Family of Christ Lutheran Church
Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2026

Welcome, Announcements and Prayer Requests

Confession and Forgiveness
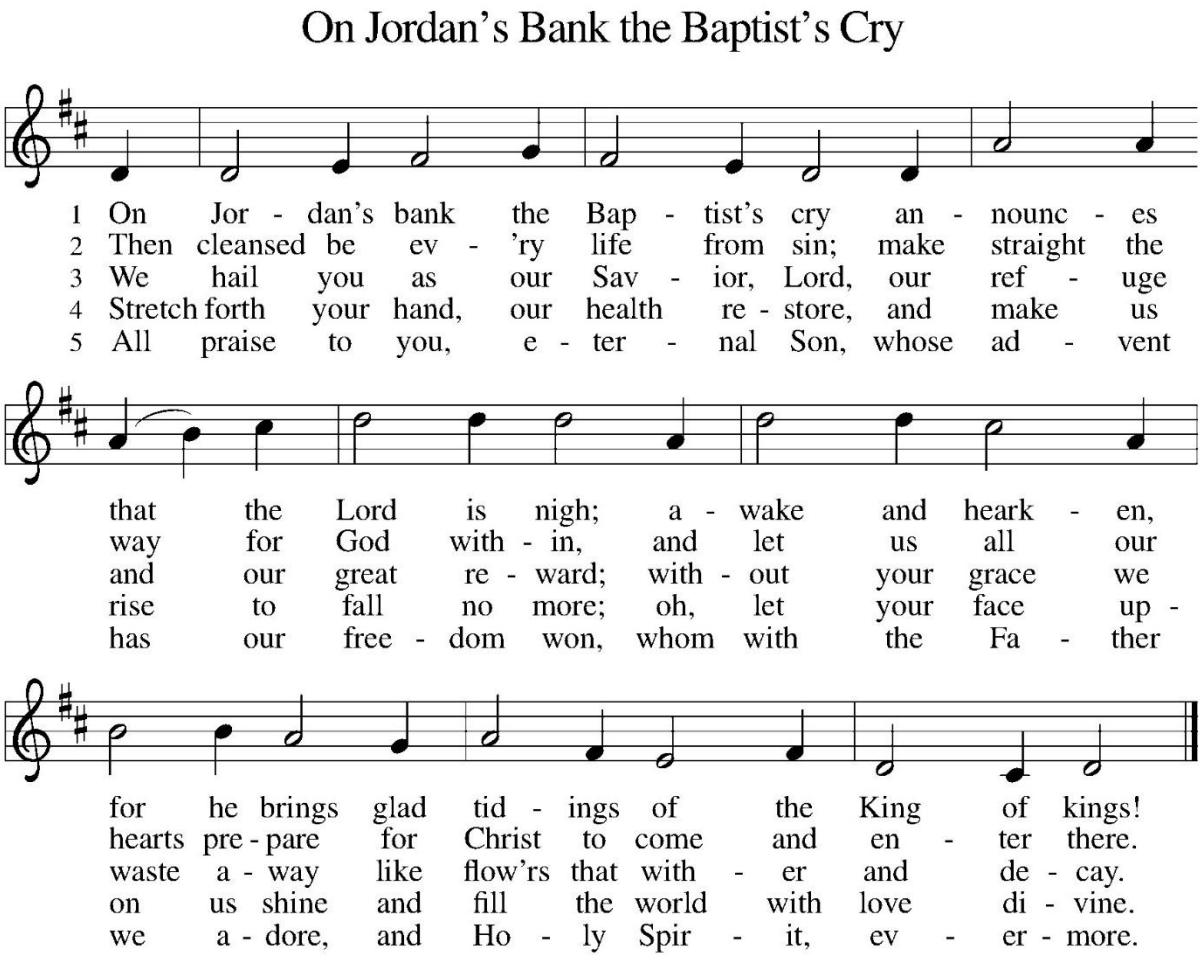
Our hearts cry out for restoration. Our spirits plead for illumination. Let us come before God in confession and in trust. Our salvation is near.

