

December 17, 2023
Third Sunday in Advent

LESSONS AND CAROLS FOR ADVENT

**Those who are able are invited to stand.*

Preparation

Pre-service music (*A time for silence in preparation for worship.*)

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Third Sunday – Hope for Those Who Are Watching

Responsive Litany:

L: Advent is a time to awaken our spiritual senses.

C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!

L: Grant us vision to behold your glory.

C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!

L: Quiet us so we may hear your still, soft voice.

C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!

L: Make us vessels of your mercy, compassion, and grace.

C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!

L: For all of us eagerly watching for your glory in our midst:

C: Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.

Candle Lighting (*The family reads about the theme for the day as the first candle is lighted.*)

This morning we light three candles. The **first candle** reminds us of those who find themselves in a season of waiting, resting in hopeful anticipation for God to act. The **second candle** is for anyone feeling weakened and wearied by the circumstances of life. We echo the cry of scripture to renew their strength and increase their power. The **third candle** awakens our spiritual senses, challenging us to embrace the glory of God, as we await our Savior's promised coming.

Congregation Response:

Christ, Be Our Light!

A Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent

Words and Music by
BERNADETTE FARRELL

Congregation:

Christ, be our light! Shine in our
hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your
Church gath - ered to - day.

The musical score is written for a congregation response. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 'Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church gath - ered to - day.' The first two staves correspond to the first line of lyrics, and the last two staves correspond to the second line. The music is simple and suitable for a congregational setting.

Lessons and Carols

Antiphon: **Wisdom**

Hymn Stanza:

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

1st Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11

A Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah, the fortieth chapter: Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

ADVENT

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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 King - dom now is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be - fits his 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!
Let the val - leys rise to meet him, And the hills bow down to greet him!
And all flesh shall see the to - ken That God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann Olearius, 1611-1684; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878, alt.
Tune: Trente quatre psaumes de David, Geneva, 1551

*Prayer of the Day

Let us Pray.... 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.**

Antiphon: **Adonai**

Hymn Stanza:

O come, O come, great Lord of might,
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

2nd Lesson: Isaiah 12:2-6

A reading from Isaiah, the twelfth chapter: Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

ADVENT

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Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, And let your lights ap - pear;
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain Pro - claim the bride - groom near;
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience Their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

The eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, And dark - er night is near.
 Go forth as he ap - proach - es With al - le - lu - ias clear.
 Shall live and reign for - ev - er When sor - row is no more.
 A - rise, O Sun so longed for, O'er this be - night - ed sphere.

The bride - groom is a - ris - ing And soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; The gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry The Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, We plead, O Lord, to see

Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; At mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; The bride - groom is at hand.
 In tri - umph cast be - fore him Their di - a - dems of gold.
 The day of earth's re - demp - tion That sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907, alt.
Tune: Swedish folk tune

Antiphon: **Root of Jesse**

Hymn Stanza:

O come, strong Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

3rd Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-5, 10

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah, the eleventh chapter: A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

*Carol: "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" LBW #23 (1,3,4 &5)

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O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, How wel - come you a -
2 Your Zi - on strews be - fore you Green boughs and fair - est
3 I lay in fet - ters, groan - ing; You came to set me
4 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; Love brought you down to

right? Your peo - ple long to greet you, My hope, my heart's de -
palms; And I, too, will a - dore you With joy - ous songs and
free. I stood, my shame be - moan - ing; You came to hon - or
me. Your thirst for my sal - va - tion Pro - cured my lib - er -

light! Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, Your lamp with - in my
psalms. My heart shall bloom for - ev - er For you with prais - es
me. A glo - rious crown you give me, A trea - sure safe on
ty. Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, That led you to em -

breast To do in spir - it low - ly All that may please you best.
new And from your name shall nev - er With - hold the hon - or due.
high That will not fail or leave me As earth - ly rich - es fly.
brace In love, all love ex - cel - ling, Our lost and fall - en race.

