

**AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH  
305 Livingston St, Filley, NE  
Pastor LuRae Hallstrom**

**THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
December 13, 2020**

**PLEASE MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING.**

Radio Frequency – 107.1 FM. Facebook @ American Lutheran Church - Filley, NE  
Financial contributions can be brought to Sunday morning worship or can be forwarded to American Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 66, Filley, NE 68357. You may also do on-line giving at [www.filleylutheranchurch.com](http://www.filleylutheranchurch.com).

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

We gather together in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 126)

<sup>1</sup>When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

<sup>2</sup>**Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;  
then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."**

<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

<sup>4</sup>**Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses in the Negeb.**

<sup>5</sup>May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

<sup>6</sup>**Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy,  
carrying their sheaves.**

ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING LITANY – THE CANDLE OF LOVE

P: As we light our advent candle, we thank you for the love you give.

**C: As we prepare for Christmas time, Light of the world, shine on us.**

P: As we seek to worship you shed love in our hearts.

**C: To all the people who don't know you, Light of the world, shine through us.**

*(the third Advent candle is lit)*

P: In this world of pain and darkness, help us to share your love.

**C: In our service here today, Light of the world, light the way.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Inspired by Isaiah 61:1/Luke 4:18-19).

P: God, you share with us words of hope, words of Good News.

**C: But sometimes we are unable to hear them because the source is too familiar.**

P: You call us to share the Good News with those around us.

**C: But sometimes we are unable to share, because the people know us too well.**

P: You encourage us to send messengers to other places where they will be heard better.

**C: But we can be jealous, wanting the Good News to be for us, not them.**

P: In the multitude of ways we can and have undermined your message of freedom and healing, in all the ways we have kept the Jubilee year from happening,

C: We have left the path of true wisdom and call upon your Grace to lead us back on track.

*(time of silent prayer...)*

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

P: This is the time of God's favour, God's grace continues to proclaim release to the captives, sight to the blind, Good News to the poor and freedom to the oppressed. We live as loved, forgiven and free people through the grace of God!

**C: Hallelujah! Amen.**

*(written by Rev. Gord, Worship Offerings)*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY:

P: Let us pray...

**C: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

*(Children are excused to go downstairs for Sunday School.)*

## FIRST READING: I Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

## GOSPEL: John 1:1-8, 19-28

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>19</sup> Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders<sup>[a]</sup> in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup> He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup> They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>22</sup> Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" <sup>24</sup> Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" <sup>26</sup> "I baptize with<sup>[a]</sup> water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." <sup>28</sup> This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

## MESSAGE

Pastor LuRae Hallstrom

## HYMN OF THE DAY: "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" #244

*(Words printed for meditation/reflection only - no singing.)*

1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art, dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king; born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

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## APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, 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

P: God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship. Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## 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.**

## BENEDICTION

P: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May his face shine upon you with grace and mercy. May He look upon you with favor and grant you peace. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

SENDING

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

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**WELCOME TO WORSHIP!** It's wonderful to gather as the body of Christ to worship and give thanks to God! Thanks be to God for all of you here in person, in the parking lot and on-line!

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:** Elva Parde, Mindy Jurgens, Betty Leners, Henry & Ann Leners, Delores Baehr, Dustin Fritch, our shut-ins.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to Michelle Snyder (Dec. 14), Jade Diehl, DaLena Schultz (Dec. 17).

**HAPPY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY** to Pastor LuRae & Bob Hallstrom (12-14-85) and Jesse & Amanda Farmer (12-19-15).

**AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH** has a brand new "Chromebook" for sale, purchased in September. Paid \$299 and would sell for \$275. Contact a council member if interested.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** Sunday School begins each Sunday after the Children's Sermon and is held from approximately 9:45-10:30 a.m. Classes will be divided between Preschool-1st grade and Second-Fifth grade. We are looking for two teachers for each Sunday and would prefer to have parents of students. **Please sign the sheet in the narthex for the Sundays that you are willing to help.**

**CONFIRMATION STUDENTS** - Please send your weekly November sermon notes either to: [norton\\_dan@yahoo.com](mailto:norton_dan@yahoo.com) or American Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 66, Filley, NE 68357.

### **WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING MEMORIAL SERVICE**

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit on December 13th, 2020 at 7:00 pm local time, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL), a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's WCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance and has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held, and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes, as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died and will never be forgotten.

**HELP NEEDED:** We have quilt blocks downstairs on the table in the Fellowship for people who are willing to sew them together. Thank you for your ministry!

**CHRISTIAN BOOKS** can be found downstairs on tables in the Fellowship Hall. Feel free to borrow one or more - there is no rush to return them.

**AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH WEBSITE:** You can find our church website at [www.filleylutheranchurch.com](http://www.filleylutheranchurch.com) or by scanning this QR code:



**BULLETIN ITEMS** are due by Tuesday evenings. Please call Sandy or email her at [smahleris@gmail.com](mailto:smahleris@gmail.com).

**BULLETINS EACH WEEK CAN BE FOUND** on Facebook and on our website, [filleylutheranchurch.com](http://filleylutheranchurch.com). Bulletins are also being sent out by email to everyone that we have an email address for. If you are not receiving the bulletin by email and would like it, please email Sandy at [smahleris@gmail.com](mailto:smahleris@gmail.com) with your email address.

**WORSHIP HELPERS:**

**Council** - Norm Flesner, Tanner Schmidt, Carol Frerichs, Dave Norton, Linda Searcey

**PowerPoint Preparer/Presenter** – Brenda Hippen

**Audio/Video** – Brad Frerichs

**Accompanist** – Sandy Mahler