(*silence*)

Before God and one another, **we confess the ways we have strayed from the paths you have set before us, O God. You lead us in peace, yet we chose the path of violence. You lead us in love, yet we reject those whom we do not like or understand, or with whom we disagree. You lead us in paths of righteousness, yet we create barriers instead of pathways to healing and restoration. Rescue us from where we have wandered. Forgive us and reorient us, that we may again walk in your will and your way. Amen.**

As John at the Jordan proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, take heart and hear this good news: you are forgiven ☩, by water and word, poured out upon you, grace upon grace, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: ELW 249 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite
Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

Please be seated

Greeting

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.

<u>Lighting of the Advent Wreath</u>

During this busy season, we pause to breathe and worship. We surround ourselves with candles, lights, greenery, and beauty. May these sights and sounds remind us that we are people of faith, guided by the light of the world. We listen for words of peace on this Second Sunday of Advent.

Brief pause for silence.

L 2: We gather together today in the midst of war, loss, hardship, and division.

L 1: Lives are taken, families mourn, sides are chosen.

What can we do? Where is our peace?

L 2: You are invited to prepare the way. The path of peace is being formed.

L 1: One stepping stone of grace at a time.

L 2: As we live between the already and the not yet, we remember salvation doesn't happen when all is right in the world.

L1: The Messiah draws near now, breaking into the present through moments of compassion and flourishing.

L 2: In this season of holy waiting, we first light the candle of hope, welcoming the coming of Christ.

Light the first candle.

L 2: And today, we light the candle of peace.

Light the second candle.

L1: We remember that Advent peace is not simply the absence of conflict but the active work of preparing pathways for healing, justice, belonging, and restoration.
May the peace of God-with-us comfort and restore.

Prayer of the Day

Prince of peace, the psalmist says, "Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for God will speak peace to the people." Here we are, O God—gathered to hear your peace, actively waiting to see your kingdom come. Help us prepare the way for healing, justice, belonging, and restoration. We know your salvation draws near. Give us minds to notice it unfolding all around us.
Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

[1]Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
[2]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.

[3]A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
[4]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.
[5]Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

[6]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.
[7]The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
[8]The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
[9]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!"
[10]See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;

his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
[11]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.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

<u>Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13</u>
Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)
[1]You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.
[2]**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people**
and blotted out all their sins.
[8]I 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.
[9]**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,**
that your glory may dwell in our land.
[10]Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
[11]**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,**
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
[12]The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.
[13]**Righteousness shall go before the LORD**
and shall prepare for God a pathway.

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.
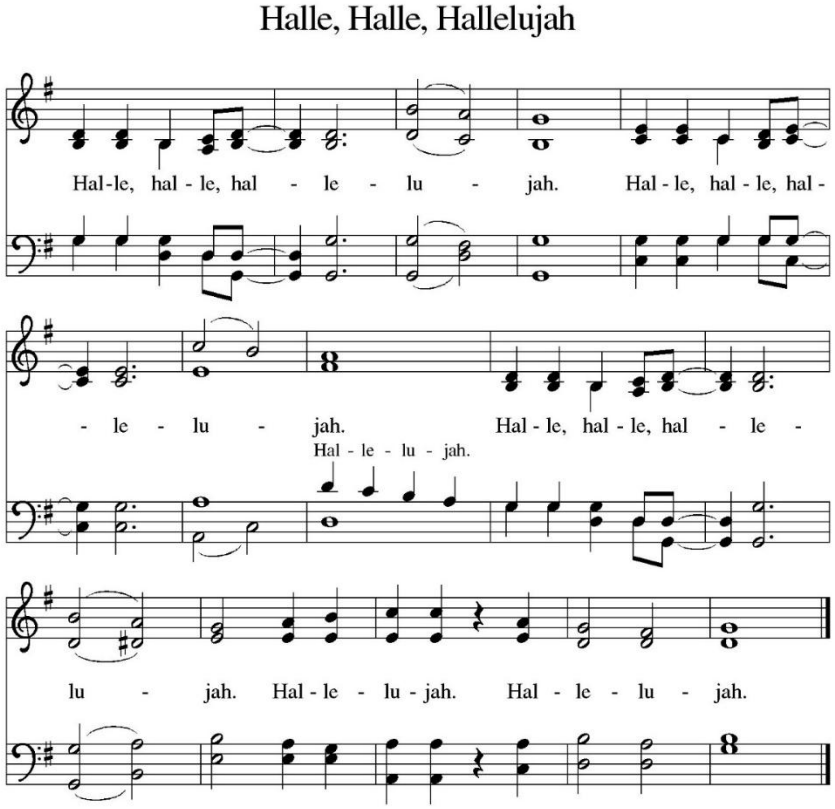
[8]Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day
is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.
[9]The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of
slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but
all to come to repentance. [10]But the day 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.
[11]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, [12]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? [13]But, in
accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a
new earth, where righteousness is at home.