Antiphon: **Key of David**

Hymn Stanza:

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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

4th Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah, the sixty-first chapter: 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; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

*Carol: "Come, O Precious Ransom"
LBW #24

Come, O Precious Ransom 24

1 Come, O pre-cious Ran-som, come, On - ly hope for sin - ful mor - tals!
2 En - ter now my wait - ing heart, Glo - rious King and Lord most ho - ly.
3 My ho - san - nas and my palms Gra - cious - ly re - ceive, I pray you;
4 Hail! Ho - san - na! Da - vid's Son! Je - sus, hear our sup - pli - ca - tion!

Come, O Sav - ior of the world; O - pen are to you all por - tals.
Dwell in me and nev - er leave, Though I am but poor and low - ly.
Ev - er - more, as best I can, Hom - age I will glad - ly pay you,
Let your king - dom, scept - er, crown Bring us bless - ing and sal - va - tion;

Come, your beau - ty let us view; Anx - ious - ly we wait for you.
What vast rich - es will be mine When you are my guest di - vine!
And in faith I will em - brace Life e - ter - nal by your grace.
That for - ev - er we may sing: Hail! Ho - san - na to our king!

Antiphon: **Dayspring**

Hymn Stanza:

O come, blest Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

5th Lesson: Isaiah 60:1-3

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah, the sixtieth chapter: Arise, shine: for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

*Carol: "Creators of the Star of Night"

Creator of the Stars of Night

1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
2 In sor - row that the an - cient curse should doom to death a
3 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
4 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all

last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,
u - ni - verse, you came, O Sav - ior, to set free
splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child
hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,

we pray you hear us when we call.
your own in glo - rious lib - er - ty.
of Mar - y, blame - less moth - er mild.
like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord. A - men.

Antiphon: **King of Nations**

Hymn Stanza:

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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

6th Lesson: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from the Book of Second Peter, the third chapter: Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Carol: "The King of Glory"

The King of Glory

Refrain
Em Bbm⁷ Em

The King of glo - ry comes, the na - tion re - joic - es.

Em Bbm⁷ Em

O - pen the gates be - fore him, lift up your voic - es.

G C Bbm/D D⁷ G

1 Who is the King of glo - ry; how shall we call him?
2 In all of Gal - i - lee, in cit - y or vil - lage,
3 Sing then of Da - vid's Son, our Sav - ior and broth - er,
4 He gave his life for us, the pledge of sal - va - tion;
5 He con - quered sin and death; he tru - ly has ris - en,

Em CM⁷ G/Bb CM⁷ D⁷ G Refrain

He is Em - man - u - el, the prom - ised of ag - es.
he goes a - mong his peo - ple, cur - ing their ill - ness.
in all of Gal - i - lee was nev - er an - oth - er.
he took up - on him - self the sins of the na - tion.
and he will share with us his heav - en - ly vi - sion.

Antiphon: **Emmanuel**

Hymn Stanza:

O come, O come, Emmanuel
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

*Gospel Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28

A reading from the Gospel of John, the first chapter: 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.

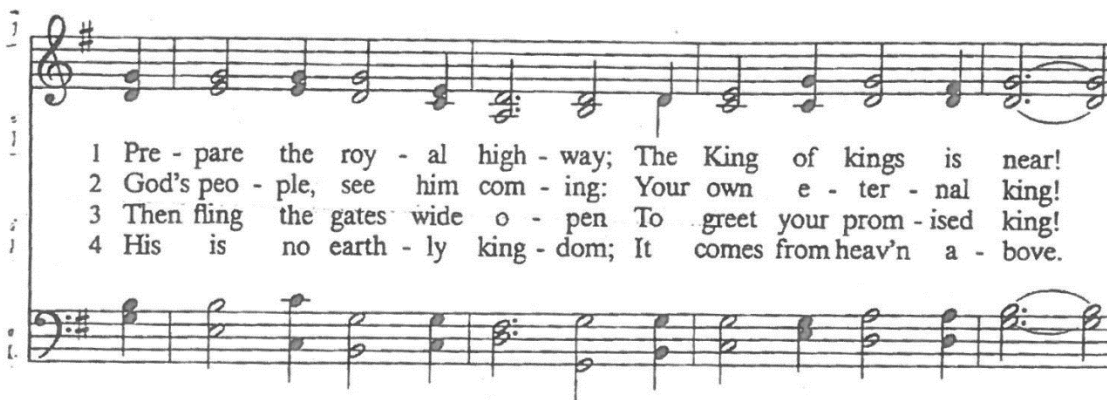
¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "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.

