

DECEMBER 10, 2023

9:00 AM

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT



ST. MARTIN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

606 W 15TH STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS

WWW.SAINTMARTINS.ORG

LOVE, SHARE, & SERVE BOLDLY.

No matter where you find yourself on your faith journey—join us!

Here you have found a church home where believers congregate to encourage each other and grow spiritually in an abundant relationship with the Lord. At St. Martin's, we promote and value an inclusive fellowship. Whether you are young, old, gay, straight, single, married, partnered—from all walks of life, backgrounds, and cultures—we welcome you!

We welcome you to our Family Worship, a casual and reflective service of togetherness. The Holy Spirit gathers us around the means of grace - the saving Word of God and the sacraments. From the table of communion where Jesus Christ comes with forgiveness, life, and salvation, God sends us out to share the good news and to care for those in need.

Families with small children may enjoy playing with toys on the Prayground rug in the Narthex. The nursery is open for children 0-4 years. The joyful noise of our young ones is always welcome in this space. Hearing Assistance Devices are available in the Narthex or you can listen through your smartphone. The ushers are happy to help you.

*Notes in italics offer directions about the service. **The people's responses are in bold.***

PRELUDE

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME

Please take a moment to greet your neighbors as we begin to worship together.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light.

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand. Amen.

The first, second and third Advent candles are lit

MUSICAL REFLECTION

We share a piece to invite us into consideration of scripture and worship through different voices.

We can sometimes feel lost and lonely during advent, anticipating Christmas but also shiftlessly caught between the weariness of the past year and the coming season. Peter Mayer's "Stables" is a heartfelt articulation of hope kindled gently in a place of exhausted loneliness.

STABLES

PETER MAYER

In Bethlehem a manger waits	For a stable hopes in love alone
Long ago and so today	And knows that love's the answer
Where hatred-weary people pray	O Love, the prophet's only word
Love will come and lay there	The only lesson left to learn
And so do countless stables stand	The only end of heaven's work
In hearts as harsh as desert lands	And the only road that goes there
Rough shelters in the wind and sand	Love that sees with mercy's eyes
That love may come and stay there	Holds its arms out open wide
Love that opens fists of hate	Threads its loom with separate lives
Heaps up gold on beggars' plates	And weaves them all together
Love that shows a kindly face	So may the lamps of stables glow
To enemies and strangers	Brightly that their light may go
And the walls of stables tremble so	For miles in the darkness, so
When the winds of fear and judgment blow	Love will find its way there

GREETING

May God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, be with us as we worship today.

Amen

PRAYER

Let us pray together. **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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

READING

JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²²Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ”

as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SONG

Please be seated. Children are invited to come forward for the children's time with the Pastor.

WE ARE WAITING FOR JESUS

JESUS BRINGS PEACE

1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below each staff. The first staff begins with a '1' indicating the first line of the song. The lyrics are: '1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.' The second staff continues with 'We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.' The third staff continues with 'Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.' The fourth staff concludes with 'We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.'

CHILDREN'S TIME

MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

Please stand as you are able.

Prayer cards, which can be found in the pew pockets, are collected by the ushers during the hymn. Prayer requests may also be sent via email or text message to prayer@saintmartins.org.

I WANT TO WALK AS A CHILD OF THE LIGHT

HOUSTON

1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to

fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous - ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with

light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain

In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the

day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the

cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

PRAYERS

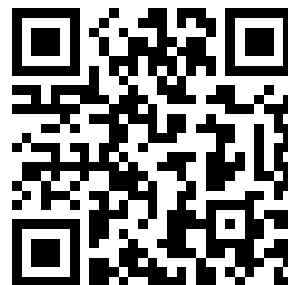
Each petition ends with: Merciful God, receive our prayer.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

*St. Martin's and its ministries are supported
by our offerings of ourselves, our time and our possessions.
Now we give as God has so graciously
given to us. To donate electronically,
go to saintmartins.org/giving or scan the QR code.*