[14]Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things,
strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish;
[15a]and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please rise as you are able.

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel according to Mark, the 1st chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

> *The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.*
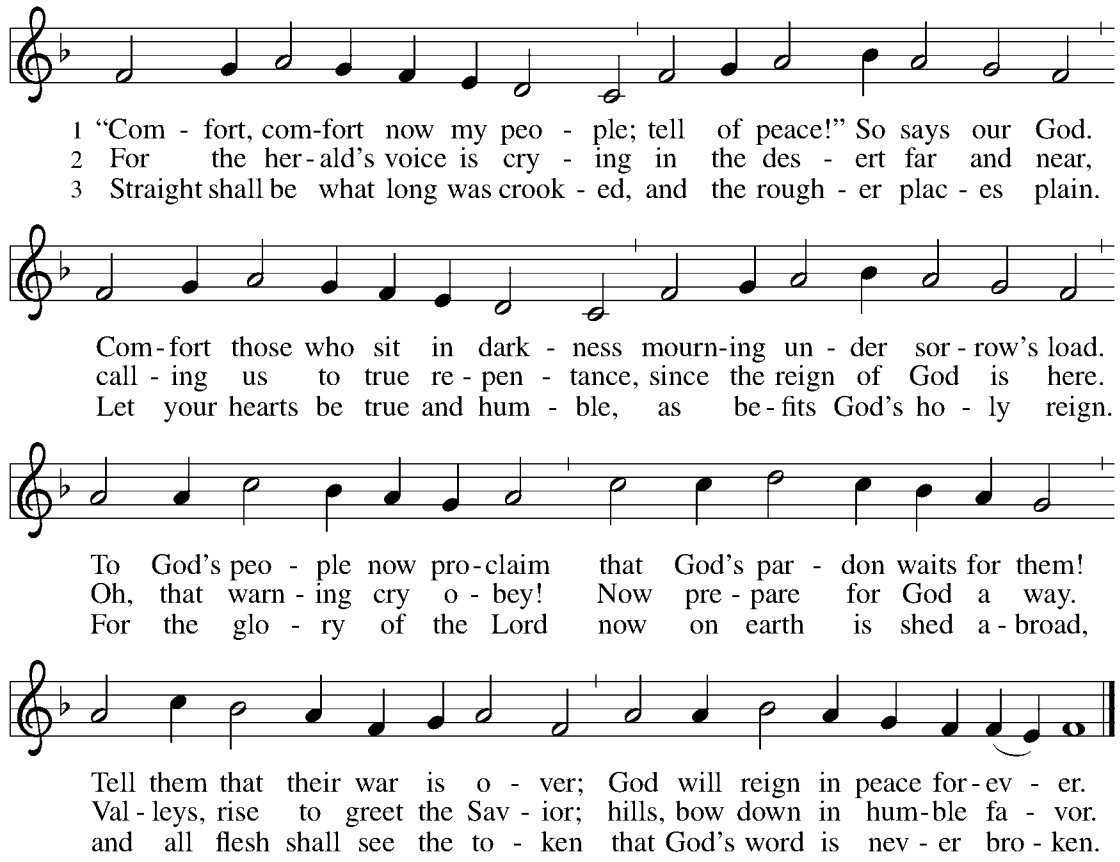
[1]The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
[2]As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
[3]the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,' "
[4]John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. [5]And 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. [6]Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. [7]He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. [8]I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

