

Sanctuary Worship Service
Third Sunday of Advent, December 14, 2025 8:00 AM

PRELUDE

There is a Great Joy A Coming

There is a great joy a coming,
There is a great joy a coming,
There is a great joy a coming
To the whole people my Lord.

Glory, glory! Glory Glory!
Glory be to God in the highest,
Peace, good will toward men.

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WELCOME

PASTOR

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

PASTOR

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

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.

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.

Amen.

OPENING HYMN

Prepare the Royal Highway

ELW 264

Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you!

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing:

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding:

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

ELW p. top 204



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand.
Amen.

Light three candles

Light One Candle

Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PASTOR

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

ASSISTING MINISTER

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

CHOIR HYMN

DROP IN CHOIR

RESPONSIVE READING

ASSISTING MINISTER

Psalm 146:5-10

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in
the LORD their God;
⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises
forever;**
⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.
The LORD sets the captive free.
⁸ **The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed
down; the LORD loves the righteous.**
⁹ The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates
the way of the wicked.
¹⁰ **The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all
generations. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING

ASSISTING MINISTER

James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer
waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early
and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of
the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you
may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering
and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
ELW 254 vs 1 (Tune ELW 392)

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, One License A-731020

The holy gospel according to Matthew the 11th chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL

PASTOR

Matthew 11:2-10

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

All Earth is Hopeful ELW 266

All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see

how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.

People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us,"
our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.

Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946, Spanish text © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Liturgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.. One License A-731020

APOSTLES' CREED

PASTOR

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 THE PEOPLE

ASSISTING MINISTER

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

OFFERING

ASSISTING MINISTER

Ways to digitally give:

- Text: "ILC" to 73256 and fill out the form
- Online at www.ilcpville.org
- Realm app

SHARING OF THE PEACE OF THE LORD

OFFERTORY HYMN

He Came Down ELW 253

He came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light;
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
hallelujah forevermore.

Text: Cameroon traditional, One License A-731020

OFFERING PRAYER

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.
Amen.

PASTOR

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you
And also 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

ELW p. 206

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PASTOR

THE 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.

LAMB OF GOD

ELW 195

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.

Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948
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COMMUNION

PASTOR

SPECIAL MUSIC

THE INFANT

CHARLIE BURCH, JAMES BURCH AND ABBY HAMMOND

COMMUNION HYMN

Savior of the Nations, Come ELW 263

Savior of the nations, come;
virgin's son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth:
God has chosen such a birth.

Not by human flesh and blood,
but the mystic Breath of God,
was the Word of God made flesh,
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.

Wondrous birth—oh, wondrous child—
from his throne, a virgin mild!
Very God, and Mary's son,
eager now his race to run!

From God's heart the Savior speeds,
back to God his pathway leads;
out to vanquish death's command,
back to reign at God's right hand.

Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
Let our faith shine ever new.

Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.. One License A-731020

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

PASTOR

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.
Amen.

BLESSING

PASTOR

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.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Fling Wide the Door ELW 259

Fling wide the door, unbar the gate;
the King of glory comes in state;
the Lord of lords and King of kings,
the Savior of the world who brings
his great salvation to the earth.
So raise a shout of holy mirth
and praise our God and Lord,
Creator, Spirit, Word.

He is the rock of our belief,
the heart of mercy's gentle self.
His kingly crown is holiness;
his scepter is his loveliness;
he brings our sorrows to an end.
Now gladly praise our king and friend,
and worship him with song
for saving us from wrong.

Oh, happy towns and blessed lands
that live by their true king's commands.
And blessed be the hearts he rules,
the humble places where he dwells.
He is the rightful Son of bliss
who fills our lives and makes us his,
creator of the world,
our only strength for good.

Come, Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ;
our hearts are open wide in trust.
Oh, show us now your lovely grace,
upon our sorrows shine your face,
and let your Holy Spirit guide
our journey in your grace so wide.
We praise your holy name,
from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590-1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress. One License A-731020

GOOD NEWS

ASSISTING MINISTER

Soon and Very Soon ELW 439

Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King.
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King.
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

Text & Music Andrae Crouch, b. 1845 Text & Music C 1976 Bud John Songs, Inc./Crouch Music, admin. EMI Christian Music Publishing, One License A-731020

DISMISSAL

ASSISTING MINISTER

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.