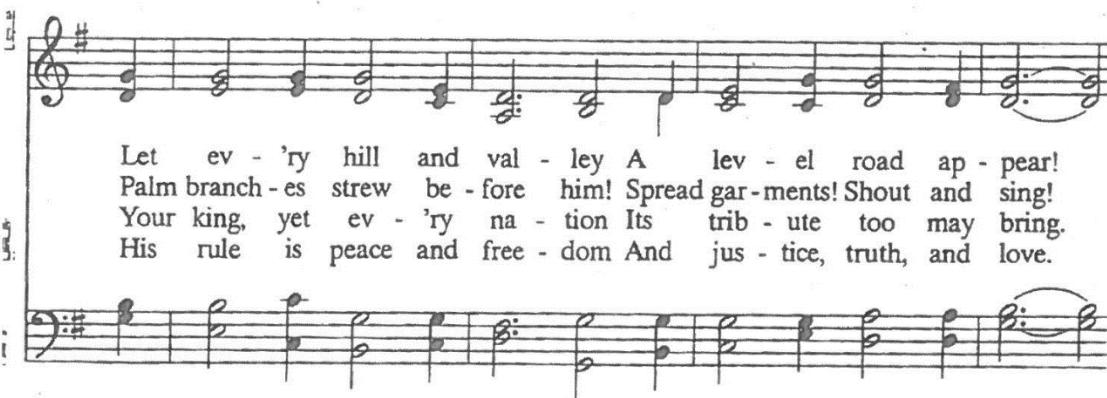
²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the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

Prepare the Royal Highway

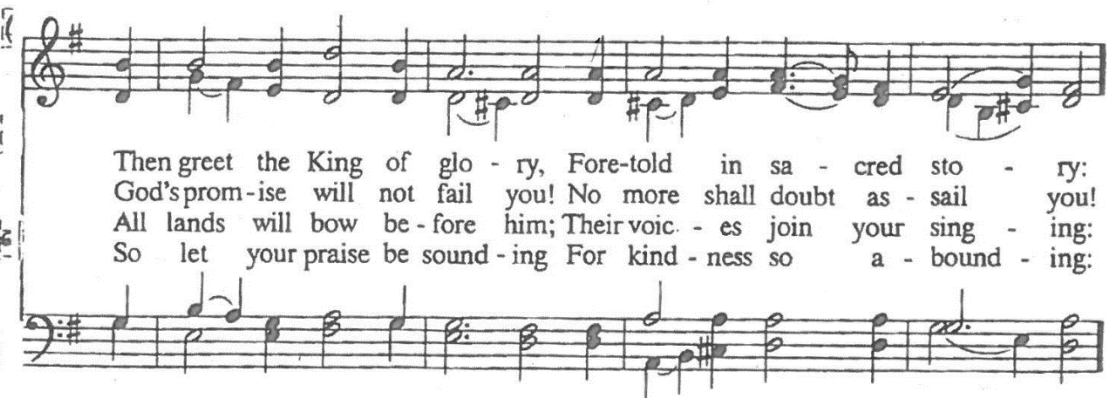
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1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: Your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from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

***Responsive Prayer (Leader/Congregation)**

O Lord, our God, be gracious to us;

we wait for you.

Dispel the darkness,

that all nations may come to your light.

Establish your peace on the earth;

join our voices to sing your praise.

Comfort the sick and weary;

renew their strength and power.

Here other petitions may be offered by worshipers.

O Lord, our God, come to us,

that the earth may behold your glory. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the throne of grace with our prayers and petitions.