MUSICAL OFFERING

THE RAINBOW CONNECTION

Why are there so many songs about
rainbows
And what's on the other side
Rainbows are visions, but only illusions
And rainbows have nothing to hide
So we've been told and some choose to
believe it
I know they're wrong, wait and see
Some day we'll find it, the rainbow
connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me
Who said that every wish would be heard
and answered
When wished on the morning star
Somebody thought of that and someone
believed it
Look what it's done so far
What's so amazing that keeps us stargazing

PAUL WILLIAMS & KENNETH ASCHER

And what do we think we might see
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow
connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me
All of us under its spell, we know that it's
probably magic
Have you been half asleep and have you
heard voices?
I've heard them calling my name
Is this the sweet sound that called the
young sailors?
The voice might be one in the same
I've heard it too many times to ignore it
It's something that I'm supposed to be
Someday we'll find it, the rainbow
connection
The lovers, the dreamers and me

OFFERING PRAYER

Please stand as you are able.

Let us pray.

God, you have given us so much and we thank you for your generosity. Please use these gifts we bring to make our world better.

Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,
our Salvation and our Hope,...

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, and resurrection...
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever. **Amen**

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.**

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Our communion table is open to all. Everyone is welcome to receive communion regardless of age or denomination. Please come forward to receive the bread then pick up a cup to receive wine. Gluten free wafers are available if requested. If you prefer to remain in your seat, please pick up a communion cup in the narthex or ask an usher to let the communion assistants know. A Stephen Minister will be in front near the pulpit to offer healing prayer during communion. You are invited to light a prayer candle on the table near the altar.

MUSIC AT COMMUNION

GUIDING LIGHT

All day permanent red
The glaze on my eyes
When I heard your voice
The distance caught me by surprise again

And I know you claim
That you're alright
But fix your eyes on me
I guess I'm all you have
And I swear you'll see the dawn again

Well I know I had it all on the line
But don't just sit with folded hands and be-
come blind
Because even when there is no star in sight
You'll always be my only guiding light

Relate to my youth
Well, I'm still in awe of you

MUMFORD & SONS

Discover some new truth
That was always wrapped around you

But don't just slip away
In the night
Don't just hurl
Your words from on high

Well I know I had it all on the line
But don't just sit with folded hands and be-
come blind
Because even when there is no star in sight
You'll always be my only guiding light

If we come back and we're broken
Unworthy and ashamed
Give us something to believe in
And you know we'll go your way

TABLE BLESSING

Please stand as you are able.

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you today, tomorrow and always. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

Generous God,

in bread and cup you have revealed your glory

for all people to see together.

Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim

your good news of liberation and release,

brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please be seated.

The children are dismissed at 9:45am to go to the Chapel.

BLESSING

Please stand as you are able.

The God of peace bless you,

the love of Christ sustain you in hope,

and the anointing of the Spirit + remain upon you

now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

THIS JOY

1 This lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
2 Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
3 Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;

oh, oh,

this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;

oh,

this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine,
ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine,
Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine,

oh,

let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

DISMISSAL

Let's leave here to love, share and serve boldly!

And give thanks to God. Amen!

POSTLUDE

SERVING TODAY

Pastor Ellen Williams - *preaching/presiding*

Kathy Edgar - *assisting minister*

Carey Henderson, Nora Friedrich - *communion assistants*
acolytes

Virginia Haas - *Stephen Minister*

Tim O'Brien - Director of Music

Austin Haller - Associate Director of Music

Andrew Fuhrman, drums;

Darin Layne, guitar; Jay Clement, bass - *musicians*

Eddie Jennings - *video*

Mike Kaase - *sound*

Norm Hummell - *ushers*

Ann Henry, Bill Grosskopf, Connie Grosskopf - *Altar Guild*

Susan Sossamon - *Welcome Center*

Janis Daemmrich - *Fellowship Snacks*