



The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord"
Mark 1:3

NEW LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pearland, TX

Worship at 8:00 AM

Second Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion, ELW Setting 3

December 10, 2023

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME – Pastor Grant Housewright

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

All: Amen.

P: 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.

P: Everlasting God,

All: 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.

P: 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.

All: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (ELW 254)



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

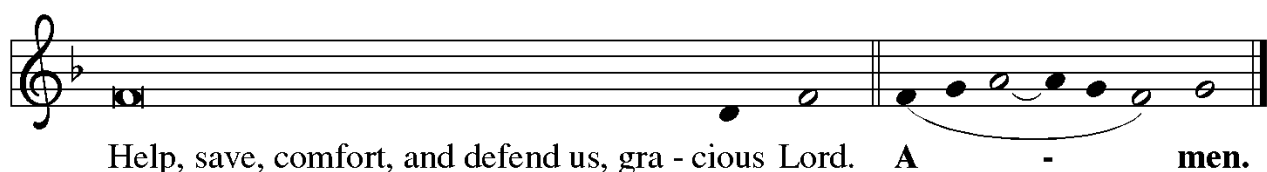
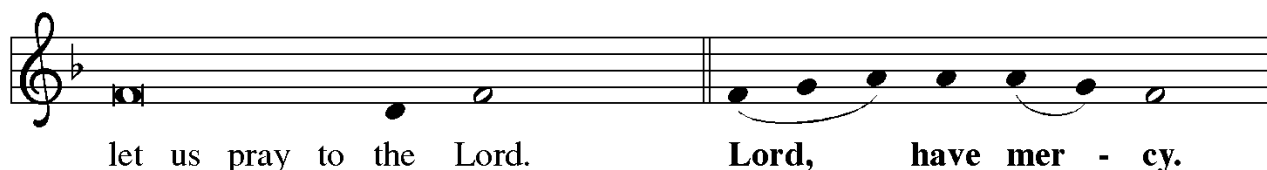
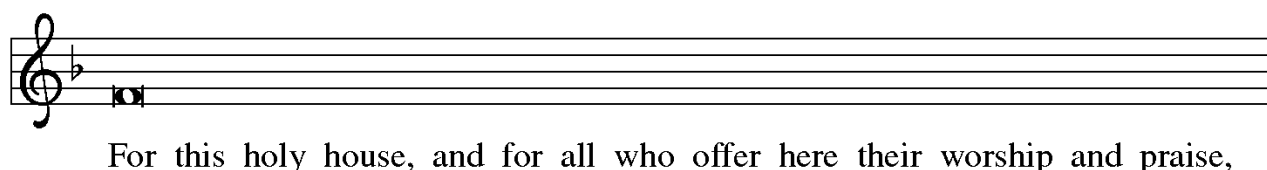
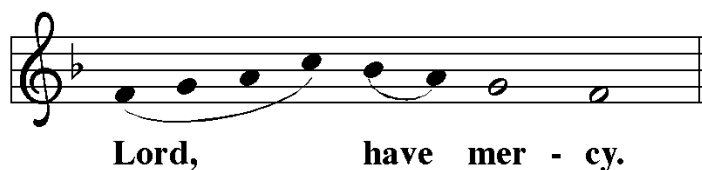
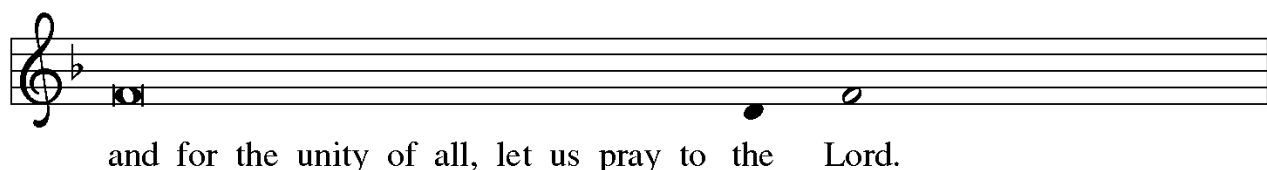
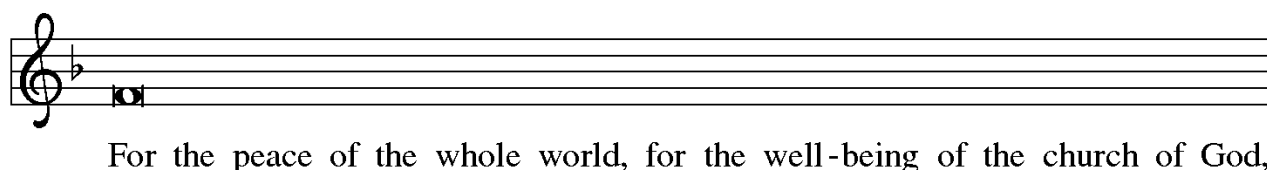
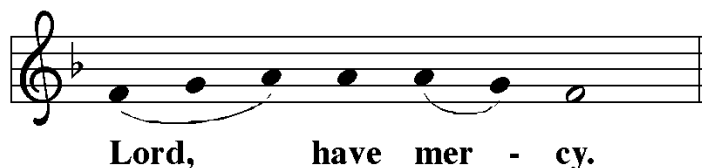
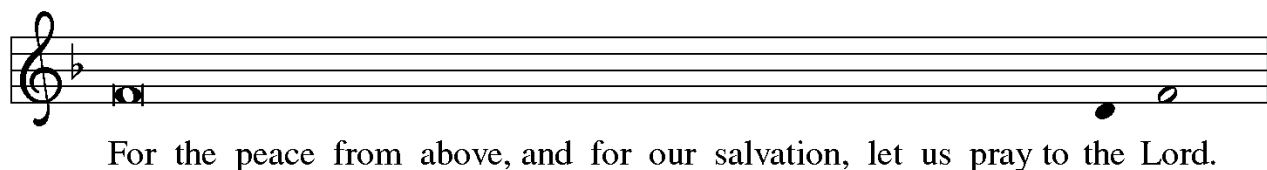
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

