

**SECOND SUNDAY**  
OF  
*Advent*

**Second Sunday of Advent  
December 8, 2024**

# FAITH LUTHERAN

**An Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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John's Island, SC 29455

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**Ministers:** *The Disciples at Faith Lutheran Church*

**Pastor:** *The Rev. Thomas A. Cassem*

**Organist:** *Helena Bradford*

**Flutist:** *Andrea Brisbin*

## INTRODUCTION

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the LORD of hosts. Finally, all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

## WE PREPARE

## WORSHIP PREPARATION

*When you hear the Prelude, please be seated and observe silence as we prepare ourselves for the beginning of our worship service.*

## PRELUDE —

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things  
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on  
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law  
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 teach us your will and guide our way.  
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe. Re-joice! Re-joice!  
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,  
 and open wide our heav'nly home;  
 make safe the way that leads on high,  
 and close the path to misery. *Refrain*
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;  
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,  
 O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
 refresh the hearts that long for you;  
 restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
 and ransom captive Israel,  
 that mourns in lonely exile here  
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.  
 Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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## Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P God of mercy,

C **we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

P God of might,

C **we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

P God in our midst,

C **we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

P A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✝ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

C **Amen.**

## 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.**

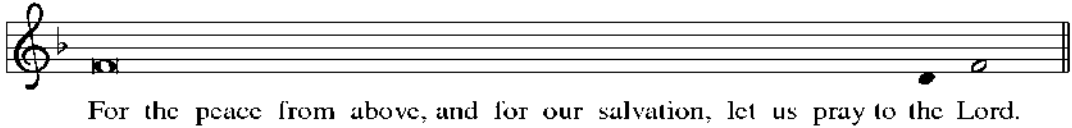
# WE PRAISE GOD

## KYRIE

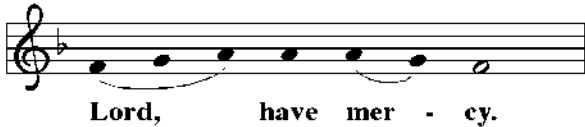
ELW pg. 138



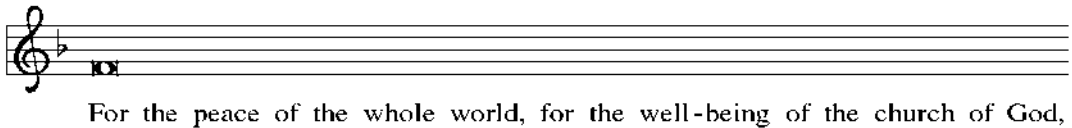
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



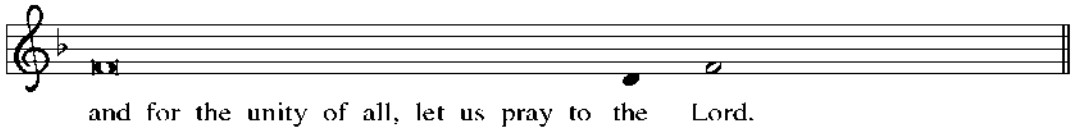
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



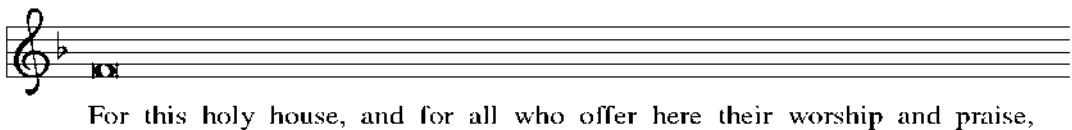
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



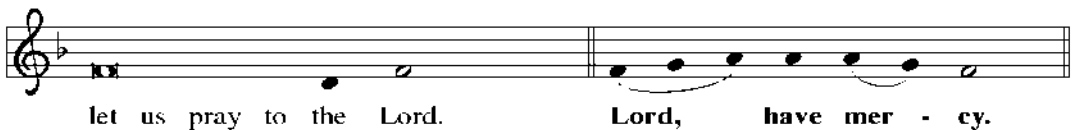
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