A brief silence

O Lord, we long for your salvation; make haste and help us. Come quickly with blessing and comfort for your people, O strong Deliverer of Israel and the Redeemer of the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Clothe your Church with the joy of your salvation. Cover it with the righteousness of Christ. Adorn it with the jewels of your Word and Sacraments. Through it, let the poor hear the Good News, the sorrowful find comfort, and captives to sin and death experience your salvation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Restore the fortunes of Christians who are persecuted for confessing Jesus as Lord. Turn their weeping into rejoicing. Cause those who hate them to repent and believe in the Good News. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give this congregation faithful hearts; ears attentive to your Word; eyes which see the needs of others; hands skilled in building up the body of Christ; and lips swift to pray, forgive, and encourage. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Guide and strengthen our seminarians and all considering your call to serve the Church. Make them faithful, true, and bold. Let them find joy in your service. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Fill our earthly rulers with your Spirit. Make them love justice and hate evil. Use them to repair lives and cities ruined by violence. Direct their words and their deeds in your truth. Establish your peace among the nations. Make each of us into trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, bearing fruit to your glory, and for the building up of your people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant your healing to the brokenhearted and to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, including those we bring before you either silently or aloud...Give them beauty instead of ashes; the oil of joy instead of mourning; and the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness. Strengthen all who care for them. Give them, and us, your everlasting love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Graciously answer our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Peace and Offertory

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(If you choose to exchange the peace, please use hand sanitizer before you start and again when finished.)

Offertory

Offertory Hymn: "Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior"

(Verses 1, 2 & 3 - Refrain / Stanza / Refrain)

614 *Refrain* Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior

Praise to you, O Christ, our Sav-ior, Word of the Fa-ther, call-ing us to life:

Son of God who leads us to free-dom; glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!

1 You are the Word who calls us out of dark-ness;
2 You are the one whom proph-ets hoped and longed for;
3 You are the Word who calls us to be ser-vants;
4 You are the Word who binds us and u-nites us;

you are the Word who leads us in-to light; you are the Word who
you are the one who speaks to us to-day; you are the one who
you are the Word whose on-ly law is love; you are the Word made
you are the Word who calls us to be one; you are the Word who

brings us through the des-ert: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!
leads us to our fu-ture: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!
flesh who lives a-mong us: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!
teach-es us for-give-ness: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!

Refrain

Refrain

Chords: Em Bm Em Am D Em C G Am D Em C Bm
Em Am Em Bm Am D G Em C Em7 Am Bm Em
C G Am Bm C D
Em Em7 C Am Dsus4 D G Em

Offertory Prayer:

P: God of Abundance,

C: we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience, hope and love, as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Penitential Rite

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,

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.

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal,

and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

The Meal

(Please use hand sanitizer before coming to the Altar. Both intinction and common cup are available.)

*The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

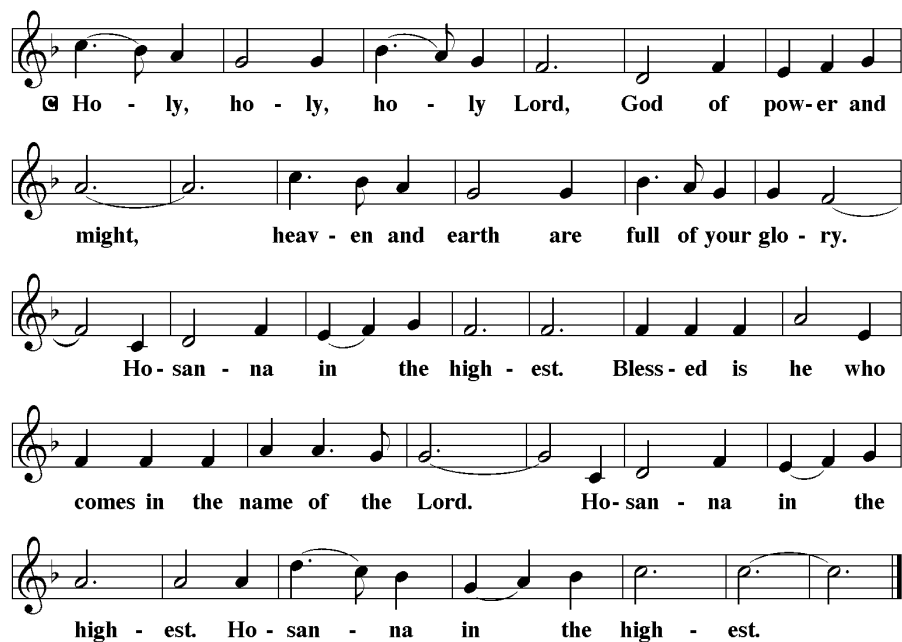
C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. 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 again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE: ADVENT