GREETING

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

All: **And also with you.**

KYRIE



CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Leader



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

L: Let us pray. Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.

All: Amen.



2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A: ¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to the city that it has served its term, that its penalty is paid, that it has received from the LORD's hand double for all its sins. ³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every 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. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get 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!" ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, with an arm to rule; God comes bearing the reward, preceded by the recompense. ¹¹The LORD will feed the chosen flock like a shepherd; God's arms will gather the lambs, God's bosom will carry them; and the LORD will gently lead the mother sheep.

A: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

Please read responsively.

A: ¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

All: ²You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.

A: ⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

All: ⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.

A: ¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

All: ¹¹Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

A: ¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

All: ¹³Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A: ⁸Do 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. ⁹The Lord is not slow concerning the promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But 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. ¹¹Since 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, ¹²waiting 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? ¹³But, in accordance with God's promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by God at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

A: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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 READING: Mark 1:1-8

P: The holy gospel according to Mark.

All: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: ¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of the Lord,’ ” ⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “After me one who is more powerful than I is coming, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but the one who is coming will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON – Rebecca McDonald

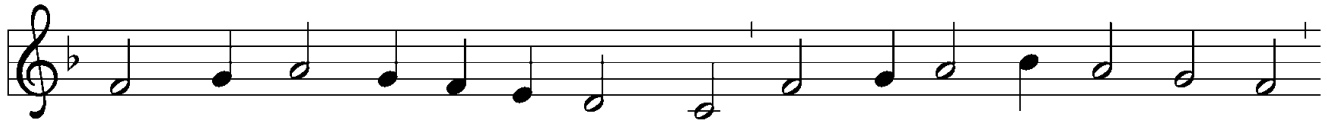
SERMON – Pastor Grant Housewright

HYMN OF THE DAY

Comfort, Comfort Now My People (ELW 256)



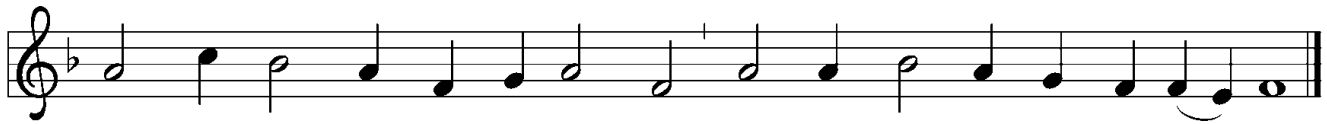
- 1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
- 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
- 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



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 pseumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

NICENE CREED

P: Joining together let us confess our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.