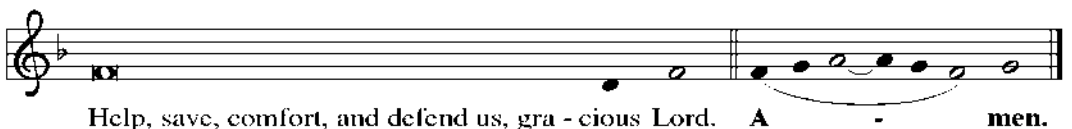
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

## We Are Waiting for Jesus



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



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.  
 Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



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

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957

Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen

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# PRAYER FOR LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH CANDLES

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

C We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.

*Light the first Advent candle.*

ELW 253  
(stz. 1 & 2)

## He Came Down



1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;  
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;  
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;  
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.  
he came down that we may have peace;  
he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN. Cameroon traditional

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

C **Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

### **First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4**

*God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means "my messenger") will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God's people, as silver and gold are refined.*

<sup>1</sup> See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup> But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup> he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**



## Psalm: Luke 1:68-79

*In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us. (Lk. 1:78)*

<sup>68</sup> Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel,  
you have come to your people and set them free.

<sup>69</sup> **You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,  
born of the house of your servant David.**

<sup>70</sup> Through your holy prophets,  
you promised of old to save us from our enemies,  
<sup>71</sup> from the hands of all who hate us,

<sup>72</sup> **to show mercy to our forebears,  
and to remember your holy covenant.**

<sup>73</sup> This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:  
<sup>74</sup> to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**free to worship you without fear,  
<sup>75</sup> holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.**

<sup>76</sup> And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

<sup>77</sup> **to give God's people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

<sup>78</sup> In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

<sup>79</sup> **to shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

## Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

*The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.*

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup> constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup> because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup> to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup> having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW pg. 142

*The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.*

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## **Gospel: Luke 3:1-6**

*John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by “repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3rd Chapter.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;

<sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **CHILDREN’S SERMON**

*All children are invited to come to the Altar steps for a special “Children’s message”.*

**SERMON**

**Rev. Thomas A. Cassem**

# WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

## HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 249

### On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounce - es  
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the  
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us  
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en.  
way for God with - in, and let us all our  
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -  
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.  
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite

Music: PUER NOBIS. European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

# **THE APOSTLES CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen**

## Prayers of Intercession

L As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

*A brief silence.*

L Refining God, move through your church. Root out practices that harm your people, and kindle a fire for sharing the gospel among bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. Lord, in your mercy,

**C receive our prayer.**

L Renewing God, transform your creation. Steer us from habits that harm what you have made and guide us in practices that preserve and restore creatures and habitats. Lord, in your mercy,

**C receive our prayer.**

L Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering. Provide comfort and strength, and nurture sustained wholeness for the future. Lord, in your mercy,

**C receive our prayer.**

L Reforming God, fill this congregation with your presence. Enrich our seasonal preparations, and bless the efforts by worship committees, music ensembles, staff, clergy, and lay leaders as they work in the weeks ahead. Lord, in your mercy,

**C receive our prayer.**

L We lift up to you all who are especially on our hearts silently or spoken.  
(*A Brief Silence for Petitions*) Lord, in your mercy,

**C receive our prayer.**

L Reassuring God, we remember those who have died and rest in you. Guide us in deep gratitude for their life, and allow us to learn from their faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy,

**C receive our prayer.**

L Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

**C Amen.**

## SHARING OUR LORD'S PEACE

*The minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.*

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C And also with you.**

# OFFERING

*Offerings given for the mission of the church. Please place offerings in basket in Narthex.*

## MUSICAL OFFERING

ELW 250

### Blessed Be the God of Israel



1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free  
2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,  
3 My child, as proph - et of the Lord you will pre - pare the way,



and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.  
the oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all;  
to tell God's peo - ple they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.



