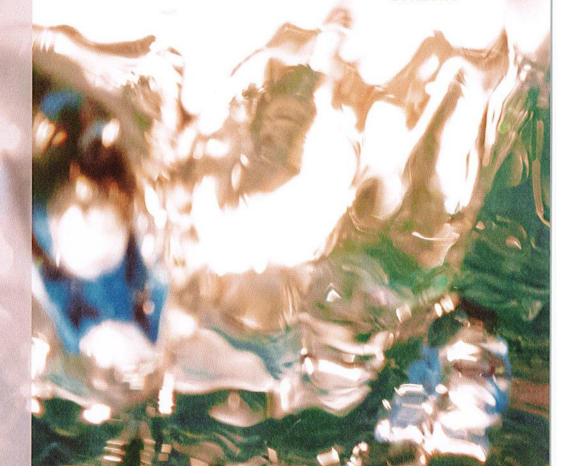


LUKE 3:16



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155 www.stpaulsyork.org Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George YouTube: St. Paul's Lutheran Church - South George St. York

WELCOME Thank you for being with us.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 188 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

Offerings Offerings are received during the liturgy. They are presented along with gifts of bread and wine at the altar. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org or use the QR Code provided.

Restrooms are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery which is accessed through the double doors front right.

The Nursery is accessed through the front right double doors. The liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery. Parents are asked to stay with their children. Quiet activities are also available in the Narthex for infant through preschool children to use with an adult.



Lutheran Church in York, PA - St. Paul's Lutheran...

stpaulsyork.org

An AED/Defibrillator unit is located in the Good Shepherd room. It is placed on the wall left side of the Springettsbury door exit.

Parents, please do accompany your child to the restroom during the liturgy and wait with them. This is a way for us to practice good safety protocol within our building.



The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God In honor of Tina Llorente's birthday by the Llorente Family and In honor of Bean's 17th Birthday by Joe Kinkella

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Children Choirs Director	Julianna Jones	jjones.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
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Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	tweikert.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Third Sunday of Advent December 15, 2024 Holy Communion 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Musical Setting #5 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

arr. Franklin Ashdown

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen

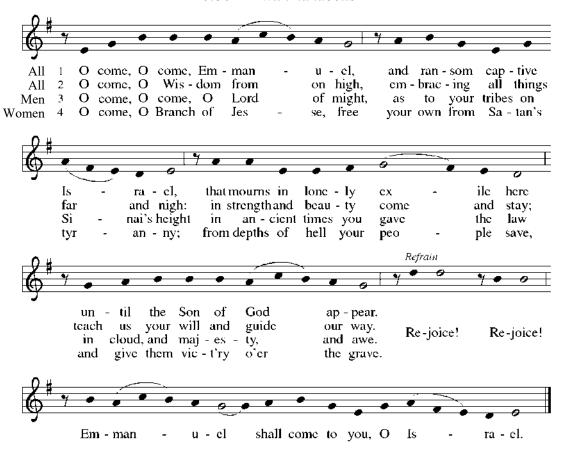
Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

ENTRANCE HYMN

O Come, O Come Emmanuel (ELW 257)

10:30 AM with handbells



- All 5 O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. *Refrain*
- Women 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. Refrain
 - Men O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one: refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new. Refrain
 - All 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Refrain

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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.

KYRIE

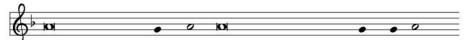






For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.





For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



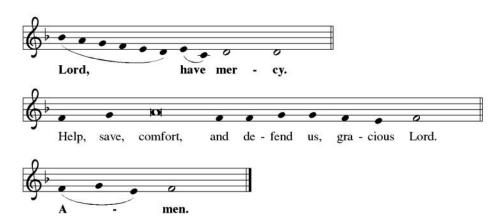




For this ho-ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor-ship and praise,



Continued on next page...



