

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

Rev. Tripp Brogdon, Pastor

Harold Culbert, Liturgist

Mavis Stephens, Choir Director

Dr. Jeff Gilbreath, Pianist

Prelude "Rejoice with Exceeding Great Joy!" Dr. Gilbreath

We Gather in God's Presence

Pastor's Welcome

Call to Worship:

One: The Promised One of God brings good news to the oppressed and binds up the brokenhearted.

All: We are witnesses to the light of Christ!

One: The Promised One of God proclaims liberty to captives and release to prisoners.

All: We are witnesses to the light of Christ!

One: The Promised One of God comforts all who mourn and gives a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

All: Rejoicing always, praying without ceasing, and holding fast to what is good, we are witnesses to the light of Christ! Let us worship God!

*Hymn "When Morning Gilds the Skies" #667

Gathering Prayer

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession:

Merciful God, you love justice; why, then, do we persist in wrongdoing? You have given us the gift of your Spirit; why, then, do we quench the Spirit among us? You have given us the words of the prophets and the Word himself; why, then, do we despise and ignore what we have heard from you? You have sent the light into the world; why, then, have we loved darkness rather than light? Forgive us. Restore us. Till and tend us as your garden until righteousness and praise spring up, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen. (Silent Confession)

Hymn of Response "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (x2) #91

Assurance of Pardon:

One: In Jesus Christ, the Lord has done great things for us!

All: Even if we have gone out in tears, God brings us home shouting for joy. Thanks be to God: we are forgiven!

Advent Candle of Joy

Gloria "Angels We Have Heard on High" (v.1 & Refrain) #113

We Listen for God's Word

Prayer for Illumination Harold Culbert

Scripture Reading Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Harold Culbert

Anthem "Advent Prayer" Choir

Scripture Reading John 1:6-8, 19-28 Rev. Brogdon

Sermon "John the Doppelgänger" Rev. Brogdon

*Hymn "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart" #804

We Respond to God's Word

Affirmation of Faith: Apostles' Creed

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Call for the Offering

Offertory "What Child Is This?"

*Doxology #606

*Prayer of Dedication

We Are Sent into the World

*Hymn "Arise, Your Light Is Come" #744

*Benediction Rev. Brogdon

Postlude

“Good Christian Men, Rejoice”

Dr. Gilbreath

*Please rise in body or spirit.

Bold and italic type indicates our shared response.

Calendar of Events:

Mon., Dec. 18 10:00 AM Color Group
11:30 AM-12:30 PM Advent Chat "N" Chew. In the Fellowship
Hall. Bring your own lunch. Study Focus: Hope

Sun., Dec. 24 10:00 AM Worship, no Sunday School
Christmas Joy Offering
4:00 PM, Christmas Eve Service

During Advent the pages on display during the Advent candle lighting were colored by our Coloring Group.

To Our Guests:

Welcome! It is a blessing to have you in worship with us today. We warmly invite your participation in the worship, fellowship, and ministry of our congregation. The pastor is available to answer any questions you might have after worship, by email or phone. There is a place for you here.

Live Streams and recordings of each week's worship service are available on our YouTube channel. For more information, visit us at www.standrewdecatour.org

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Scripture Reading, Harold Culbert: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion-- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. 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. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being 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 with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Scripture Reading, Rev. Brogdon: John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.