



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

C: Amen.

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

Kneel

P: Long-expected God,

C: we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.

P: God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.

C: Amen.

Stand

GATHERING HYMN

***The King Shall Come* LBW 33**

1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,
2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, to bear and fight and die,
3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn when Christ, vic - to - rious, rose
4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race
5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.

when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.
but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn-ing sky.
and left the lone - some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes.
the day when Christ in splen - dor comes, and we shall see his face.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick - ly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1859-1925
Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davisson, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929-2003
Arr. © 1969 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission.

APOSTOLIC 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.

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



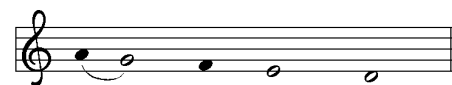
Lord, have mer - cy.



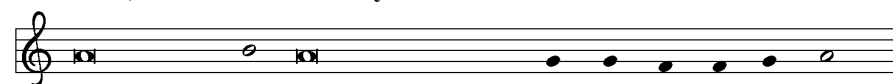
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



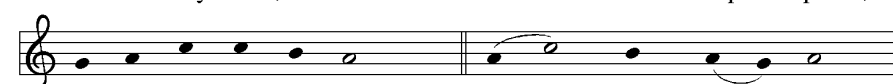
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



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



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Sit

LIGHTING OF THE WREATH

A: 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.

C: Amen

ADVENT CHORAL VERSE

As the first candle is lit, the choir recites the first verse.

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

A: A Reading from Isaiah:

¹ The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

² In days to come

the mountain of the LORD's house

shall be established as the highest of the mountains

and shall be raised above the hills;

all the nations shall stream to it.

³ Many peoples shall come and say,

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,

to the house of the God of Jacob,

that he may teach us his ways

and that we may walk in his paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction

and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He shall judge between the nations

and shall arbitrate for many peoples;

they shall beat their swords into plowshares

and their spears into pruning hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation;

neither shall they learn war any more.

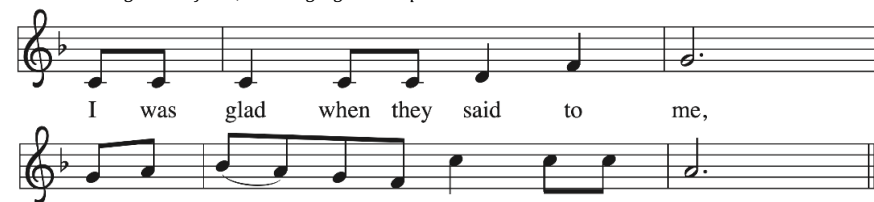
⁵ O house of Jacob,
 come, let us walk
 in the light of the LORD!

A: The word of the Lord.

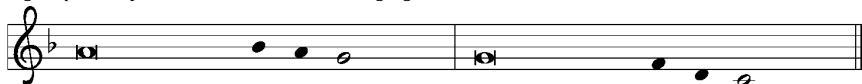
C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 122

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.



Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.



- ¹ I was glad when they | said to me,
 “Let us go to the house | of the LORD.”
- ² **Now our | feet are standing**
within your gates, | O Jerusalem.
- ³ Jerusalem is built | as a city
 that is at unity | with itself;
- ⁴ **to which the tribes go up, the tribes | of the LORD,**
the assembly of Israel, to praise the name | of the LORD. R
- ⁵ For there are the | thrones of judgment,
 the thrones of the | house of David.
- ⁶ **Pray for the peace | of Jerusalem:**
“May they pros- | per who love you.
- ⁷ Peace be with- | in your walls
 and quietness with- | in your towers.
- ⁸ **For the sake of my kindred | and companions,**
I pray for | your prosperity.
- ⁹ Because of the house of the | LORD our God,
 I will seek to | do you good.” R

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

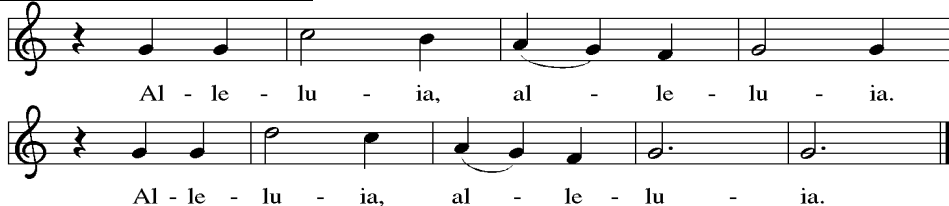
A: A Reading from Romans:

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³ let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

CANTOR: Show us your steadfast | love, O LORD,* and grant us | your salvation.