All: 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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

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.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

A: Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

A: Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season. Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

All: Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

The ministry of New Life Lutheran Church is made possible through the tithes, gifts, and offerings of the people. We encourage you to give as an act of worship today. You can offer a gift by texting to 281.864.3278, adding a dollar amount to the message box, and send. A link will appear for a one time set up. Once it is set up, it takes seconds to give again. You can also give through our website by scanning the QR code on the pew.

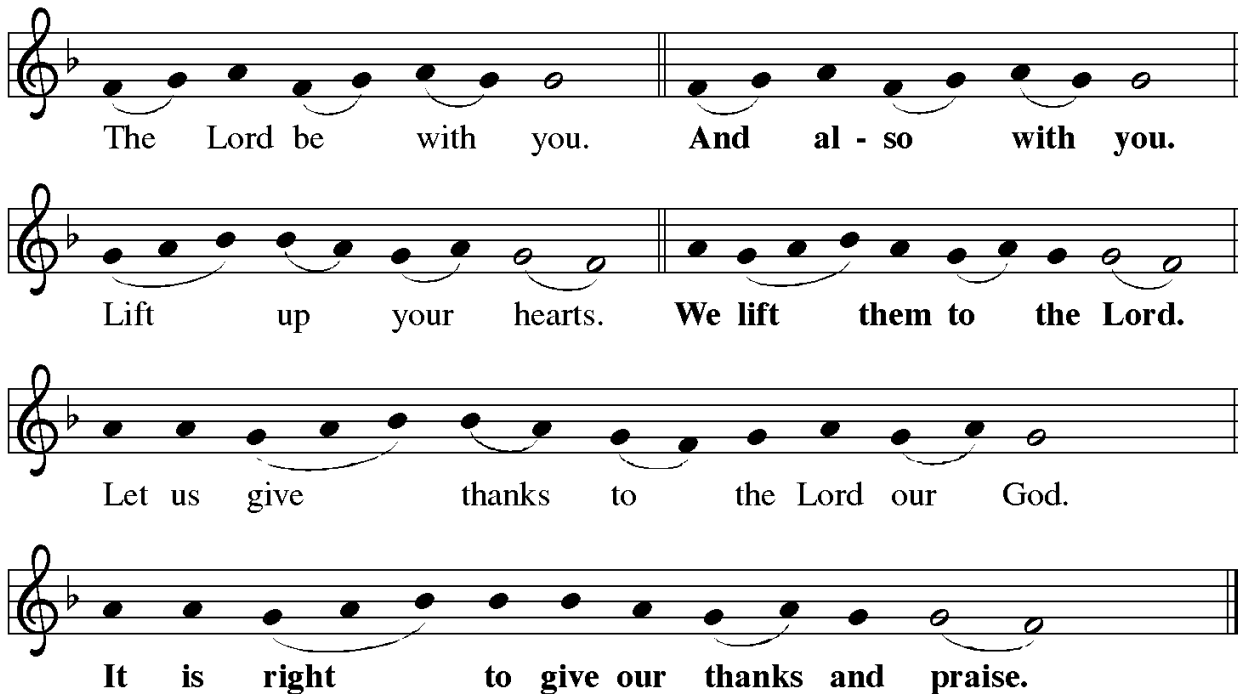
OFFERTORY – New Life Choir

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

All: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

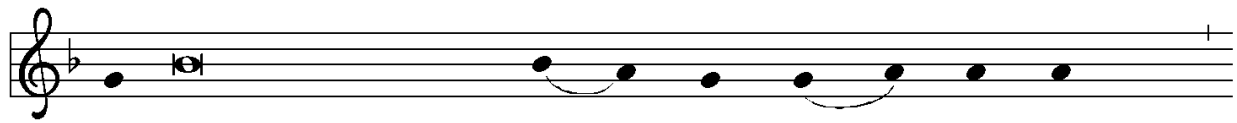


The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

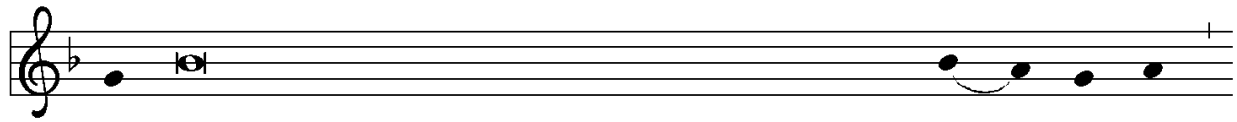
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.



