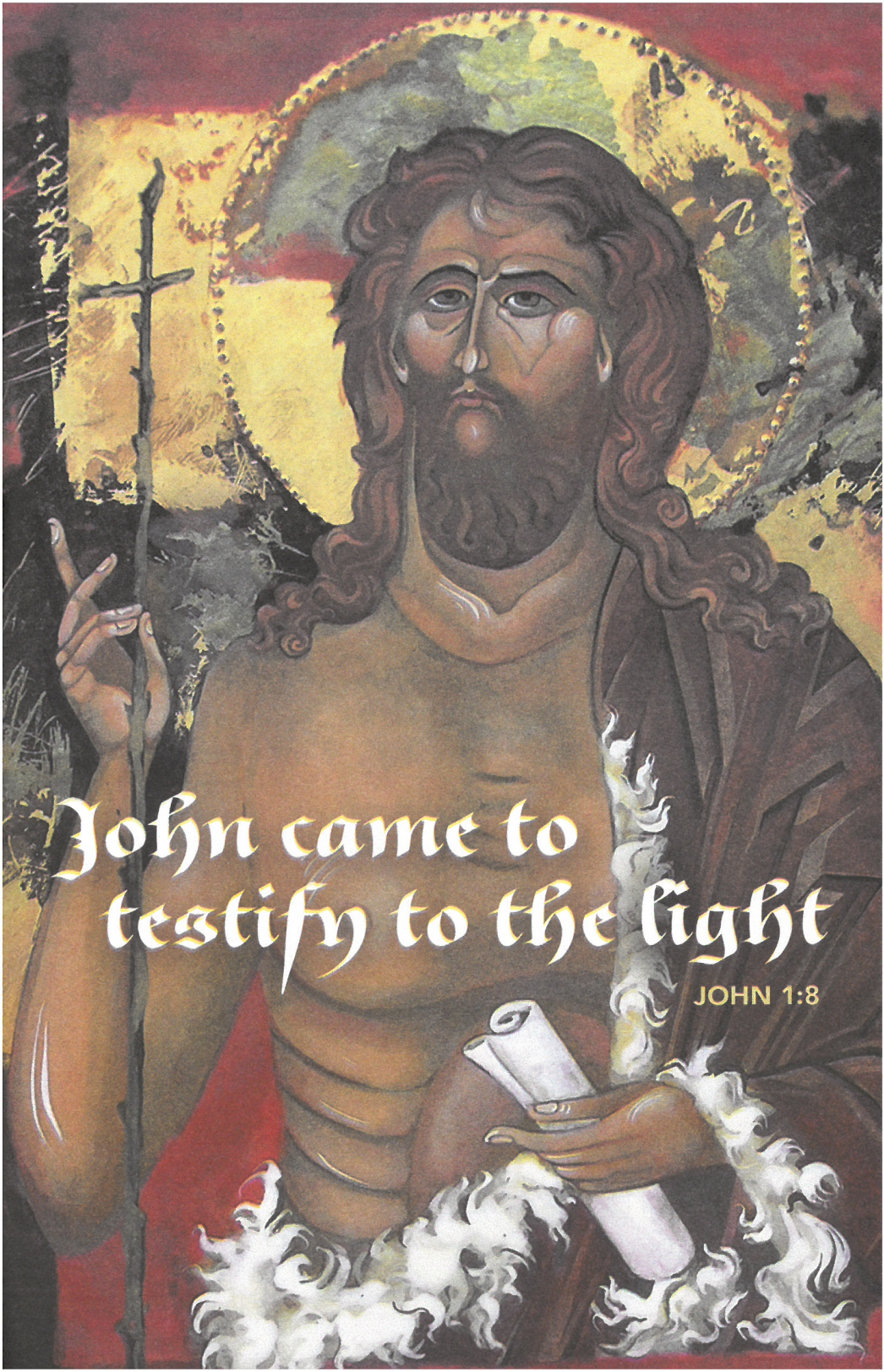

John came to
testify to the light
JOHN 1:8

Highland Lutheran Church

38809 NE 41st Ave. La Center www.HighlandLutheranChurch.com 360.263.2302

Welcomes You

Sunday, December 13, 2020
Third Sunday of Advent

WELCOME to worship today!

