

ADVENT

A TIME OF WAITING

**St. Matthews Church**

WHERE COMMUNITY GATHERS AND GROWS

December 17, 2023

## Advent 3

Sunday, December 17, 2023

(\* indicates the assembly stands)

### Gathering

Prelude	<i>"Trio on Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland"</i>	J.S. Bach
Words of Welcome & Service Announcements		
*Confession and Forgiveness (see page 4)		
*Hymn 249	<i>"On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist's Cry"</i>	
*Lighting of the Advent Wreath (see page 5)		
*Hymn 240 v. 1-3		<i>"Light One Candle"</i>
*Greeting		
*Kyrie		p. 98
*Prayer of the Day		
Anthem	<i>"Rejoice in the Lord Alway"</i>	Anonymous
Children's Message		

### Word

First Reading		Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalms 126 (see page 6)		(congregation sings refrain)
Second Reading		1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
*Gospel Acclamation	<i>"Alleluia!"</i>	p. 102
*Gospel Reading		John 1:6-8, 19-28
Sermon		
*Hymn of the Day 255	<i>"There's a Voice in the Wilderness"</i>	
*Nicene Creed		p. 104

\*Prayers of Intercession

**A: you receive our prayer!**

\*Peace

## **Thanksgiving**

\*Canticle of Thanksgiving

p. 219

\*Thanksgiving for the Word

\*Lord's Prayer (*Our Father, who art in heaven...*)

p. 221

## **Sending**

General Announcements

\*Blessing

\*Hymn 815

*"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"*

\*Dismissal

**A: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

*"Toccatà on Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland"*

J.S. Bach

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**"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.

## Confession and Forgiveness:

P: Blessed be the ...

Everlasting God,

**A: you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.**

**We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness  
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.**

**We are complicit in systems of exploitation.**

**We choose comfort over courage.**

**We are careless with creation's bounty.**

**Look upon us with mercy.**

**Turn our hearts again to you.**

**Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways  
for the sake of our waiting world.**

**Amen.**

## The Advent Wreath

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is 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. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath. (*Source: Sunday & Seasons*)

### Third Sunday of Advent

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.

# Psalm 126 Refrain

Hal Hopson



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## Leading Worship Today

**Minister:** Rev. Sebastian Meadows-Helmer

**Diaconal Minister of Music:** Deacon Scott Knarr

**Lector:** Kim Schaner

**Choral Scholars:** Nicole Hamilton, Hannah Swiderski, Nathalie Nasr, Dylan Siebert, John Waterfield

**Broadcast:** Andrew Weber

**Building Monitor:** Steve Dickin (519-580-8407)

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## Worship Notes

In our prayers Yvonne, Jeanette, Meaghan, Henry, Marie, Grace, Maureen and John.

## General Announcements

**Advent 4 Service:** Our regular Sunday morning 9.30 a.m. service is cancelled on December 24th. In its place at 9.30 a.m., there will be a brief 10-15 minute worship with readings, hymns and Lighting of the Advent Wreath. This service will not be live-streamed, however in its place, the Dec. 3rd Advent Carol Service will be re-broadcast.

**Painter Needed:** If you are interested in doing some painting jobs around the church, please call or email Ron Roeder (ronder30@outlook.com or 519-895-6833). Thank you.

**The 2024 Offering Envelope Boxes** are available for pickup outside the church office.



### JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

Get the newsletter and email updates on upcoming church events, announcements, reminders and service changes.

Contact [info@stmattskw.com](mailto:info@stmattskw.com) today!

**Church Fire Plan** For everyone's awareness, a copy of the Church Fire Plan for safe exit from the Sanctuary appears in the back of the worship books. Please take a moment to review for your own safety.

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Space for your notes on today's service, for your personal reflection.



## Important Information for today's worship

- **Offering:** Please place your offering in one of the offering plates in the Narthex (entranceway) upon entering. The offering plates will be presented at the High Altar during the service.
- **The Peace:** We support people's choices for passing of the peace.
- **Exiting:** At the end of the service, please remain in place until the end of the postlude.
- **Please join us for Fellowship Time** after worship in the Lower Level Hall. Use any of the staircases (Narthex, west stair tower, parking lot tower) to go down.
- **Lower Level Sanctuary Washrooms** can be accessed via any of the staircases. There is one wheelchair accessible washroom, and the rest are all-gender washrooms. A further all-gender washroom is also available via the west stair tower door (front left of the Sanctuary) on the same level. Turn right at the hallway.

## Contact Information

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The Musicians of the Kitchener-Waterloo  
Players' Association Present

*Charles Dickens'*  
**a Christmas  
Carol** 

**Sunday, December 17, 4:00pm**

**St. Matthews Lutheran Church  
54 Benton Street, Kitchener ON**

*Readers - CBC Radio's Tom Allen with special guests Andrew Craig  
Larry Larson, Cynthia Johnston Turner  
& Carmen Grant*

*Musicians - Matthew Jones conductor  
KW Youth Orchestra with soloists  
Sarah Rodriguez-Valtierra & Samuel Molina  
KW Brass  
KWSPA Strings  
Lori Gemmell harp Lina Cao guzheng  
Andrew Craig piano & voice*

**\$30** at the door. For online ticket sales scan the QR code  
or got to <https://tinyurl.com/2d4269ya>



Proceeds to support the **KW Symphony Players' Association**

# CHRISTMAS AT ST. MATTHEWS

## Worship Services

**Christmas Eve (German)**

December 24th

5:00 pm

**Christmas Eve (English)**

December 24th

7:30 pm

**Christmas Day**

December 25th

9:30 am





# St. Matthews Lutheran Church

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