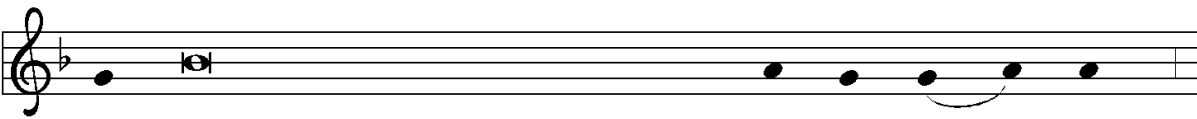
It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,



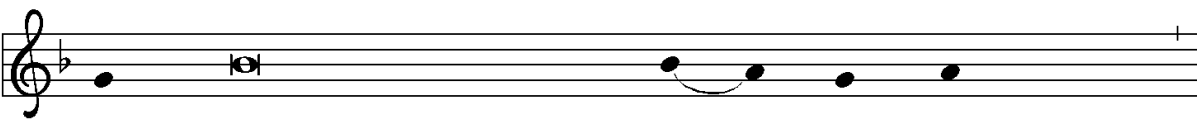
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,



al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.



You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,



through whom you will also make all things new



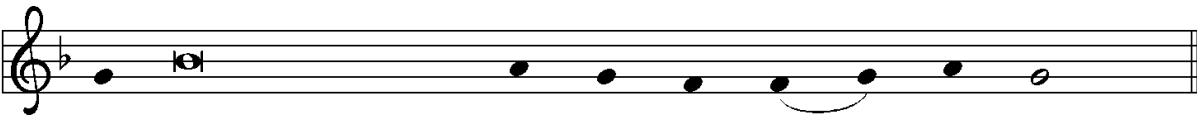
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.



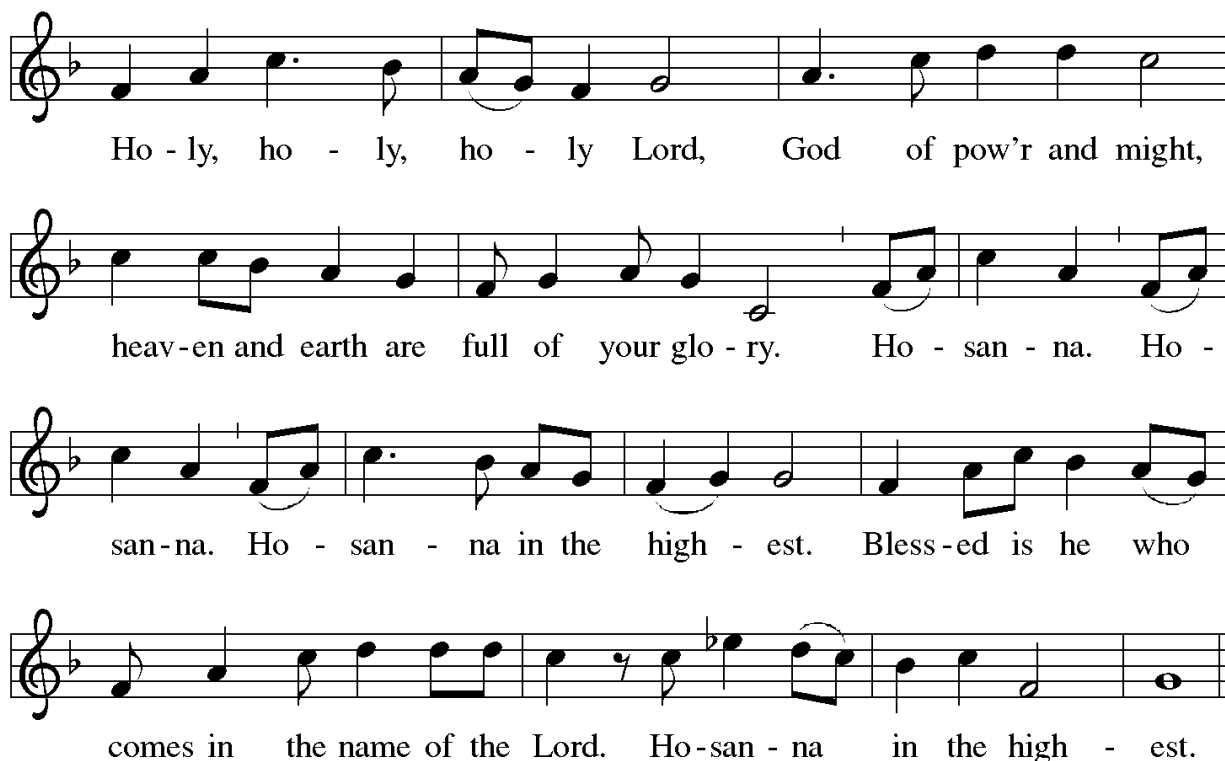
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,



with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,



we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:



P: 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: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

All: 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.

