



NATIVITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Caring, Witnessing, Serving



3rd Sunday of Advent

10:15 a.m.

December 15, 2024

ORDER OF WORSHIP

ELW - SETTING 1

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INTRODUCTION

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

P: = *Pastor*

W: = *Worship Assistant*

A: = *All in Attendance*

**indicates congregation should stand if able.*

PRELUDE

(During the procession and recession please turn to face the Processional Cross and follow its movements to and from the Altar).

GATHERING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

P: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship:

(a moment of silence for reflection as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.)

***ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

A: Amen

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

Silence is kept for reflection

P: God of mercy,

A: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P: God of might,

A: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

P: God in our midst,

A: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

A: Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN:**

“He Came Down”

ELW#253

1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

***GREETING**

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

A: And also with you.

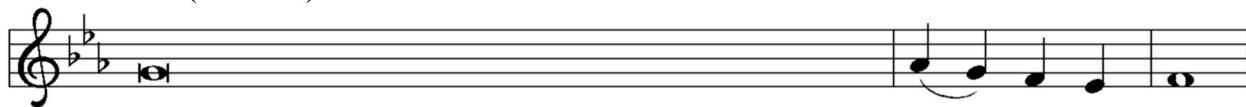
***KYRIE**

pg.98

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

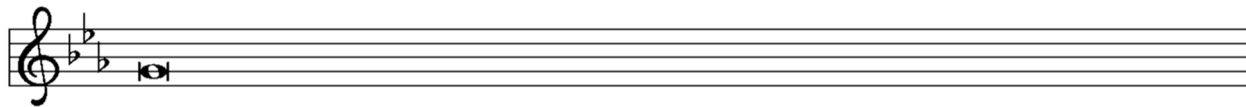
***KYRIE (cont'd)**



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



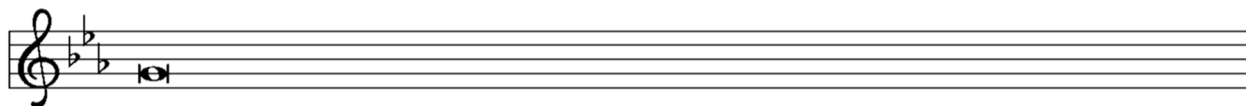
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray. 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. **A: Amen**

*THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

P: Let us Pray: 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.

A: Amen

*ADVENT CAROL

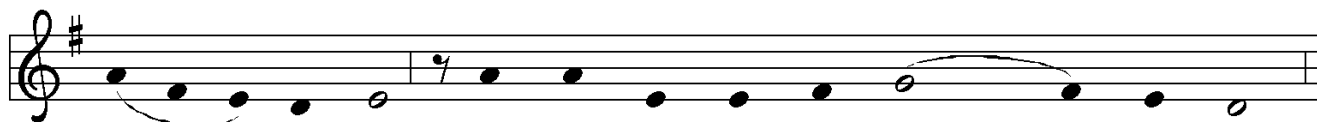
“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

ELW#257

(Stanzas 5 & 6)



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

5 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. *Refrain*

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

L: The Word of the Lord.

A: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

In your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (Is. 12:6)

W: ² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not ¹ be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become ¹ my salvation.

A: ³ **With joy you ¹ will draw water
from the wells ¹ of salvation.**

W: ⁴ And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call ¹ on God's name;
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this
name ¹ is exalted.

A: ⁵ **Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done ¹ gloriously;
let this be known in ¹ all the earth.**

W: ⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O ¹ royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy ¹ One of Israel.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

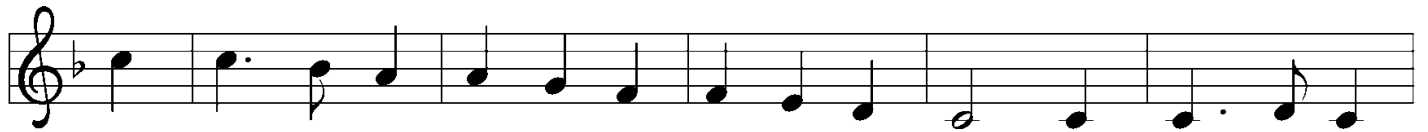
Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

L: The Word of the Lord.

A: **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is night.
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

pg.102



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the third chapter.

A: Glory to you, O Lord.

***GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18**

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

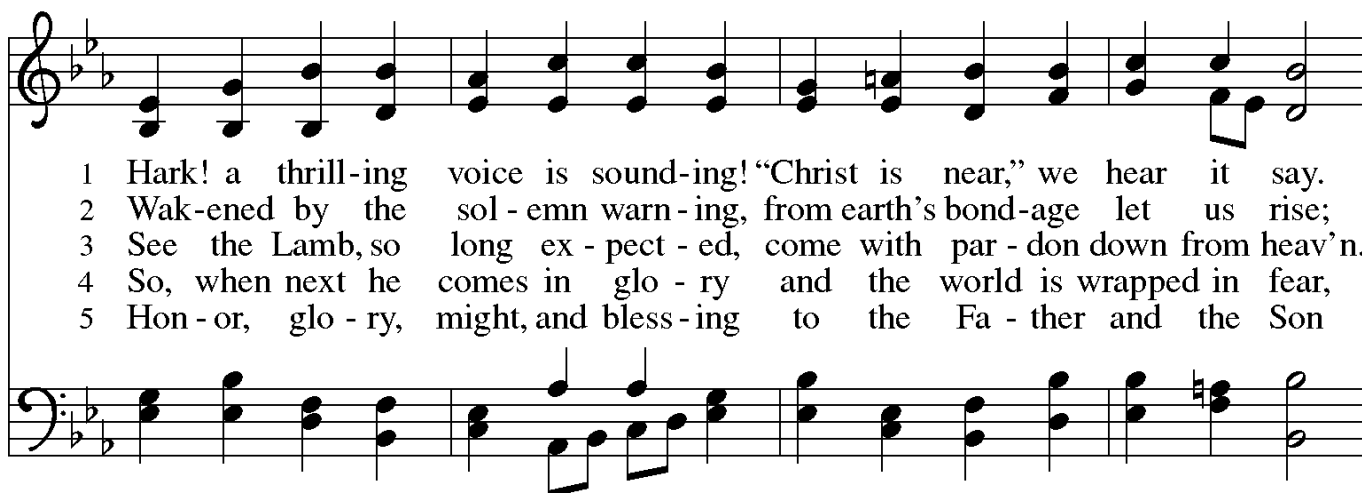
¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

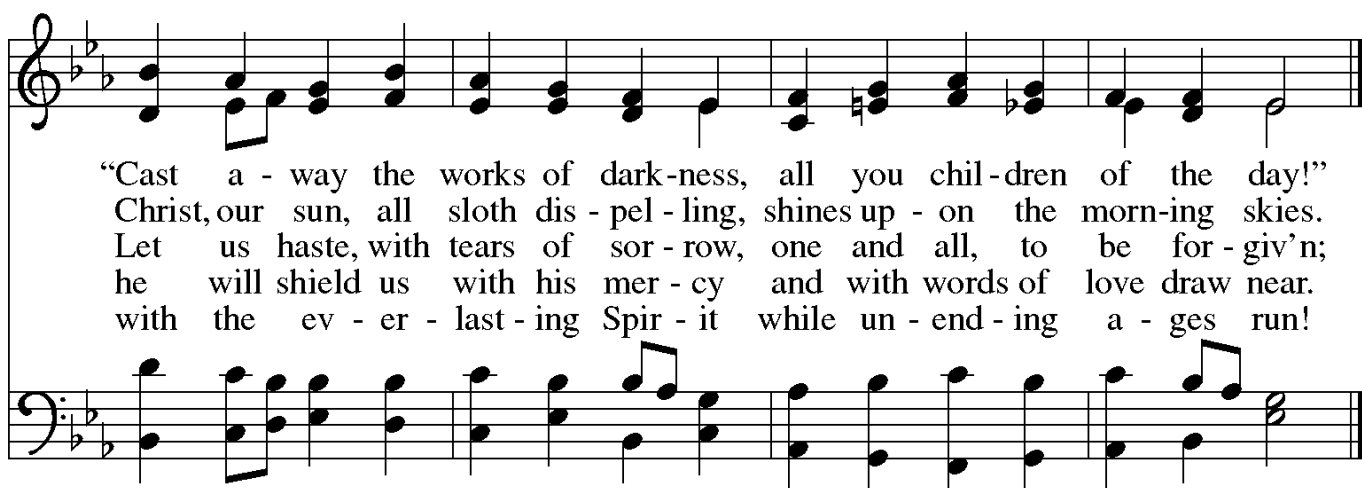
A: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: “Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding” ELW#246**



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! “Christ is near,” we hear it say.
2 Wak-ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth’s bond-age let us rise;
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don down from heav’n.
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son



“Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!”
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all, to be for - giv’n;
he will shield us with his mer - cy and with words of love draw near.
with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it while un - end - ing a - ges run!

