So, forgive us loving God and Father, and restore unto us the joy of our salvation, and of our common life in You, for we ask these things in Jesus's name, and by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

Beloved of God, hear this good news: God's love never fails, and it is always at work to bring us back to God and one another. If we have confessed and repented of our sins, then in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

May God restore us to the joy of our common life now and always. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (liturgy on screen)

#### PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Peace of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be always with you. And also, with You

**CORPORATE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: Nicene Creed** 

#### THE BLESSING & SENDING

## Authorities we want to remember specifically in prayer this week:

MO US House of Rep District 6 – Sam Graves

MO US House of Rep District 7 – Eric Burlison

MO State House of Rep District 106 – Travis Wilson

St Peters Alderman Ward 4 – Nick Trupiano

# Our Advent Prayer

I lift my heart up to You, Lord, to thank You for the blessings You shower on me each day. You are the 'joy of my soul.' I know that in Your great love, I am held and protected by You.

I pray and listen to the good news You send; I ask and feel the healing. I am freed by You from the things in this world that let me hide from You. I rejoice, I rejoice, down to my soul. Help me to prepare my heart to be open and able to receive Your immense love.



# **FAITH COVENANT MINISTRIES**

LOVE | LIFE | LORDSHIP | LEADERSHIP

faithcovenantstl.com

#### Purpose Statement:

We exist to glorify God by serving as a conduit for the grace of God whereby faith the Love, Life, Lordship and Leadership of the Kingdom of Heaven is revealed and expanded to all nations.

#### **Mission Statement:**

We desire to be a multi-cultural, multi-generational conduit of the grace of God to be used to fulfil our purpose, for the glory of God.

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 430 St. Charles, MO 63302 636-373-9001

Weekly Corporate Gatherings: Sunday Worship Service- 10:00 AM

Discipleship Groups (times vary)

#### Staff:

Rev. Michael Hammond, Sr. - President & Senior Pastor Rose Hammond- Receptionist

# Order of Worship

Sunday, December 17, 2023

# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

(Congregation responses spoken together appear in **bold** print.)

#### **OPENING DECLARATION & PRAYER**

Come, let all who love the Lord enter God's house for worship! There are many who are poor and wounded and do not know of Christ's love. So, we must proclaim for all to hear the news of Jesus Christ, who died so ALL might have life and have life more abundantly. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

(Prayer) God, in Your wonderful and gracious way You sent Christ to call us to a oneness with You which we could not earn on our own. Reach into our hearts and help us celebrate Your love which knows no boundaries. In Christ we pray, Amen.

WORSHIP IN SONG (click the song title for a YouTube track)

<u>Lord of All</u> <u>Every Praise</u> <u>Here I Am to Worship</u>

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Heavenly Father, as the scriptures are read, please guide our hearts and minds to be open to the movement of Your Spirit, to listen for the ways You are calling us, and to explore how we might live more deeply into Your way, Your truth, and Your life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (NASB95)

<u>Leader</u>: This is the Word of God.

Congregation: Thank you Lord for your Holy Word

(Quiet Reflection)

SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 126 (NASB95)

Leader: This is the Word of God

Congregation: Thank you Lord for your Holy Word

(Quiet Reflection)

WORSHIP IN SONG: HYMN OF THE MONTH

O Come All Ye Faithful | View the lyrics here

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (NASB95)

Leader: This is the Word of God

Congregation: Thank you Lord for your Holy Word

(Quiet Reflection)

GOSPEL READING: John 1:6-8, 19-28 (NASB95)

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

**People: Praise to You Lord Christ** 

SERMON (10:45 a.m.) https://www.facebook.com/fcmstl

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE

The act of confessing our sin is not simply a recitation of our faults and wrongs, but also an opportunity to receive God's mercy and share in that abundant grace. Confident of God's love for us, let us confess our sins to God, first quietly and personally, then aloud and corporately. (Quiet personal confession)

Merciful God, the stories of Your faithfulness abound in Scripture, in history, and in our own lives, yet we confess that we do not continually trust You, and in Your provision and care for us.

We struggle and witness the struggles to live and thrive all around us. We have found that our joy is not fierce. We are overwhelmed by what is required of us to live for You and to love our neighbors. We go our own way, longing for joy and peace, and fail to recognize our need for communion with You and our neighbors.

(cont'd on back page)

| <u>Series: Our Spirit Waits   Message Title</u><br>Pastor Michael Hammond Sr. | 17 December 202  |
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#### "Approved to God"

## By Oswald Chambers

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. — 2 Timothy 2:15

If you cannot express yourself well on each of your beliefs, work and study until you can. If you don't, other people may miss out on the blessings that come from knowing the truth. Strive to reexpress a truth of God to yourself clearly and understandably, and God will use that same explanation when you share it with someone else. But you must be willing to go through God's winepress where the grapes are crushed. You must struggle, experiment, and rehearse your words to express God's truth clearly. Then the time will come when that very expression will become God's wine of strength to someone else. But if you are not diligent and say, "I'm not going to study and struggle to express this truth in my own words; I'll just borrow my words from someone else," then the words will be of no value to you or to others. Try to state to yourself what you believe to be the absolute truth of God, and you will be allowing God the opportunity to pass it on through you to someone else.

Always make it a practice to stir your own mind thoroughly to think through what you have easily believed. Your position is not really yours until you make it yours through suffering and study. The author or speaker from whom you learn the most is not the one who teaches you something you didn't know before, but the one who helps you take a truth with which you have quietly struggled, give it expression, and speak it clearly and boldly.