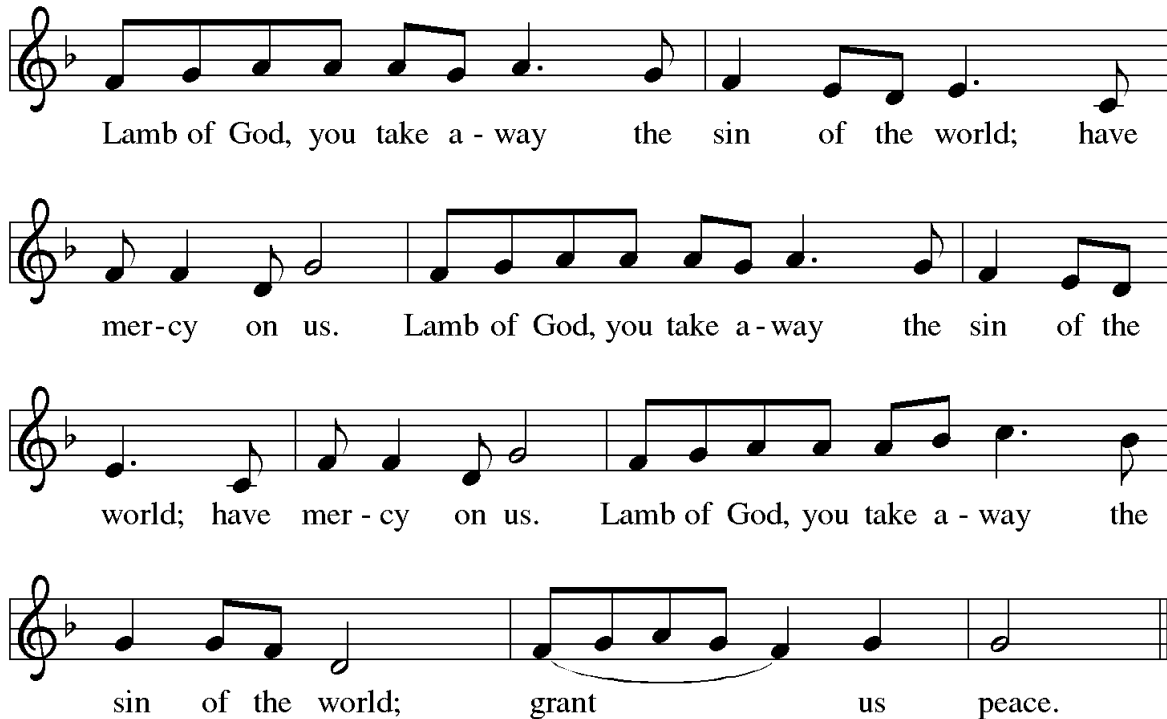
P: In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

All: Amen. Thanks be to God.

SHARING THE MEAL

Everyone is welcome to receive Jesus in bread and wine. This is Jesus' table, and he welcomes all. Pre-filled communion packets are available in the Narthex if you would prefer to receive communion that way. Everyone else is invited to come down the center aisle maintaining two continuous lines. You will receive a piece of bread with the words, "The body of Christ given for you," and you can respond with, "Amen." Remain on the side of the section of pews you are sitting in. You will receive an individual cup of either wine (red) or grape juice (clear) with the words, "The blood of Christ shed for you," and you can respond with, "Amen." There is a basket available for your empty cup. You will then return to your pew from the side aisle.