There will be no refreshments following worship.

"Rejoice always," begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe," go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Welcome

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Lord God,
stir up the wills of your faithful people, 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.

Music for Reflection

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Lector: Pastor Erik

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

L: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.

Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.

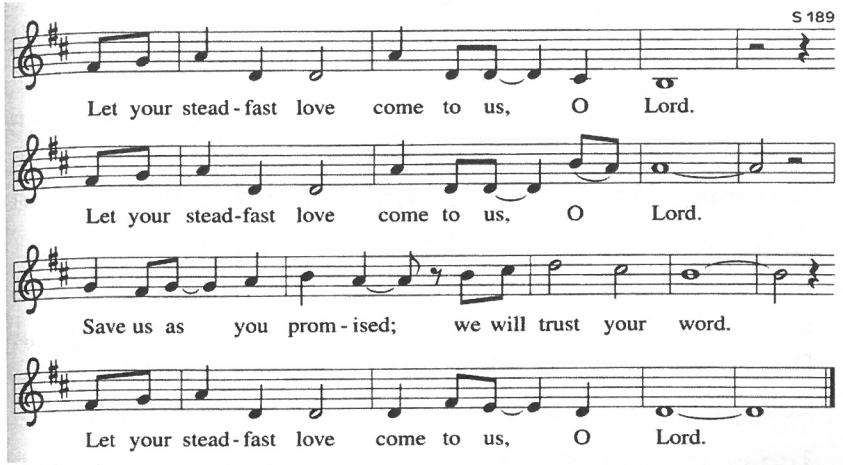
Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

L: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord,
C: Thanks be to God.

~Message~

Hymn of the Day *Solo*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Today we pray for the Lord's care: for those impacted by the Coronavirus and for the nation as we seek racial harmony. Also for: Laurel Mate, Billie Rebello, Derry Lounsbury, Pauline Morrison, Dan Smith, Robert Collinger, Scot Leppenan, Brian Dooney, Daniel Vickoren, Topanga Howell, Jake Culvert, Evvy Allen, Doyle Seale, Britney Thompson, Bruce Cowan, Nathaniel Cowan, Judy Briggs, Bill Raybell, & Anders Johnson~

Today we thank God for the lives of those marking special days this week.

Birthdays: 12/17 Bette Morton~

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.

THE OFFERING

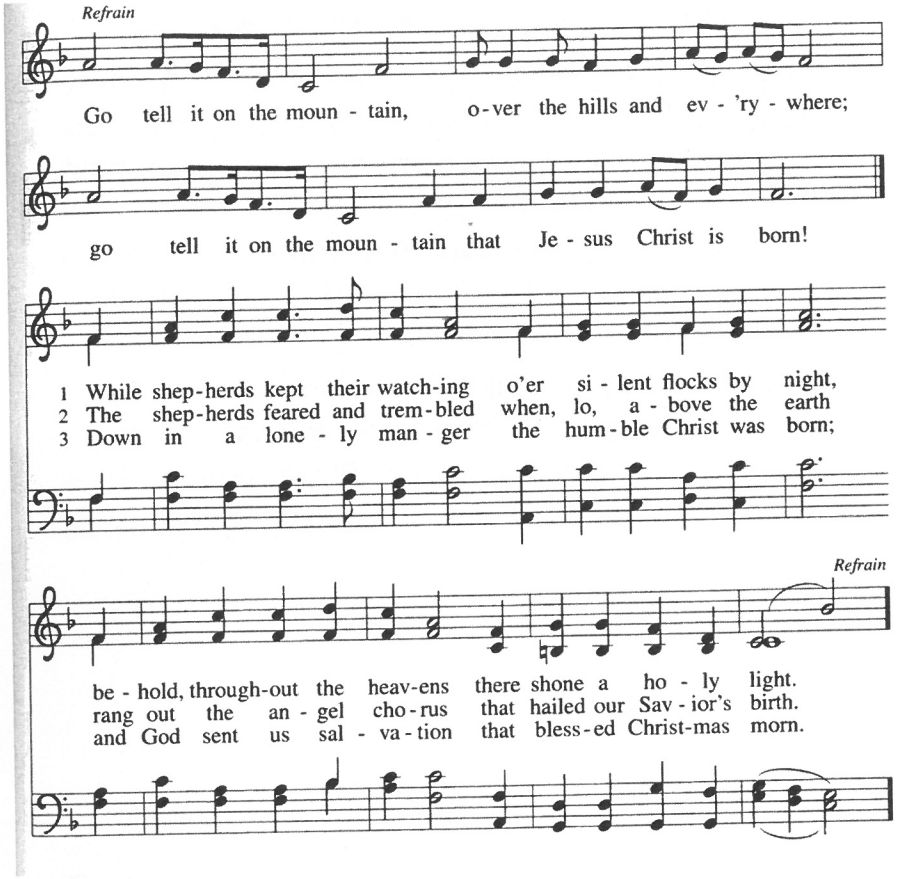
We invite members and friends to give in response to God's grace among us. Our offering is a sign of caring for the work of the Gospel and is a significant act of worship.

