

**Year B; Third Sunday of Advent**  
**Liturgical Elements**  
**Developed for December 17, 2023**  
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

**Lectionary Texts**

- Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
- Psalm 126
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- John 1:6-8, 19-28

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*from Psalm 126*)

One: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, they were like those who dream.

**All: Then, their mouths were filled with laughter, and their tongues with shouts of joy;**

One: then it was said among the nations,

**All: “The Lord has done great things for them.”**

One: The Lord has done great things for them, and they rejoiced.

**All: Restore the fortunes of those who suffer, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.**

One: May those who sow in tears

**All: reap with shouts of joy.**

One: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,

**All: they shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. Let us worship God!**

**CALL TO CONFESSION** (*from John 1*)

John the Baptist cried out in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of the Lord,” as the prophet Isaiah had said. Let us, also, make our ways straight and make way for the coming Messiah. Let us confess where we have wavered from his path.

**SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*from 1 Thessalonians 5*)

**Gracious and merciful God, your appointed apostle, Paul, writes that we shall rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances. We, though, can let circumstances draw us down and from joy to misery and despair. We can forget to pray and to let other things distract us from a conversation with you. We can fail to offer thanks to you for the abundance you provide us or to others for the care they offer us. Forgive our sins, and restore us to wholeness. Do not hide your face from us, but continue to show us favor. Amen.**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON** (*from 1 Thessalonians 5*)

The Apostle Paul also writes that the one who calls us, the God of peace, is faithful and will sanctify us entirely. He will prepare our spirit and soul and body to be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord. Follow him and his ways, and know that you are forgiven. Friends, hear and believe this good news.

**All: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*from Isaiah 61*)

**Lord of hosts, you rule over heaven and earth and could choose to focus on those beings you have made perfect, but you have chosen to concern yourself with this broken world and sinful people. You long to bring righteousness and justice to this world and to offer joy and abundance to your people. With thanks for your many blessings, we offer these gifts for your work. Guide your church in using them for your intentions. In the name of the Savior of the World. Amen.**

Elements in this document are based on the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV). Some portions are direct quotes; though, quotation marks and designations are usually left out for ease of use in bulletins and other worship resources. Usually, the Call to Worship is based upon the Psalm of the day and follows that Psalm very closely but modifying it for a leader vs. congregation responsive setting if necessary. Other elements usually deviate more significantly from the text. While they may quote very short sections, they are generally written in the theme of the text. Elements usually designate the book and chapter from which they are derived.

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