C: Repeat the Alleluias

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fourth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples, ³⁶ "About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two will be in the field; one will be

taken, and one will be left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴² Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord
C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit
SERMON.....Ray Huff, ALWL

Stand
HYMN OF THE DAY

Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying.....LBW 31



1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and in her
3 Now let all the heav'ns a - dore you, and saints and



on the heights are cry - ing; a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
heart new joy is spring - ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom,
an - gels sing be - fore you. The harps and cym-bals all u - nite.



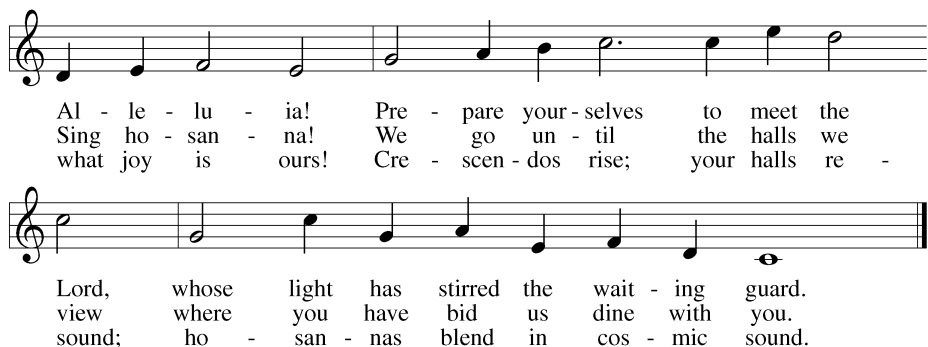
Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
for her Lord comes down all glo - rious, the strong in
Of one pearl each shin - ing por - tal, where, dwell - ing



thrill - ing cry re - joic - es: “Come forth, you maid - ens! Night is past.
grace, in truth vic - to - rious. Her star is ris’n; her light is come.
with the choir im - mor - tal, we gath - er round your daz - zling light.



The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!”
Oh, come, you Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God’s own Son.
No eye has seen, no ear has yet been trained to hear,



Al - le - lu - ia! Pre - pare your - selves to meet the
 Sing ho - san - na! We go un - til the halls we
 what joy is ours! Cre - scen - dos rise; your halls re -

Lord, whose light has stirred the wait - ing guard.
 view where you have bid us dine with you.
 sound; ho - san - nas blend in cos - mic sound.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829–1878, alt.
 Music: WACHET AUF, Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
 the Father, the Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth,
 of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 the only Son of God,
 eternally begotten of the Father,
 God from God, Light from Light,
 true God from true God,
 begotten, not made,
 of one Being with the Father.
 Through him all things were made.
 For us and for our salvation
 he came down from heaven;
 by the power of the Holy Spirit
 he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
 and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
 he suffered death and was buried.
 On the third day he rose again
 in accordance with the Scriptures;
 he ascended into heaven
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 He will come again in glory to judge the living
 and the dead,
 and his kingdom will have no end.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

P: God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

C: Amen

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The pastor and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. **R:** Peace be with you.

Sit

MEAL

OFFERING

The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.

