

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2017



THE LESSON Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The LORD God's spirit is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim release for captives, and liberation for prisoners, ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and a day of vindication for our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³to provide for Zion's mourners, to give them a crown in place of ashes, oil of joy in place of mourning, a mantle of praise in place of discouragement. They will be called Oaks of Righteousness, planted by the LORD to glorify himself. ⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins; they will restore formerly deserted places; they will renew ruined cities, places deserted in generations past. . . .

⁸I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and dishonesty. I will faithfully give them their wage, and make with them an enduring covenant. ⁹Their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants among the peoples. All who see them will recognize that they are a people blessed by the LORD.

¹⁰I surely rejoice in the LORD; my heart is joyful because of my God, because he has clothed me with clothes of victory, wrapped me in a robe of righteousness like a bridegroom in a priestly crown, and like a bride adorned in jewelry. ¹¹As the earth puts out its growth, and as a garden grows its seeds, so the LORD God will grow righteousness and praise before all the nations.

THE RESPONSE Psalm 126

¹When the LORD changed Zion's circumstances for the better, it was like we had been dreaming.

²Our mouths were suddenly filled with laughter; our tongues were filled with joyful shouts.

It was even said, at that time, among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them!"

³Yes, the LORD has done great things for us, and we are overjoyed.

⁴LORD, change our circumstances for the better, like dry streams in the desert waste!

⁵Let those who plant with tears reap the harvest with joyful shouts.

⁶Let those who go out, crying and carrying their seed, come home with joyful shouts, carrying bales of grain!

THE EPISTLE 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always. ¹⁷Pray continually. ¹⁸Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹Don't suppress the Spirit. ²⁰Don't brush off Spirit-inspired messages, ²¹but examine everything carefully and hang on to

what is good. ²²Avoid every kind of evil. ²³Now, may the God of peace himself cause you to be completely dedicated to him; and may your spirit, soul, and body be kept intact and blameless at our Lord Jesus Christ's coming. ²⁴The one who is calling you is faithful and will do this.

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

⁶A man named John was sent from God. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. ⁸He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light. . . .

¹⁹This is John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?"

²⁰John confessed (he didn't deny but confessed), "I'm not the Christ."

²¹They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

John said, "I'm not."

"Are you the prophet?"

John answered, "No."

²²They asked, "Who are you? We

need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³John replied,

"I am a voice crying out in the wilderness,

Make the Lord's path straight,
just as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴Those sent by the Pharisees ²⁵asked, "Why do you baptize if you aren't the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

²⁶John answered, "I baptize with water. Someone greater stands among you, whom you don't recognize. ²⁷He comes after me, but I'm not worthy to untie his sandal straps." ²⁸This encounter took place across the Jordan in Bethany where John was baptizing.

MOVING TOWARD THE MANGER

THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND
DWELT AMONG US.

JOHN 1:14

ADVENT, WEEK THREE: THE WORD BECAME FLESH

Melody.....Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland 7777

P The virgin's Son, our Lord Jesus, is called Emmanuel, a name that means "God with us." We light the third candle to celebrate the coming of Jesus, who is God himself in human flesh, born among us to be our Savior.

(Three candles are lit.)

Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.

P We often turn from the light of God to follow our own sinful desires.

C **Almighty God, forgive us and fill us with the light of your love. Help us to reflect your light in our lives each day.**

P In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

C **He was in the beginning with God.**

P All things were made through him,

C **And without him was not any thing made that was made.**

P In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

C **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

P And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

C **And we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh—
Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

Daily Bible Readings for the Third Week of Advent

Sunday.....	John 1:1-5
Monday.....	John 1:14-18
Tuesday.....	Galatians 4:4-7
Wednesday.....	John 3:19-21
Thursday.....	1 Thessalonians 5:4-11
Friday.....	John 8:44-50
Saturday.....	1 John 4:1-6