Altar Guild	Kathy Miller	June Kreider	
Sound Tech.	Terry Miller	John Null	
Offering Counters	Sandy Tippett/Lee Mills	Beth Birchall/Ken Hollinger	
Livestream	Clarence Clark/ Marianne Burkholder	Ray Kneisley	
Communion Prayers	Fred & Crystal Lepley	Jerry & Susie Kramer	
Nursery/Class	Melissa Cuff/	Marianne Burkholder/	
ages 4-5 Susie Kramer		Susie Kramer	

	Dec. 24 (p.m.)
Assit. Min./Comm. Assit.	Dcn. Arica Demme
Lector	Isaac Demme
Ushers	Jack McCarthy/Bob Thomas
Musician	Joanne Thomas
Altar Guild	Rose Keller
Sound Tech.	Terry Miller
Livestream	Ray Kneisley/Lee & Judy Mills
Communion Prayers	Lee & Judy Mills

Dec. 10, 2023 ATTENDANCE - 60

ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE USHERS.

"CRY ROOM AVAILABILITY"

For parents with children younger than one year, there is a "Cry Room" near the front entrance if you would need to use that during the worship service.

Please maintain silence for meditation as soon as the candles are lit until the beginning of the service.

TODAY'S COMMEMORATION Daniel and the Three Young Men



Daniel the prophet and the Three Young Men—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—were among the leaders of the people of Judah who were taken into captivity in Babylon. Even in that foreign land they remained faithful to the one true God in their piety, prayer, and life. On account of such steadfast

faithfulness in the face of pagan idolatry, the Three Young Men were thrown into a fiery furnace, from which they were saved by the Lord and emerged unharmed (Daniel 3). Similarly, Daniel was thrown into a pit of lions, from which he also was saved (Daniel 6). Blessed in all their endeavors by the Lord—and in spite of the hostility of some—Daniel and the Three Young Men were promoted to positions of leadership among the Babylonians (Dan 2:48–49; 3:30; 6:28). To Daniel in particular the Lord revealed the interpretation of dreams and signs that were given to King Nebuchadnezzar and King Belshazzar (Daniel 2, 4, 5). To Daniel himself the Lord gave visions of the end times.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The third candle of the advent wreath is (often) pink in color, setting it apart from the other candles. The reason for the distinct color is that the third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday – a word that means rejoice. This Sunday marks the point in the season in which there are more candles lit than not lit and draws upon the proclamation of John 1:5, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." The power of Jesus Christ gives cause for us to rejoice.

The candle we light this morning is called the Sheperds' Candle. As St. Luke records the birth of Christ, he tells us that "in that same region there were shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night." (Luke 2:8) Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to them with glad tidings of Jesus' birth, followed by a whole company of angels.

When the angels left, the shepherds went with haste to Bethlehem and found the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes just as the angel had told them. They told Mary about their heavenly visit and Mary treasured their message in her heart. When the shepherds returned, they glorified and praised God for everything they had heard and seen.

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

The assembly stands (if able)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: In the name of the Father, and of the & Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: AmenMatthew 28:19b;[18:20]

P: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our Sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

[Hebrews 10:22]

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 124:8

P: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalm 32:5

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

- P: Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C: O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
- P: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this Lord, unto us all.

5

C: Amen

ENTRANCE HYMN

Joy to the World



Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748 Tune: George F. Handel, 1685-1759, adapt.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Let us pray . . .

As we light the third candle of our Advent wreath we give thanks to you, O God, for the shepherds whom your angels visited. May we, like them, be quick to run to Jesus. Cause us to find him in Word and Sacrament. Grant us peace and joy when we find Jesus in these places so that we, like the shepherds, may continue through life rejoicing in you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.



- A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray | to the Lord.
- Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.
- A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray | to the Lord.
- C Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.
- For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray | to the Lord.
- Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.
- A Help, save, comfort, and defend us | gracious Lord.
- C Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you. C: And also with you. 2 Timothy 4:22

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, give ear to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our hearts by your gracious visitation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S SERMON



The First Reading is from the 61st chapter of Isaiah

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

1"The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion — to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. 4 They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸"For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their offspring shall be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul 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 like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its

sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the LORD God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations."

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Brief silence for reflection.

The Psalm is read responsively.

Psalm 126

- ¹ When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
- ² Then our mouth was 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; we are glad.
- ⁴ Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like streams in the Negeb!
- ⁵Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy!
- ⁶ He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

Brief silence for reflection.