So have the proph - ets long de - clared that with a might - y arm  
that we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise,  
Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine forth and nev - er cease



God would turn back our en - c - mies and all who wish us harm.  
in ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.  
to drive a - way the gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944, based on Luke 1:68-79

Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune

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## OFFERING PRAYER

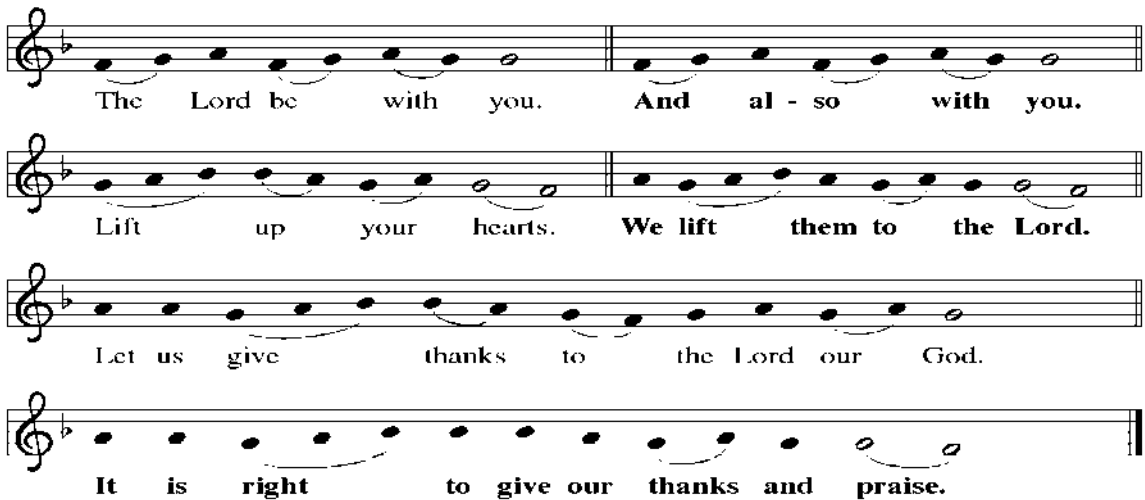
P Let us pray.

C **Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## WE RECEIVE GOD'S GIFT

### HOLY COMMUNION

#### Great Thanksgiving



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

*The presiding minister continues:*

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



# HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*The Pastor leads us in the Words of Institution (Not Printed)  
Please direct your attention to the altar.*

## LORD'S PRAYER

**P** Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C** **Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

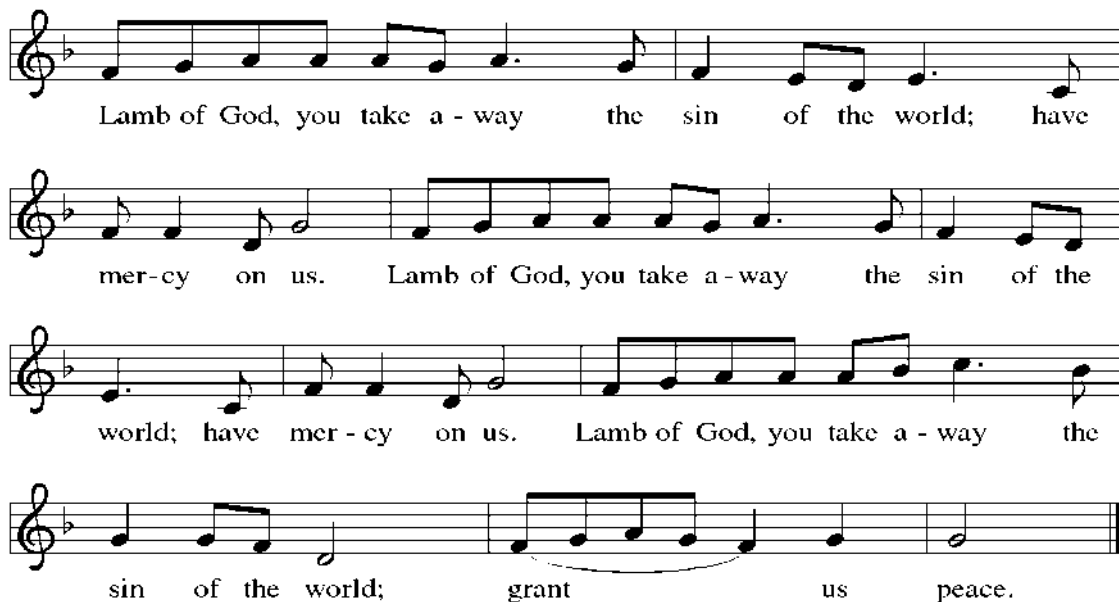
**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P The Gifts of God for the People of God.