ANTHEM

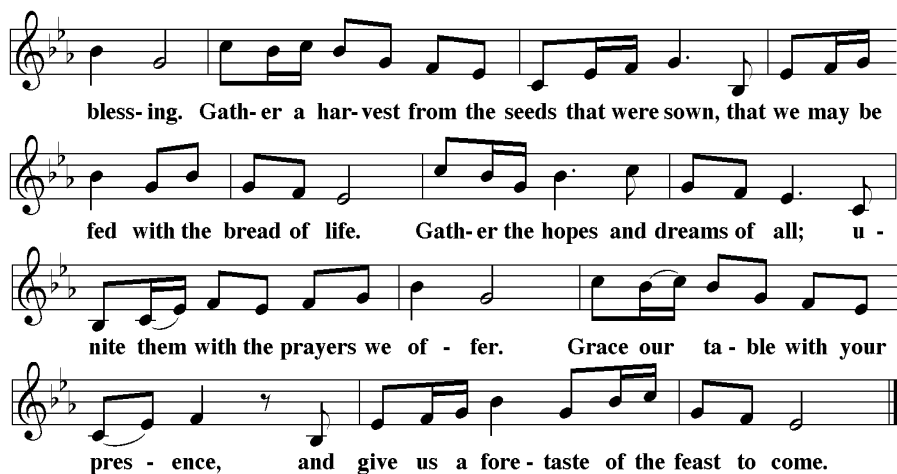
Prepare Ye the Way.....Laura Shafferman

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

☞ Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

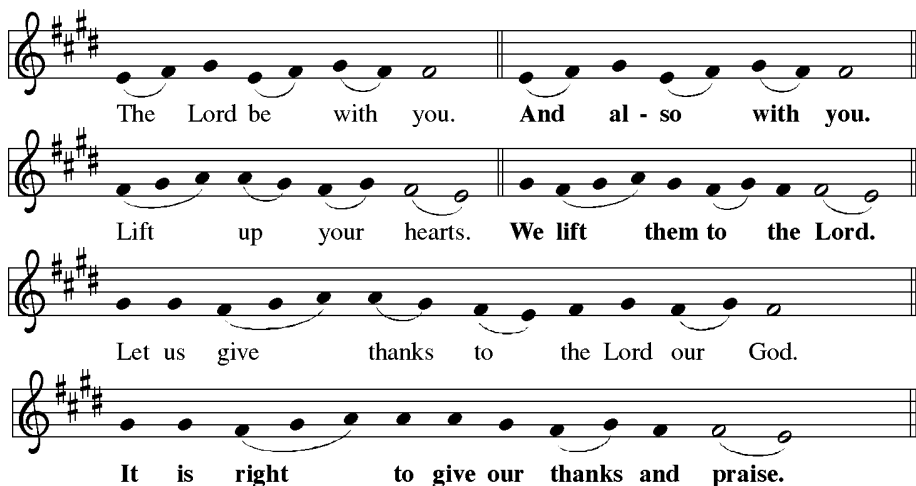
OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray:

C: Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.

C: Amen.

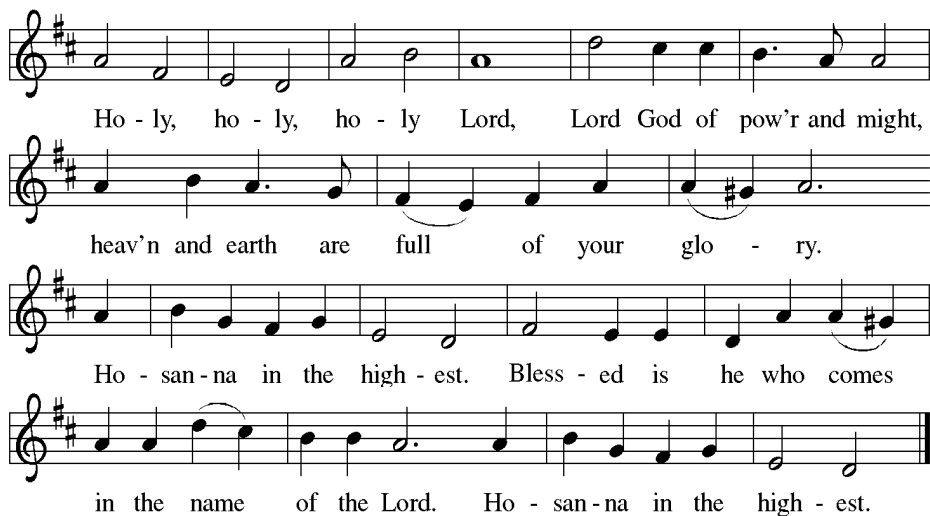
GREAT THANKSGIVING



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.

PREFACE

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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n 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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

[P]: Holy One, the beginning and the end,

the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

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.

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word
dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God,
we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
One God, now and forever.

C: Amen

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.