The Second Reading is from the 5th chapter of 1 Thessalonians

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

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 prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil. ²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Brief silence for reflection.

The assembly stands (if able) to welcome the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 1st chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

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

¹⁹And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." ²²So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to 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." ²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

The assembly stands (if able).

HYMN OF THE DAY

Prepare the Royal Highway



Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. hymnal version, 1978 Tune: Swedish folk tune, 14th cent. BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN 76767766

NICENE CREED

C: 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

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

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

A brief silence.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these or similar words:

P: Lord, in your mercy, C: hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. C: Amen

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always. C: Ar

C: And also with you.

The people greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

OFFERTORY

Now Thank We All Our God



Text: Martin Rinkhari, 1385-1649; in Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878 Tune: Johann Crüger, 1398-1662 NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT 67 67 66 66

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Let us pray. Blessed are you,

C: O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

P: The Lord be with you. C: And also with you. 2 Timothy 4:22

P: Lift up your hearts. C: We lift them to the Lord. [Colossians 3:1]

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

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

[Psalm 136]

P: It is indeed right and salutary . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

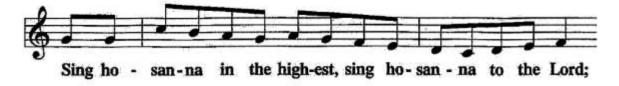
SANCTUS

Isaiah 6:3

G Ho - Iv. ho - Iv. ho - Iv. Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored:



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.





PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- P: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
 - In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.
 - We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood. C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD Matthew 26:26-28: Mark 14:22-24: Luke 22:19-20: 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

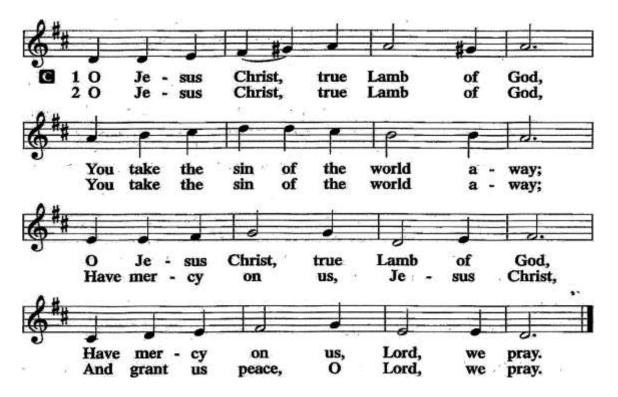
- P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
 - In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My & blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

LORD'S PRAYER Matthew 6:9-13

- P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.
- C: 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 assembly is seated.

AGNUS DEI John 1:29



INVITATION TO COMMUNION AND TO PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

We invite you to pray silently for someone in the congregation while sitting in the pew before or after receiving Communion or while in line waiting to receive. Two people will be at the back of the sanctuary praying for everyone at this time.

All are welcome to receive the Lord's Body and Blood who are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine.

HOW WE COMMUNE: When you come forward the pastor will first give you bread to eat. Then, take a cup from the tray. The assistant will pour in wine to drink. Afterward, you will place the empty cup in the water in the plastic container at the side aisle, and return to your seat.

If you are unable to consume wine, you may commune with only the bread. Unbaptized and those who have yet to receive first communion may come forward to receive a blessing. Signify by holding your hands to your chest instead of reaching out for the bread and wine.

The assembly stands (if able) when everyone has received the sacrament.

BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. C: Amen



POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

God of mercy and grace, we thank you for feeding us with the sacrament of Christ's body and blood – that which strengthens us in faith and assures us of new life now and in eternity. As we wait and watch for the return of the Messiah in these last days, continue to feed us with the life-giving bread and the cup of salvation.