This is the Gospel of our Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

<u>Sermon</u>

Hymn of the Day: ELW 256

Comfort, Comfort Now My People



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

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Please be seated

<u>Prayers of the People</u>

In hope and expectation, we bring to God our prayers for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Prepare your church for the mystery of Christ's incarnation. Strengthen your people with the promises made known in word and sacrament, in our common life, and in service with our neighbors. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.
Reveal your glory in the goodness and wonder of your creation. Inspire renewed commitments by individuals, cities, countries, and the global community to practices and policies that safeguard the planet. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.
Defend all who work for peace and cooperation among towns and cities, states and nations. Point us toward new solutions to

long-standing challenges in our communities, and empower us and our leaders to act with clarity and wisdom. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.
Speak tenderly to all who cry out in hunger, pain, or distress. Bring comfort and connection to all who are hospitalized, homebound, or living in nursing homes. Encourage those who care for them. We ask you to be attentive to our prayers for those on our prayer list and those we name before you now (*brief pause*). God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.
Stir up our commitment to your justice, especially for the most vulnerable communities among us. Transform the stories, structures, and attitudes that maintain the inequities among us. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.
We praise you for the wisdom of all the faithful saints. Guard our waking and our sleeping, until with Nicholas and all the faithful departed, we find our rest in you. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.
We entrust these and the prayers of our hearts to you, most holy God, in the name of Christ Jesus our Savior.
Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The one for whom we wait is our Prince of peace and Reconciler of the world. We share the peace with a weary world. We share the peace to offer God's grace. We share the peace to anticipate and recognize God's salvation in our world. May the peace of

Christ be with you.
And also with you.
Please share a sign of Christ's peace with those around you.
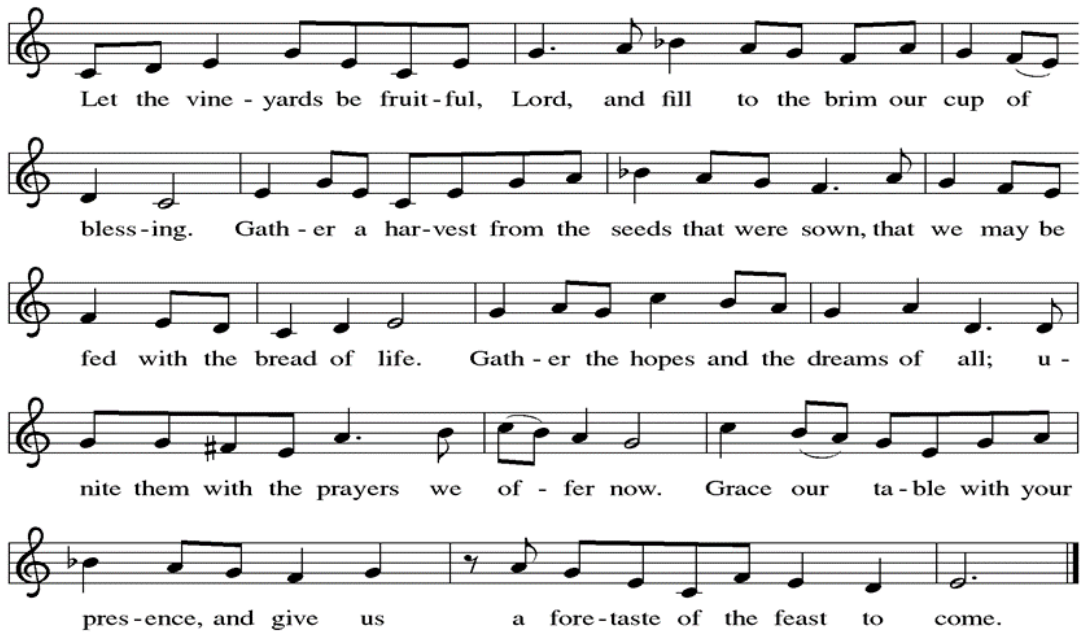
(Please share a sign of peace however you're comfortable today: fist bump, handshake, high five, peace sign, or gentle wave.)