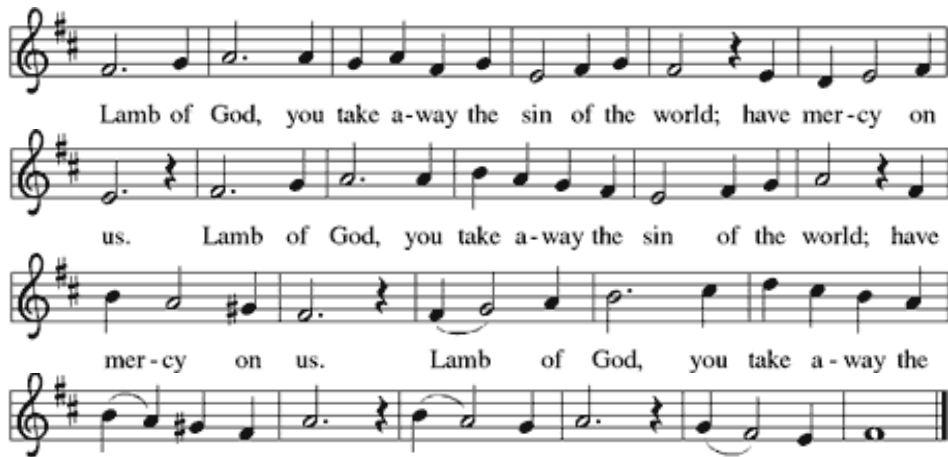
For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

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, grant us peace.

Sit

COMMUNION

All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table.

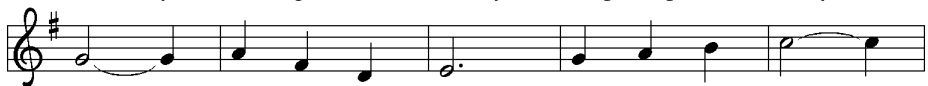
As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Amen

COMMUNION HYMN*Christ be our Light*

1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.

Refrain

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.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell

Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

Stand

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**A:** Let us pray.

God our host,
 at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
 Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
 welcome the stranger,
 and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen***SENDING*****BLESSING****P:** May God who comes among us,

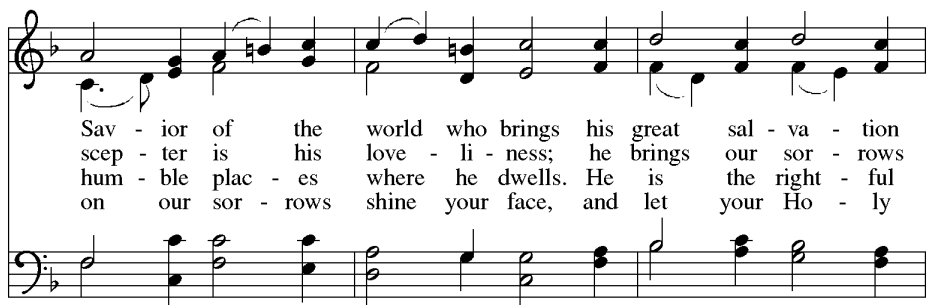
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
 grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
 and good news to share today and always.

C: Amen**SENDING HYMN** *Fling Wide the Door*

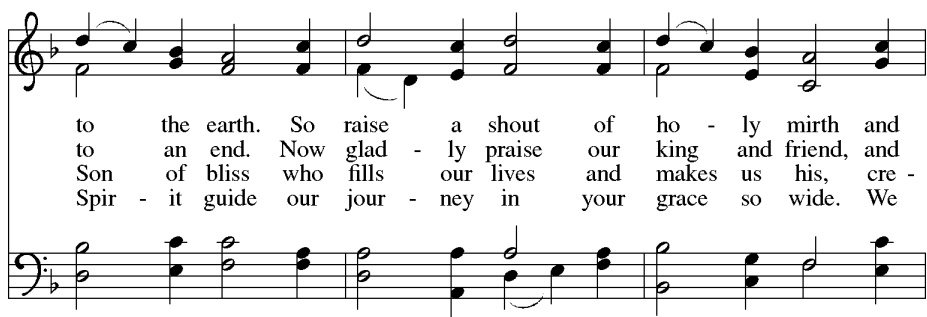
The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn, and the second system contains the next four lines. The lyrics are printed below the vocal staves, with each line corresponding to a vocal part. The piano accompaniment is shown in the bass clef staves.