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sit FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14-20

back page

PSALMODY

8:00 AM sung by soloist

10:30 AM Sung by Choir

- 1 Surely it is God who saves me; I shall trust and have no fear. For the Lord defends and shields me and his saving help is near. So rejoice as you draw water from salvation's healing spring; in the day of your deliv'rance thank the Lord, his mercies sing.
- Make God's deeds known to the peoples; tell out his exalted name.

 Praise the Lord, who has done great things; all his works God's might proclaim.

 Zion, lift your voice in singing; for with you has come to dwell, in your very midst, the great and Holy One of Israel.

Sung by all



Repeat alletvia

Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e-ter-nal life.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 3: 7-18 back page

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Reep

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

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

A brief silence.

Eternal God, give courage to your people and empower them as they take risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who are committed to proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We pray for all who are sick or hurting, especially . . . Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here (*specific ministries may be named*). Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We thank you for the gift of time, especially time spent with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy, receive our prayer.

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ., our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.

The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

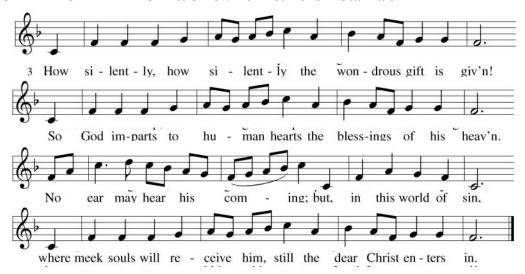
Sit

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

8:00 AM Organ God's Son Has Come J. S. Bach 10:30 AM Chancel Choir Every Valley John Ness Beck

OFFERTORY

O Little Town of Bethlehem Stanza 3



OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Merciful Father,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.

THANKSGIVING

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you.

Through him you created all things, and in him you take delight.

He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb.

He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

It is he, our Lord Jesus, who fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

It is he who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said:

Take and eat; this is my body, broken for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This is my blood poured out for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we lift this bread and cup before you, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

And we ask you:

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your Church;

gather into one all who share this bread and wine;

fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth,

that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ.

Through him all glory and honor are yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church both now and forever. **Amen**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

FRACTION RITE a brief silence is kept

Sit

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Holy Communion at St. Paul's Church is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

Procedure for receiving Communion:

- 1. Come to communion using the center aisle.
- 2. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.
- 3. Take your place along the chancel step.
- 4. The ministers will bring the host and wine to you.
- 5. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.
- 6. Return to your pew using the side aisle.

COMMUNION HYMNS Fling Wide the Door (ELW 259)



Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (ELW 254)



- 1 Come, thou long-ex pect-ed Je-sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
- 2 Born thy peo-ple to de-liv-er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee. born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.



Is -rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art, By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Wait for the Lord (ELW 262) Sung unaccompanied The hymn is repeated until all have communed



Stand

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

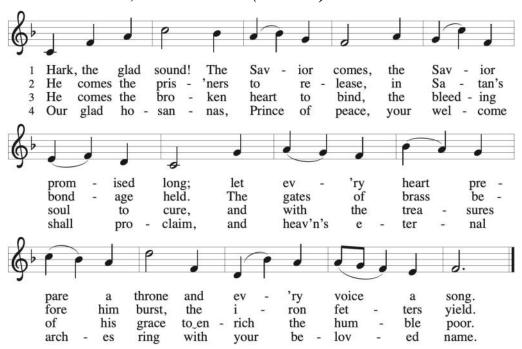
POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Almighty God, in the Eucharist you cleanse us from our sins and prepare us for the coming of your Son. Make us ready always to welcome Him into our hearts as we receive you Holy Sacrament; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. Amen

HYMN Hark, the Glad Sound! (ELW 239)



DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Toccata on Veni Emmanuel

Andrew Carter

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This Week at St. Paul's

Sunday, December 15, Advent 3							
8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist						
9:15 AM	Sunday School for children						
10:30 AM	Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream						
6:30 PM	PM AA Meeting—Community Room						
Monday, December 16							
6:30 PM	Council Meeting						
Tuesday, December 17							
9:30 AM	Pantry						
6:00 PM	Christmas Decorating						
6:00 PM	Create—Preschool thru Grade 6						