C Thanks be to God.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

## WE RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION

### Communion Distribution

*Please be seated. All who celebrate with us the presence of the risen Christ in Holy Communion are invited to join us for this sacrament. We receive communion at the communion rail. Please remain seated until the ushers invite you to commune by pew. When you come forward, please return to your seat by the outside aisle. Children are invited for a blessing.*

*If you would like to communion brought to you in your pew, please notify an usher.*

## Wait for the Lord

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a series of chords and a melodic line. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the upper staff.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It also consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are printed below the upper staff.

Text: Taizé Community

Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

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## Comfort, Comfort Now My People



- 1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her-ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be-fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!  
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for-ev - er.  
 Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.  
 Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre psaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

## **Communion Blessing**

**P** May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.


**C** **Amen.**

## **Communion Prayer**

**P** Let us pray.

**C** **Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. Amen.**

## **WE ARE SENT** **BENEDICTION**

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you  peace.

**C** **Amen**

## Prepare the Royal Highway



- 1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

*Refrain*

Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*

Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.

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## DISMISSAL

P May God all mighty and merciful ✝ bless you, keep you, and give you his peace.

C **Amen.**

P Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

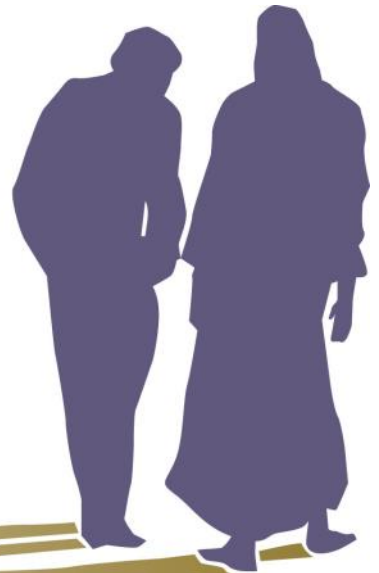
C **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

### Statement of Purpose

As servants of Christ, we are called to proclaim God's saving Word in a caring, nurturing way, to spread God's love throughout our community, and to provide opportunities for people to grow in Christ.

*Our Worship Ends + Our Service Begins*



## Second Sunday of Advent — December 8, 2024

### Road Maintenance

When John the baptizer arrives on the scene, it must mean Jesus is just around the next bend. Yet the path ahead that the prophet Isaiah describes has no bends or curves. It is a way made straight, one on which the rough spots have been smoothed out and the stumbling blocks removed. Our daily lives are rarely, if ever, made straight and smooth, though. The stressors we encounter at work, the difficulties of parenting or caring for family, the challenges that come as we get older fill our paths with twists and turns. Little is plain and simple, in life or in scripture. The point of the gospel is not that everything will be smooth for us if we just have faith. But neither are we hopelessly lost along the way. The good news is that God provides a way forward. Amid the obstacles are also openings.

Preparing our hearts to follow the way of Jesus involves work. Just as maintaining a roadway demands ongoing inspection and service, our spiritual lives and the lives of our faith communities require consistent, long-term attention, care, and commitment. During Advent, we in the church together recommit to the “roadwork” necessary for preparing the way. We open ourselves to receiving the gift of God’s creative presence in the world.

Faith is the opening through which God begins this work. We do not baptize ourselves. We are not called to do the work alone. Rather, we are baptized into a community of faith, as members of Christ’s body in the world. God’s grace given to us in word and sacrament transforms and empowers us to work collectively, to care for one another and God’s creation, to work for justice and peace. Life together won’t always be smooth or straightforward. There will be obstacles. But by the grace of God, there are also open roads ahead.

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