1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
 2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
 3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
 4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen

comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
 gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
 king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
 wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -



Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
 scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
 hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
 on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
 to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
 Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
 Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We



praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
 wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
 a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
 praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943

Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704; arr. hymnal version

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Fred Harbaugh, Jean Nolan, Diana Rooker, Susan Christ, Greg Eckenrode; **Lay Assistant:** Janet Stroble; **Comm. Asst.:** Mary Schultz **Acolyte:** Weston Sherman; **Altar Guild:** Vicki Bair, Doris Butt; **Greeters/Communion Presenters:** Paul Weaver, Jean Weaver
Cantor: Dave Bausinger; **Flower Delivery:** Jody Fullmer
Guest Organist: David Reier

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of loved ones.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Nita and Eugene Hamm by their daughter and son-in-law, Debra and James Walton.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Andrea's father, William H. Dennis and David's mother, Geraldine C. Turner by David and Andrea Turner and children.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of George R. Weiskerger on the anniversary of his birthday, November 30th, by his family.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah Church! It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. *We hope to see you again.*

This morning we welcome Ray Huff, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader (ALWL) of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Ray has received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching.

Kids in Mission is this Saturday, December 6, 9:00-12:00.

Please hand in your Poinsettia order forms by December 8.

Advent Devotionals published by the Lutheran Hour Ministries are on a table in the Narthex.

Next Sunday, December 7 is our Christmas Dinner, immediately following worship. **Please sign-up** by Wednesday, December 3. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex or contact church office. Please give the number of attendees.

Sunday, December 21 immediately following worship we will be decorating the church. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!** Please sign-up on the sheet in the Narthex. **Many hands make quick work. Please share your time and talent.**

(continues)

(announcements continued)

The congregation council members will be installed Sunday, December 29, during worship. The members of council for 2026 are: Newly elected to council is Lauren Russell. Re-elected members are Jimmy Gardner and Rhonda Koch. Current members are Anita Bair, Alfred "Al" Cole, Jody Fullmer, Craig Kropp, Joanie Jackson, Sylvia McCarty and Ronald "Ron" Yeagle.

For all the saints who can join us in singing praise to God:

The next Saints in Song Sunday will be the fourth Sunday in Advent, December 21. The anthem is easy to learn. Rehearsal will be after church on Sunday, December 14 and again on December 21 before worship at 8:45. If you like to sing, we hope you will join us.

White Gifts Ministry - The Angel Trees are up! Each year, we provide Christmas gifts to families in need who are members of our congregation or whose names we get from the South Williamsport Area School District. Requested items are listed on angel tags which adorn the trees in the narthex. If you'd like to help, please take as many tags as you'd like from the tree, purchase the needed item, and ***wrap the gift in white paper***. Gifts should be brought in and placed in the blue bin in the Chapel alcove by December 14. Cash donations will also be accepted.

Christmas Food Baskets: Please see the Messenger for a list of food items we are collecting. Cash donations will also be accepted. All donations are needed no later than December 14. **recipients** are now being identified. If you know someone who could benefit from receiving a Christmas basket, ***please contact the church office by Friday, December 5***. Baskets will be ready for pick-up Saturday, December 20.



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

Advent Signs

Few things in life are as jarring as awakening to the shriek of a fire alarm. Of course, that is by design. The safety of those gathered indoors calls for a blaring warning of impending danger so that all might be delivered from harm. Jesus offers a similar signal to his beloveds today, begging us to pay attention to the seriousness of the message he bears: *Be ready! Keep awake! Pay attention to your surroundings! Deliverance is coming soon!*

Advent is a season of preparation, directing our focus toward the incarnation, toward Christmas, when God becomes human and the weary world rejoices. Sometimes preparations take the form of months long laborious planning, as we might do for an international trip or the renovation of a home. Other times, preparations must happen immediately, within hours, minutes, or seconds. When a fire alarm sounds, there's no time to plan: We must act quickly, gathering what is most important to get to safety together.

This first Sunday of Advent is a chance to take stock of what is most important in life, to attune our spirits to the reign of heaven that God is birthing in our world. We may be unsettled by these gospel images of the great flood and of field workers being disappeared. Such stories indeed may spark fear, anxiety, and distrust. Yet God comes to be with us amid all the great uncertainties of life, amid the atrocities of human violence, amid the worst of our losses and fears. Jesus reminds us that God is always drawing near to the world, always extending mercy, always acting with love. Mercy and love are Advent signs worth paying attention to, worth staying awake for. Be ready, beloveds, and fear not! God's deliverance is coming soon.

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