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,
our Salvation and our Hope,
we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.
When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,
you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.
At this end of the ages
your Son Jesus came to bring us your love
and to heal all the suffering world.
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,
we await his coming again
in righteousness and peace.
Send your Spirit on us
and on this bread and wine we share:

strengthen our faith,
increase our hope,
and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

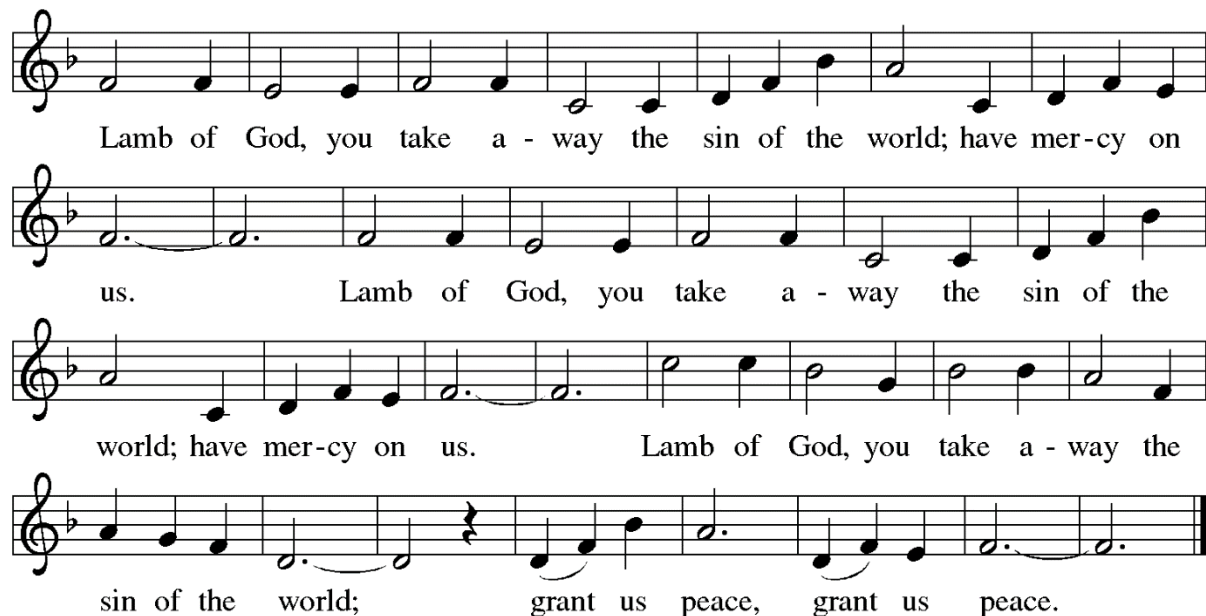
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**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.**

FRACTION

*Agnus Dei ("Lamb of 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, grant us peace.

INVITATON TO COMMUNION

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here. Come, eat and drink

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ ✝ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen**

COMMUNION PRAYER

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.**

Blessing of the Christmas Tree

Psalm 96: 9-13 (Leader/**Congregation**)
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him.
Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king!
**He has made the world so firm that it cannot
be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."**
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the Lord when he comes,
when he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with equity.

Pastor:

Be praised, O God, for the blessings around us that point to you.

Be praised, O God, for the signs of this holy season that awaken in us wonder.
Praise for the steadfast green of this tree, which like your love, endures all seasons.

Praise for the lights that will illumine our darkness, like Christ, who brings
light to the world.


Praise and thanks for the children who enrich our lives and gather around to hear your
Word and celebrate the mystery of your birth.

Bless those who decorate this tree with symbols of your love and eternal
grace, and those who will view it, that all together may join our voices with
those of the tree and of all creation, who sing at your coming: "Glory to God in the
highest, and peace to his people on earth!"

