

**SAINT THOMAS LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BLUE CHRISTMAS  
DECEMBER 13, 2023**

**OPENING**

**GREETING**

The light of our Lord Jesus Christ, the warmest of God, and the hope of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**THANKSGIVING FOR LIGHT**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you called light into being, and you set lights in the sky to govern night and day. In a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night you led your people into freedom. Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ; may your Word be a lamp to our feet and light to our path; for you are merciful, and you love your whole creation, and with all your creatures we give you glory, through your Son Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**PSALM 27**

<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup> **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
worship the LORD in the splendor of his<sup>[a]</sup> holiness.**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders,  
the LORD thunders over the mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup> **The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is majestic.**

<sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup> **He makes Lebanon leap like a calf,**

**Sirion<sup>[b]</sup> like a young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup> The voice of the LORD strikes  
with flashes of lightning.

**<sup>8</sup> The voice of the LORD shakes the desert;  
the LORD shakes the Desert of Kadesh.**

<sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD twists the oaks<sup>[c]</sup>  
and strips the forests bare.

And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

**<sup>10</sup> The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;  
the LORD is enthroned as King forever.**

<sup>11</sup> The LORD gives strength to his people;  
the LORD blesses his people with peace.

## **PRAYER**

Creator of the stars of night, bless the long hours of this night with the warmth of your presence. Come to all who suffer in any way. Grant rest to the weary, freedom to those who are burdened, and bright hope to those who despair. Strengthen us as we await your coming once again, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **READING**

Isaiah 40: 1-11, Comfort for God's People

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and proclaim to her  
that her hard service has been completed,  
that her sin has been paid for,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice of one calling:  
"In the wilderness prepare  
the way for the LORD<sup>[a]</sup>;  
make straight in the desert  
a highway for our God.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be raised up,  
every mountain and hill made low;

the rough ground shall become level,  
the rugged places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,  
and all people will see it together.  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, “Cry out.”  
And I said, “What shall I cry?”

“All people are like grass,  
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
because the breath of the LORD blows on them.  
Surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
but the word of our God endures forever.”

<sup>9</sup> You who bring good news to Zion,  
go up on a high mountain.  
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,<sup>[c]</sup>  
lift up your voice with a shout,  
lift it up, do not be afraid;  
say to the towns of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”

<sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,  
and he rules with a mighty arm.  
See, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense accompanies him.

<sup>11</sup> He tends his flock like a shepherd:  
He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart;  
he gently leads those that have young.

***Comfort, Comfort Now My People – Lloyd Risser***

## **READING**

Revelation 22:1-5, Eden Restored

**22** Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are

for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup>No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. <sup>4</sup>They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup>There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

## **READING**

John 1:1-5, The Word Became Flesh

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

## **REFLECTION - Pastor Mary Metzger**

**SILENT PRAYER** – Lighting Candles – Prayer Concerns – Laying On of Hands

## **BLESSING**

May God bless you and keep you.

May God's holy darkness enfold you and grant you rest.

May God nourish a seed of hope among us.

**Amen.**

***Silent Night*** – Lloyd Risser

## **DISMISSAL**

The peace of Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**