Wednesday Advent Vespers December 18 6:00 PM Dinner 7:00 PM Vespers

Wednesday, December 18

10:00 AM Preschool & Pastor—Nave
10:30 AM Bible Study—Christ Hall

6:00 PM Advent Dinner

7:00 PM Advent Vespers– Harp

Thursday, December 19

6:00 PM English Class— Community Rm

6:30 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Chancel Choir

Friday, December 20

6:00 PM Family Christmas Movie Night Sunday, December 22, Lessons & Carols

We begin an adjusted Christmas Worship schedule

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Room

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	Assisting Minister	Crucifer		Live stream	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Guild
12/15			Ann Ulrich		Riese		Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder
	,		Tristan Ericson				Tonya Cave, Sandy Dickensheets

Book Club meets at St. Paul's—January 16th 3:00-4:00 the Book Club will meet at the church to discuss The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell by Robert Dugoni. All are welcome!

Food Pantry Needs: Plastic and paper grocery bags. Peanut butter.

Monetary donations can be placed in a "special" envelope marked "Pantry".

Volunteers on: Tuesday (distribution day), Thursdays (food delivery days) and some Sundays (pantry stocking days) Contact Teresa Rohrbaugh, Patty Snyder, Ken Hinkle, or the church office (717-843-8155) with questions.

The "Pantry Grocery Cart" in the Good Shepherd Room is for bags and food donations only.

The Flower sign up sheet is now open for 2025.

Please sign up on the sheet on the Springettsbury entrance bulletin board and fill out the sentiment sheet. One vase is \$35.00

Hurricane Relief Offerings to help meet needs with Hurricane Helene and Milton should be placed in a special offering envelope and marked "Hurricane Relief". All donations will be given to the ELCA Donations for Disaster Response Fund.



Christmas Worship Schedule

Please note the alternate service times throughout the Christmas Season

Sunday December 22, Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:30 AM

Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion

Joy to the World

The Ringing in of Christmas

Organ, Chancel Choir

Tuesday, December 24, Christmas Eve - The Nativity of Our Lord 4:00 PM

The Holy Eucharist
Lighting of Hand Candles
Children's Choir, Cello Duet, Violin
7:00 PM

The Holy Eucharist Lighting of Hand Candles Handbells, Organ, Chancel Choir, Piano Duet, Violin, Brass

Wednesday, December 25, Christmas Day 10:30 AM

The Holy Eucharist

Sunday December 29, First Sunday after Christmas 10:30 AM

The Holy Eucharist with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Sunday January 5, Second Sunday after Christmas 9:15 AM

Pancake Breakfast (Men's Group Cooking)

10:30 AM

The Holy Eucharist Jazz Quartet leading the liturgy Advent 3 C, 2024

Zephaniah 3:14-20 Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18

The nation was undergoing much upheaval. People had grown tired of the political land-scape. Leadership was veering off in directions that permitted God's people to think that just about any behavior was acceptable. For some, the current leadership couldn't vacate soon enough, for others the looming new administration was coming too quickly. Neither the existing leadership nor the one on the horizon could withstand a press secretary like John the Baptist. John called out each group, the ordinary citizens, the tax collecting rich, and the military soldiers. He told the citizens to get busy sharing from their abundance. He told the tax collectors to collect no more than the amount owed and the implicit, to collect from those trying to avoid paying their share. He told the soldiers not to extort monetary payment for protection or favors and to honestly protect the citizenry from all forms of aggression. In one word "repent" John's message gets summed up. Heaven knows repentance is needed!

In the ancient days when God's people and society as a whole had drifted away from God and God's ways of equity and justice, of worship and prayer, a prophet would arrive on the scene and cry out to the people. The cry would generally begin with a call to repentance for past wrongs and erred ways. The prophet would call the community to task. Why do you act in such ways and grieve the Lord God whose desire it is to love you and care for you and bring you out of hardship to enjoy relationship, creation, and peace. Don't you want relationship, creation and peace?