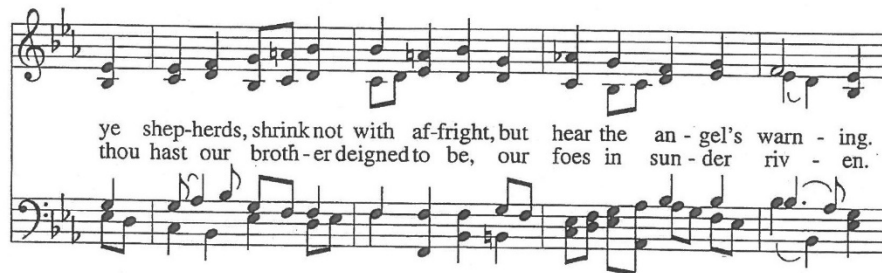
And let all together say: **AMEN!**

*Hymn: "Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light"

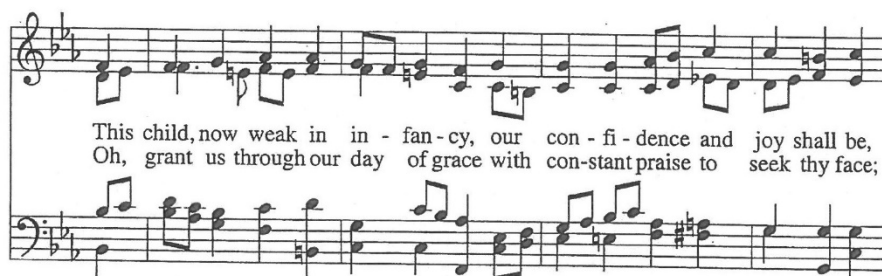
Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light



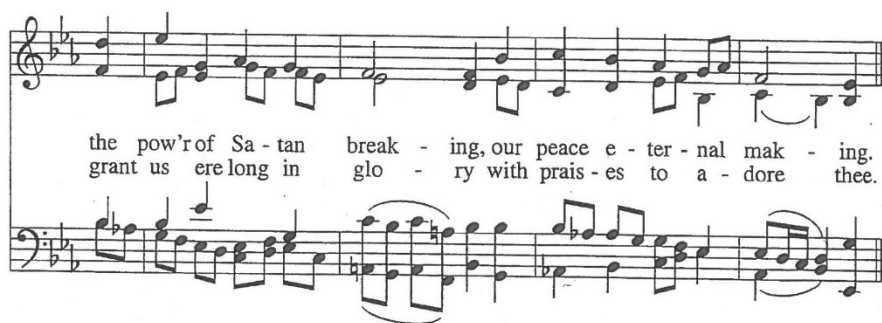
1 Break forth, O beau - teous heav'n-ly light, and ush - er in the morn - ing;
2 All bless - ing, thanks, and praise to thee, Lord Je - sus Christ, be gi - ven;



ye shep - herds, shrink not with af - fright, but hear the an - gel's warn - ing.
thou hast our broth - er deigned to be, our foes in sun - der riv - en.



This child, now weak in in - fan - cy, our con - fi - dence and joy shall be,
Oh, grant us through our day of grace with con - stant praise to seek thy face;



the pow'r of Sa - tan break - ing, our peace e - ter - nal mak - ing.
grant us ere long in glo - ry with prais - es to a - dore thee.

Benediction

May God, who gathers us in love, lead you in pathways of righteousness and justice.

May God, who knows us more deeply than we know ourselves, lead you in pathways of forgiveness and freedom.

May God, who fills us with good things, lead you in pathways of equity and abundance. The blessing of the holy Trinity, one God, be upon you and remain with you forever.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Advent and Christmas at Shepherd of the Hills - -

***Advent Worship/Study** Wednesdays at 5:00 on December 6, 13, and 20.
Please use the Zoom link on our website, montpelierlutheran.org.

The theme is: "Preparing in Christ's Presence." We will be looking at 3 familiar passages from the prophet Isaiah. If you have an Advent Wreath, please have it with you as we will light the candles each week.

***December 24 (Advent IV)** – The morning service will be led by Rev. Rick Neu.

***December 24 (Christmas Eve) 5:30pm.** Led by Rev. Rick Neu, we join in singing our favorite carols, celebrating the birth of our Savior, as recorded in Luke 2, and rejoicing with Holy Communion.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.