C: Amen

BENEDICAMUS and BENEDICTION

P: Let us bless the Lord. C: Thanks be to God. [Psalm 103:1]

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favor and & give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26

C: Amen

Music: Bernadette Farrell

Text and music @ 1993 Bernadetic Farrell, admin. OCP Publications

Christ, Be Our Light



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98 96 and refrain

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES

In your daily prayers please remember those listed below:

Homebound

Debbie Binder
Donna Hiltebeitel
Elizabeth Larsen
Sonya LaGamba
Earl and Janet Harry

Additional prayers

Tom Scherer - ALS

Pr. Ted Hummel – bone marrow cancer **Brittany Merrill** – chemo, radiation & surgery

Donald Moyer – chemo

Meghan Mills – colitis remission

Chuck Landis - cancer

Courtney Tito – kidney transplant Lauren Didyoung – brain cancer Jo Zimmerman – dementia

Dorothy Mills – bleeding esophageal

varices

Patricia Stroup – pulmonary disease Anthony Riggi – custody of daughter Jeanne Zeller – pancreatic cancer Pr. Amy Schifrin – bone infection

BJ Wolfgang – broken arm

Anne Gleason – rehab for broken leg
Pat McDermott – securing a diagnosis
Josephine Benny – recovering from a fall
Candy Whitney – recovering from shingles

Rose Keller – chemo

Christine Caporaletti – recovering from

back surgery

Family of Don Graybill – mourning his death

Cathy Holford – find housing or shelter

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES (conti.)

- **To request a prayer** during today's worship for a person not on the list above, "print" the name on the prayer request form on the table in the back of the nave before worship.
- Names on the additional prayers list will be printed for one month.

 Contact Rose Keller (717) 333-1448 or (rose.a.keller@gmail.com) or

 Pr. Mark at (pastor@reformation-nalc.org) to keep a name listed for
 another month, to add a new name, or to remove a name.
- **Prayer Chain participants** are emailed prayer updates. Contact Judy Mills (pabluebird1242@icloud.com) to be included in the updates, or request removal from the chain.

STEWARDSHIP

Offering plates are not passed during the service. They are on a table in the back of the nave. You may also mail checks to Sandy Tippett (3377 Horizon Drive, Lancaster PA 17603) or make a donation online at https://www.reformation-nalc.org/giving/.

MINISTRY CONTACTS

	_	
Altar guild	June Kreider	717-285-3241
Announcements	Ray Kneisley	717-449-9155
Assistant ministers	Judy Mills	717-468-7571
Coffee Time	Joan Hollinger	717-684-8584
Funeral Luncheons	Rose Bennett	717-468-8106
Lectors	Judy Mills	717-468-7571
Luther Lager League	Pastor Mark	717-823-7739
Prayer Requests	Judy Mills	717-468-7571
Purls Shawl Ministry	Judy Mills	717-468-7571
Sound	Chaz Stroup	717-684-2760
Ushers	Rose Keller	717-333-1448

CHURCH COUNCIL OFFICERS AND LIAISONS

President	Ken Hollinger	717-951-0323
Vice President	Melissa Cuff	610-457-6412
Secretary	Kim Wittel	717-468-7917
Treasurer	Fred Lepley	717-629-6371

Christian Ed	Melissa Cuff	610-457-6412
Communications	Betty Scheich	717-464-6759
Mission Team	Melissa Cuff	610-457-6412
Fellowship	Ken Hollinger	717-951-0323
Finance/Stewardship	Fred Lepley	717-629-6371
Property	Jack McCarthy	717-471-5855
Social Ministry	Terry Miller	717-898-0001
Worship & Music	Kim Wittel	717-468-7917

CORE VALUES OF THE NALC

Christ-Centered

We confess the apostolic faith in Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures. We affirm the authority of the Scriptures as the authoritative source and norm, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged" (Formula of Concord). We accept the ecumenical creeds and the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses to the Word of God.

Mission-Driven

We believe that the mission of the Church is to preach the Gospel and to make disciples for Christ. We believe that making disciples — in our congregations, in our communities and nations, and around the world — must be a priority of the Church in the present age.

Traditionally-Grounded

We affirm the ecumenical creeds and the faithful witness of the Church across time and space. We endorse the form and practices of the universal Church that are consistent with Scripture, particularly the office of the ministry and the tradition of worship under Word and Sacrament. We seek dialogue and fellowship with other Lutheran churches and with faithful Christians of other confessions.

Congregationally-Focused

We strive to be a church body that is organized to facilitate the ministries of local congregations in a posture of servanthood and a spirit of partnership, through the provision of resources, connections and information.



2655 Innsbruck Drive, Suite A New Brighton, MN 55112-9304

Phone: 651-633-6004 Toll-free: 888-551-7254

Website address: www.thenalc.org

"NOTES FROM WORSHIP OR SUNDAY SCHOOL"