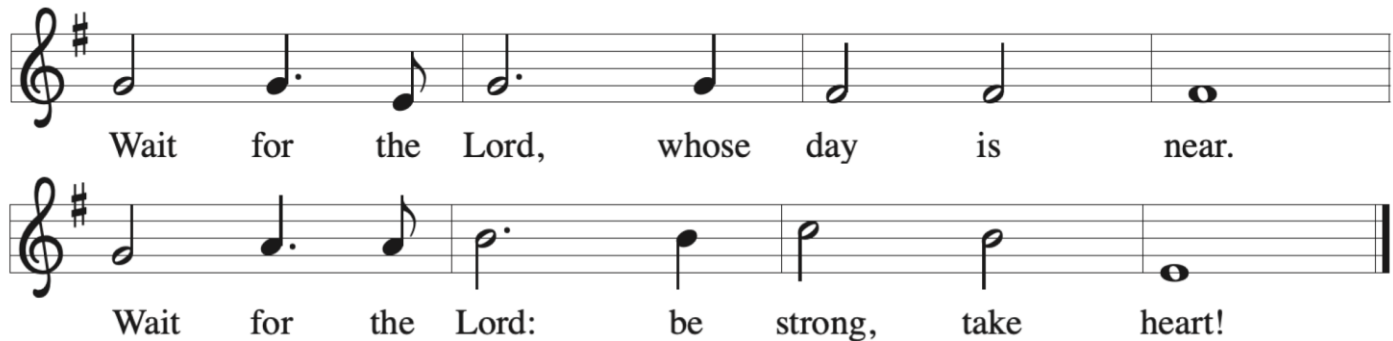
LAMB OF GOD



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.

COMMUNION HYMN

Wait for the Lord (ELW 262)



Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community

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

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www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

P: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you, strengthen you, and keep you in God's grace.

All: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray. 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.

All: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

All: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

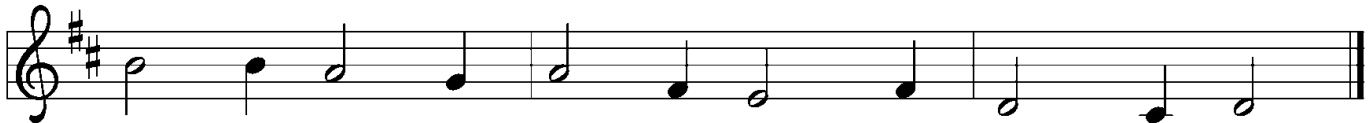
On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (ELW 249)



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - 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

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Today is the Second Sunday of Advent: December 10

Traditional Worship: 8:00 AM

Contemporary Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday School on Advent Break: Sunday School at 9:15 AM will take a break during Advent and Christmas and return on January 7, 2024!

Soup Supper and Midweek Advent Service: We are gathering on Wednesday evenings in December for food, fellowship, and worship. Supper begins at 5:45 PM, choir rehearsal is at 6:15 PM, and the service will begin in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM. Sign up sheets for the potluck meals are in the narthex.

WELCA Christmas Party: Today all women of the church (including youth 8 years and older) are invited to lunch at noon in the Fellowship Hall. We'll collect offerings for Christian Helping Hands.

Children's Christmas Party: Saturday December 16 at 11:00 AM. Bingo prizes, crafts, pizza, and a surprise guest! Invite your friends and family.

Children's Christmas Pageant: Sunday December 17 at 9:15 AM. Rehearsal is on Saturday December 16 (before the Christmas party). Children and youth of all ages are invited to participate, and we can also use parent helpers for costumes and organizing. See Aimee Castillo for details.

Community Christmas Caroling: We have three opportunities to spread Christmas cheer to our neighbors. Thursday December 21 at 2:00 PM at The Landing at Watercrest senior living, Friday December 22 at 6:00 PM at Trinity Oaks assisted living, and Friday December 22 at 7:30 PM in the neighborhood surrounding New Life. Please join us for any or all of these events!

Poinsettia Orders Available: You can sign up for a poinsettia in the narthex. Poinsettias will be displayed on Christmas Eve and can be picked up after the services. Cost is \$10 each.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: We will combine Sunday morning worship on December 24 for ONE service at 9:30 AM.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services: Sunday, December 24 at 4:00 and 7:00 PM.

First Sunday of Christmas: We will combine Sunday morning worship on New Year's Eve, December 31 for ONE service at 9:30 AM.

Today's Worship Leaders (8:00 AM)

Assisting Minister

Elna Ritter

Communion Assistant

Deanna Owens, Cheryl Robinson

Usher

Robin and Vince Gottlieb

Technology

John Gestl

*Altar flowers are given in honor of
Jackson Creighton's 2nd birthday.*