If you wish to make an offering to the church, our mailing address is:
Highland Lutheran Church
38809 NE 41st Ave,
La Center, WA 98629

you can also give digitally through our website, highlandlutheranchurch.com
or through the GivePlus app,
available on Android and Apple phones

Blessing

Sending Hymn **ELW 290** *"Go Tell It on the Mountain"*



Announcements

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Announcements

Plans for Christmas Eve at Highland…

Living Nativity!

Services will be at 4pm & 5pm on Christmas Eve*.
Service will be BRIEF (15-20 minutes), just enough time to share the Christmas story with Curly the camel (thank you, Jeff!), pray together, and sing Joy to the World!
Services will be held outside under the covered area (dress warmly!) We ask that everyone wear a mask and observe physical distancing.

(*there will be no Christmas Day service this year)

Opportunities to help locally!

We have a **giving tree** from Friends Next Door located in the narthex. Please take a tag or two and bring back unwrapped gifts with the tag attached. This year you can also go online to https://bit.ly/3fAabYH and take a "virtual tag." You will still need to return your gift to one of the tree locations (Highland Lutheran, the La Center Church in downtown LC, Sadie & Josie's Bakery, Stone Hill Coffee, Caring Corner, & Bethany Vineyards) no later than Friday, December 18th. Thank you!

*Friends Next Door is also looking for donations of unopened tape and wrapping paper this year.

Blessings Bags are here again! They are located in the narthex to the church. Please feel free to drop by and grab one or two.

Also, Social Concerns is having its annual **socks & underwear drive.** Please see the bin located next to the Blessings bags in the narthex.

(If you would like to pick up some Blessings bags, donate to the sock/underwear drive, or pick up some tags from the giving tree and you don't have a key to the church, please contact Lori or Pastor Erik to make arrangements to gain entrance, as the building is closed with the exception of Sunday service. Lori can be reached at 360-953-9987. Pastor Erik can be reached at 360-213-9873. Thanks!)

Opportunities for year-end giving:

Year-End Offering to *Highland Church*
Many people like to make a year-end gift to the church, like a gift to Jesus on his birthday! (I've been told there may be additional tax benefits to non-profit donations this year thanks to the C.A.R.E.S. Act, but you should check with your accountant about the particulars). Our treasurer says that thanks to careful control of spending, faithful and generous giving by our community, and the PPP loan, our church finances are stable. We are projected to end the year with a loss... but not nearly as severe as one might have imagined amidst the pandemic. Your donations continue to fund our amazing church and help fulfill God's work! Donations can be mailed at any time, or as more people are doing, donations can be made online through our website Highlandlutheranchurch.com

FIRST READING: 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;
[2]to proclaim the year of the
LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of
our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
[3]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.
[4]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.

[8]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.
[9]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.
[10]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.
[11]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.

Psalm 126

or Luke 1:46b-55

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 [not printed]

GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7]He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. [8]He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

[19]This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" [20]He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." [21]And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." [22]Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" [23]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.
[24]Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. [25]They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" [26]John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, [27]the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." [28]This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Next Sunday's Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55 *or* Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38.

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