Offering is Collected

Offering and Elements Are Brought to the Table

Offering Song: ELW 182

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful
Offering Song



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
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Offering Prayer

Gracious God, **in this Season of Advent, as we wait for the Messiah, we offer not only ourselves but our tithes and gifts as well. May these offerings work to bring about healing, justice, belonging, and the thrill of hope to a weary world. Amen.**

Communion

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts full of holy anticipation.

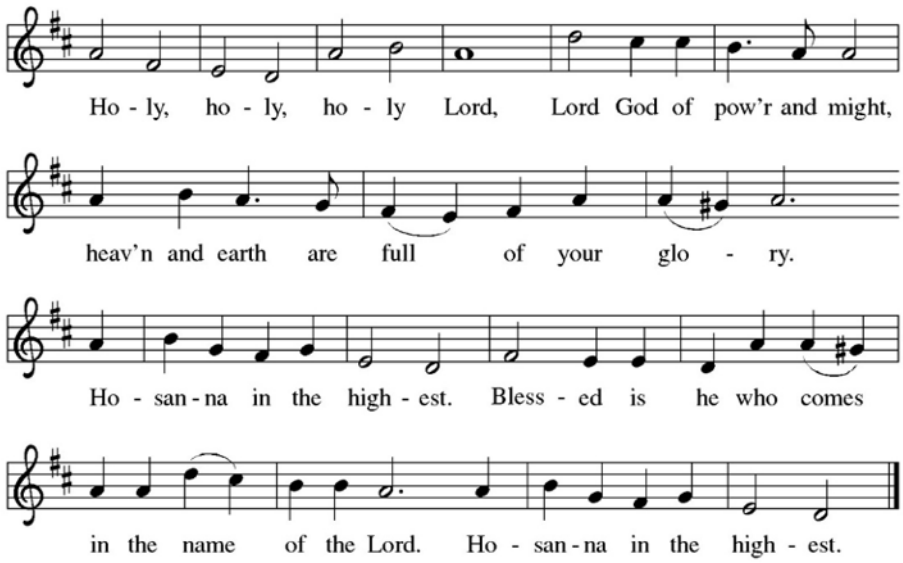
We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to Immanuel, God with us.

We joyfully give our thanks and praise.

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 a thrill of hope in our hearts, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their

unending hymn:



Holy are you, O God, and blessed is your almighty name.
When the faithful cry out to you, you draw near. Salvation comes.
As we long for healing, restoration, and wholeness, you model the power of mercy, compassion, and generosity through your Son, Jesus Christ.

On the night Jesus gathered his friends to eat together, a common meal was transformed into elements of grace to be shared, remembered, and celebrated by generations upon generations.

On that night, Jesus took a simple loaf of bread.
Blessed it.
Broke it.
And Shared it.

He said, “Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”
Then Jesus took a cup of wine.
Blessed it.
Passed it.
And said, “Drink from it, all of you. 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.”

Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Gracious God, pour out your Spirit on us and these your gifts of grace. May they be for us a reminder of how your salvation breaks through in everyday life to everyday people. May we remember the Messiah who saved us is saving us and will save us. Fill our hearts with gratitude for this table where there is enough for all. **Amen.**

With confidence, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us:
Lord’s Prayer
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