That is where we find John the Baptizer in this morning's reading. In the wilderness, in the place of hardship, and he is crying out to the people, that we need to change. We can't rely on the relationship of others to God. It isn't hereditary. Grandma's faithfulness doesn't get passed on to you along with the china and crystal and her favorite earrings and necklace. John calls those who came out to see "vipers." Snakes he calls them. They claim Abraham as their ancestor so they don't think that they have anything to worry about. Their snaky ways irritated John. They need to repent. They need to bear fruit. They need to answer to the one who is mightier, the One who is coming. Like all of the great prophets of old, John points to an age to come. "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."

Oh how we need preaching like John. Our community and society drift further and further from God. In the Old Testament the work of God's Spirit is most fundamentally the work of life giving. Murder and killing are not God's ways. Revenge and retribution are not in God's arsenal. The Prophet Zephaniah says that God has turned over a new leaf. God is not distant, permitting people to think that they can get away with anything they like, but God, says the prophet Zephaniah, is in your midst! God is nearer than you can comprehend.

The Spirit of God is something that we will hear a lot about during this cycle of the lectionary. Luke makes use of the Spirit of God throughout the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. The words used in the Nicene Creed have a way of getting to the heart of how Luke understands the Spirit of God. "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life." The Spirit is life giving. If you want to know where God is at work, where the Spirit is alive and well, simply seek out where and what and how things, words and actions are life giving.

It is through such life giving fruit bearing work, words, and actions that the Spirit of God is recognized; that the nearness of God can be grasped, seen, and experienced.

During this season of Advent we are called to return to God. We often think of this as a Lenten theme. But it is at the heart of Advent? The questions we ask; how do we repent of our own sinful ways? How do we invite others to return to God? Luke's response: "through ethical non-exploitative action for the benefit of others!" That is a fancy way of saying "bear fruit."

A few folks gathered yesterday to give thought to the work of Bridge of Hope and to discern if it is time for us to actively assist a family as they move from homelessness to a reliable sheltered existence and life. New volunteers are helping off load the delivery truck on Thursday for the restocking of the Food Pantry. Clothing is brought to the church and taken to Union Lutheran Church to help with their community clothes closet. Tuition money is sent to Tanzania so that a member of our sister congregation can receive training as an Evangelist at Mbeya Bible College. 2025 calendars *Experiencing Tanzania* are given out to tell the story of a people needing a medical facility and finances to fund its construction. These are just a few examples of how the St. Paul's congregation is at work bearing fruit, drawing people closer to God, making a way for others to experience God's loving embrace. And you are part of it all. You have gathered here again to confess sin and call upon the mercy of God. And you are not alone, we are all here. We are repenting and preparing for the One who is coming.

Advent is about bearing fruit, seeing need and acting accordingly. Advent stirs up in us the life giving Spirit of God, calling us out of our selfish ways as we prepare to meet the Mighty One, Christ Jesus. He comes to us in bread and wine, words and water, sermon and song and as the child of Bethlehem. He is that one that will teach in the temple, call a group of followers to learn from him, support him, share in life with him. He is the one that will be unjustly sentenced to death and die on a cross. This One is needed by the world, by people we know, by neighbors and friends who are drifting.

The nation and our society will not change or do what is right on its own. The world has always needed prophets to call God's people and nations out of self-delusional ways and actions, back to the way of God. John cried out to people about the one who is coming. They were filled with expectation. He wanted them to be ready for God's son Jesus. Jesus comes and calls us out of our self-delusional ways and actions. He woos us into relationship through Baptism and fills us with his Spirit to live lives that are life giving. John's good news doesn't answer any why questions put forth from the snaky people in the Judean wilderness. John simply and boldly exhorts them to bear fruit. We need prophetic words calling us to repent and turn to God, and God's life giving way.

"So, with many other exhortations, John proclaimed the good news to the people." Amen.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The 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.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The 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 18 as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I 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.

²⁰At 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.

Psalmody: Isaiah 12:2-6

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6Do 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.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

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? 8Bear 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. 9Even 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."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" 11 In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." 12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." 14Soldiers 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."

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John 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. 17His 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 unquenchable fire."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.