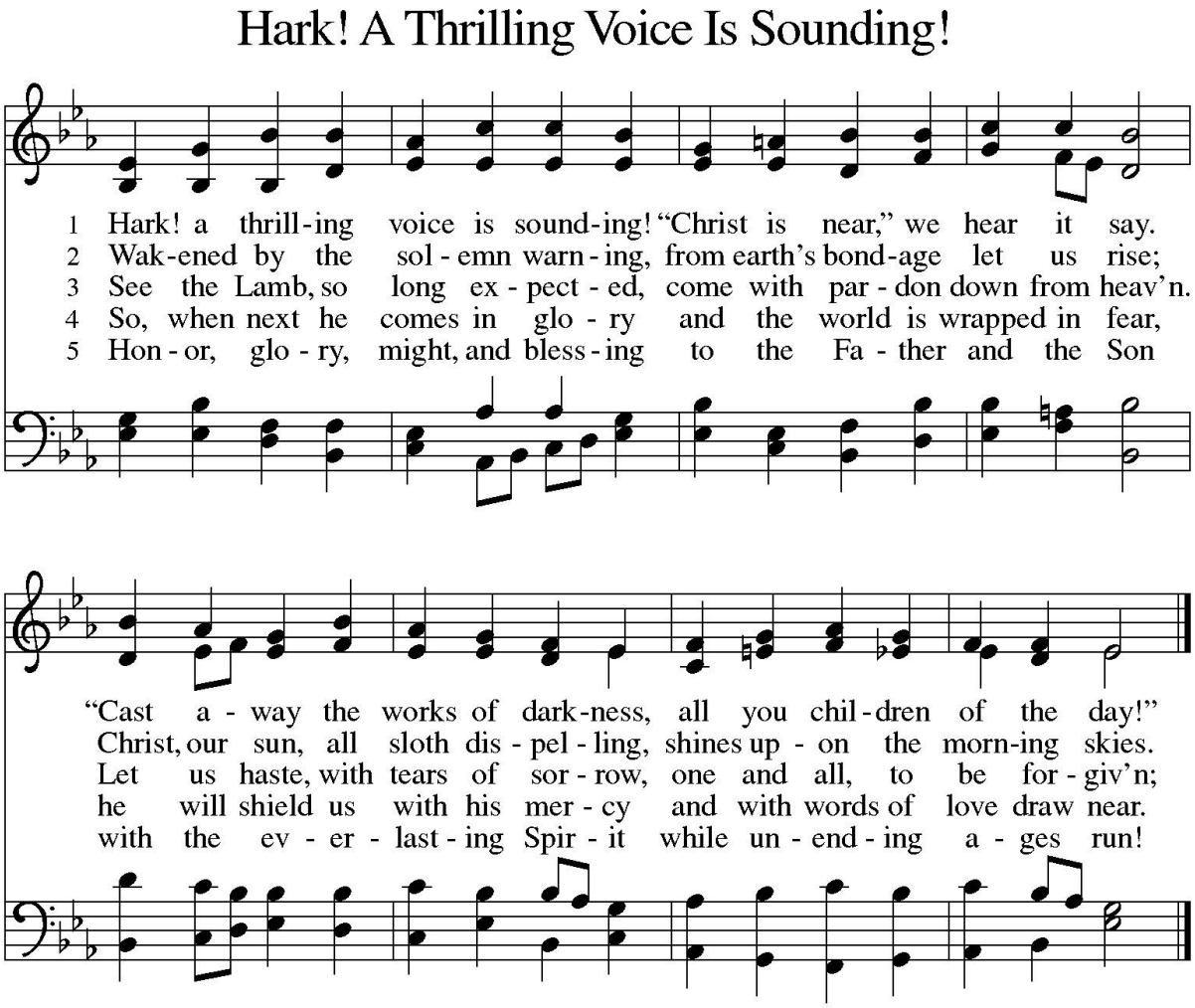
now and forever. Amen.

<u>Invitation to Communion</u>

God invites all people to this table. Here we find a thrill of hope, the promised peace, the joy of grace, the love of God. Come, not because you are perfect, but because God's love is perfect and given freely. **Amen.**

(All are welcome at the Table. The juice is the innermost circle on the tray. Reminder: You commune fully even if you consume just one of the elements.)

Communion hymn: ELW 246 Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding



Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

Post-Communion Blessing

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

Prayer after Communion
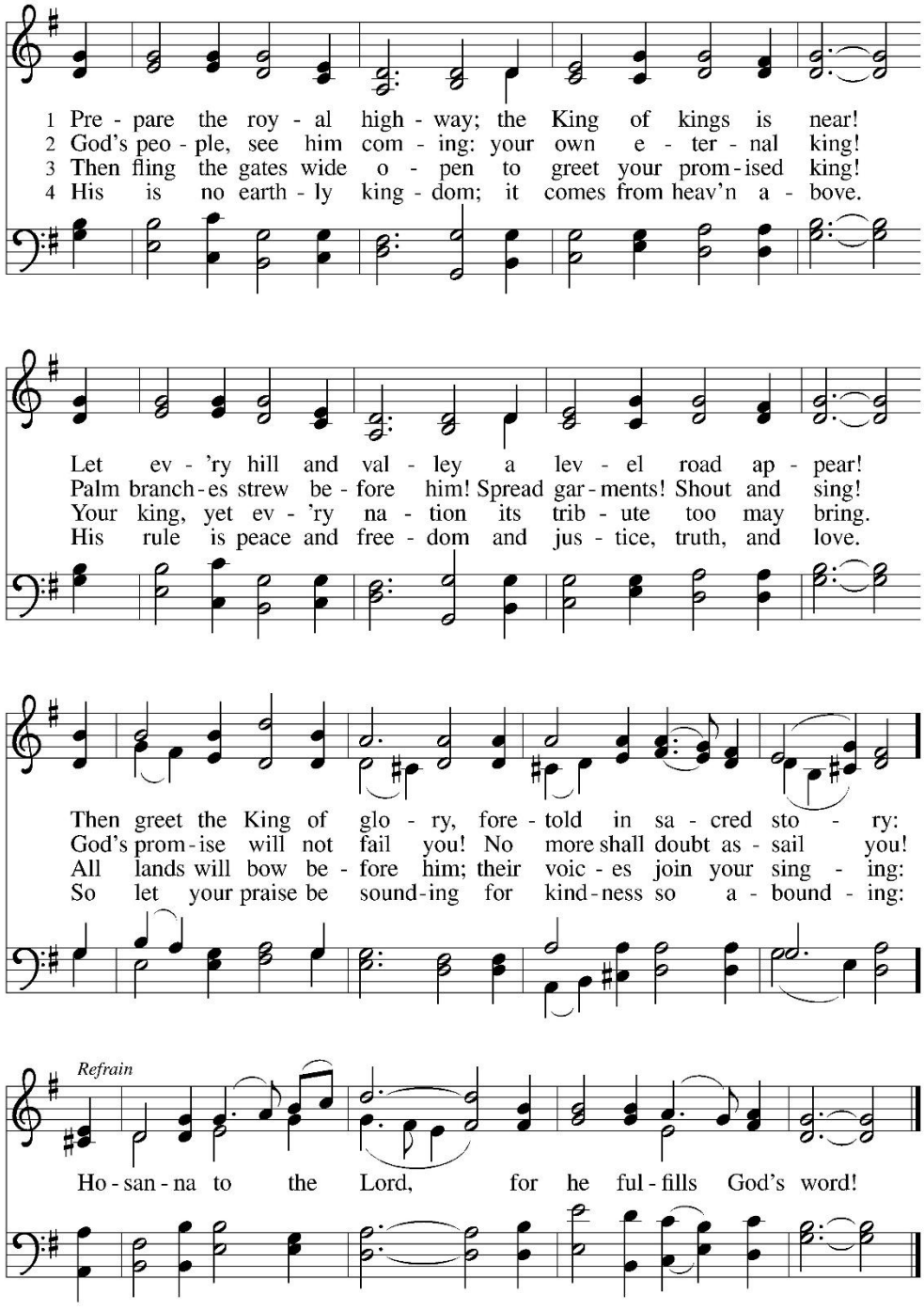
Generous God, **you satisfy our thirst in parched places, and you nourish us in faith. Assure us of your provision, and send us out to provide for others, following in the way of Jesus. Amen.**

Blessing

May the blessing of God, our salvation, Christ, our peace, and the Spirit, our joy, ☩ thrill your heart and sustain your spirit, now and always. **Amen.**

Sending hymn: ELW 264 Prepare the Royal Highway

Prepare the Royal Highway



Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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Dismissal

Go to share tidings of peace for all people.
Thanks be to God.

Announcements:

- **Hanging of the Greens:** Today, right after the service.
- **Getting Crafty:** Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. Bring your current work-in-progress and craft and visit for a while.
- **Christmas Pageant:** Dec. 27, 10 a.m.
- **Annual Meeting:** Jan. 17, right after service.

focelca.com
foclutheran@gmail.com
Pastor Jane Brda, SAM
Ellen Mueller — Music

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