***THE NICENE CREED**

P: Let us now confess our faith with the words of the Nicene Creed.

A: 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**

W: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence.

W: God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy,

A: receive our prayer.

W: God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy,

A: receive our prayer.

W: God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Grant safety and comfort to all those who witness and experience violence and those who live amongst the cruelty and chaos of war, especially for the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Lebanon, and Palestine. Lord, in your mercy,

A: receive our prayer.

W: God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. Especially for *Matt Fickes, Beth Neese, David Fisher, Debbie Pappa, Maryann Gilbert, Janet Liotta, Tim Wargo, Tom Eichenlaub* and those we name in our hearts before you. Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy,

A: receive our prayer.

W: God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy,

A: receive our prayer.

W: God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy,

A: receive our prayer.

P: Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

A: Amen.

***PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

A: And also with you.

OFFERTORY INTERLUDE



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



bles - 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 the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your

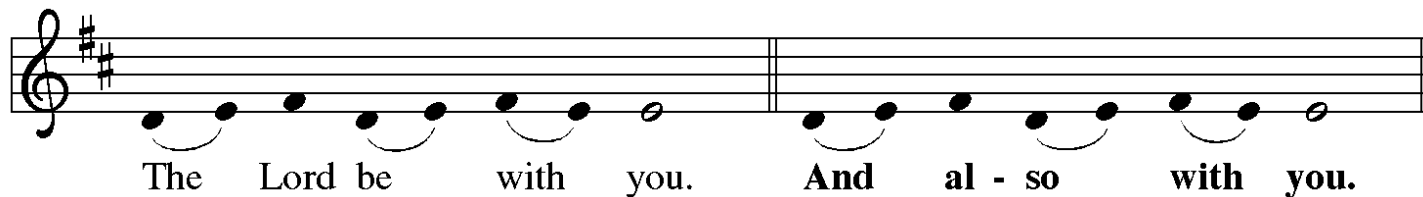


pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

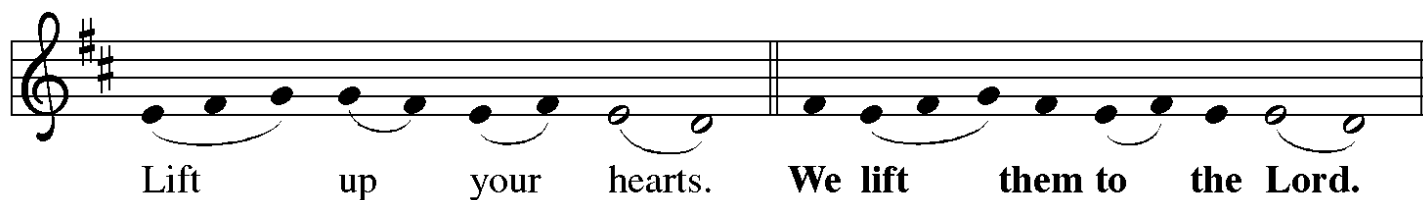
***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

W: Let us pray together.

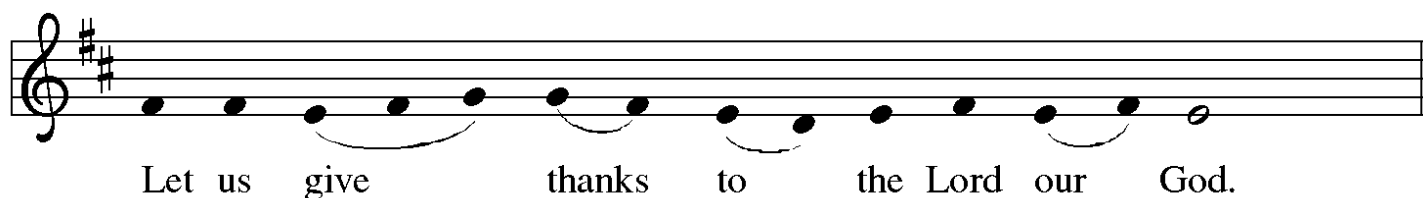
A: Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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.

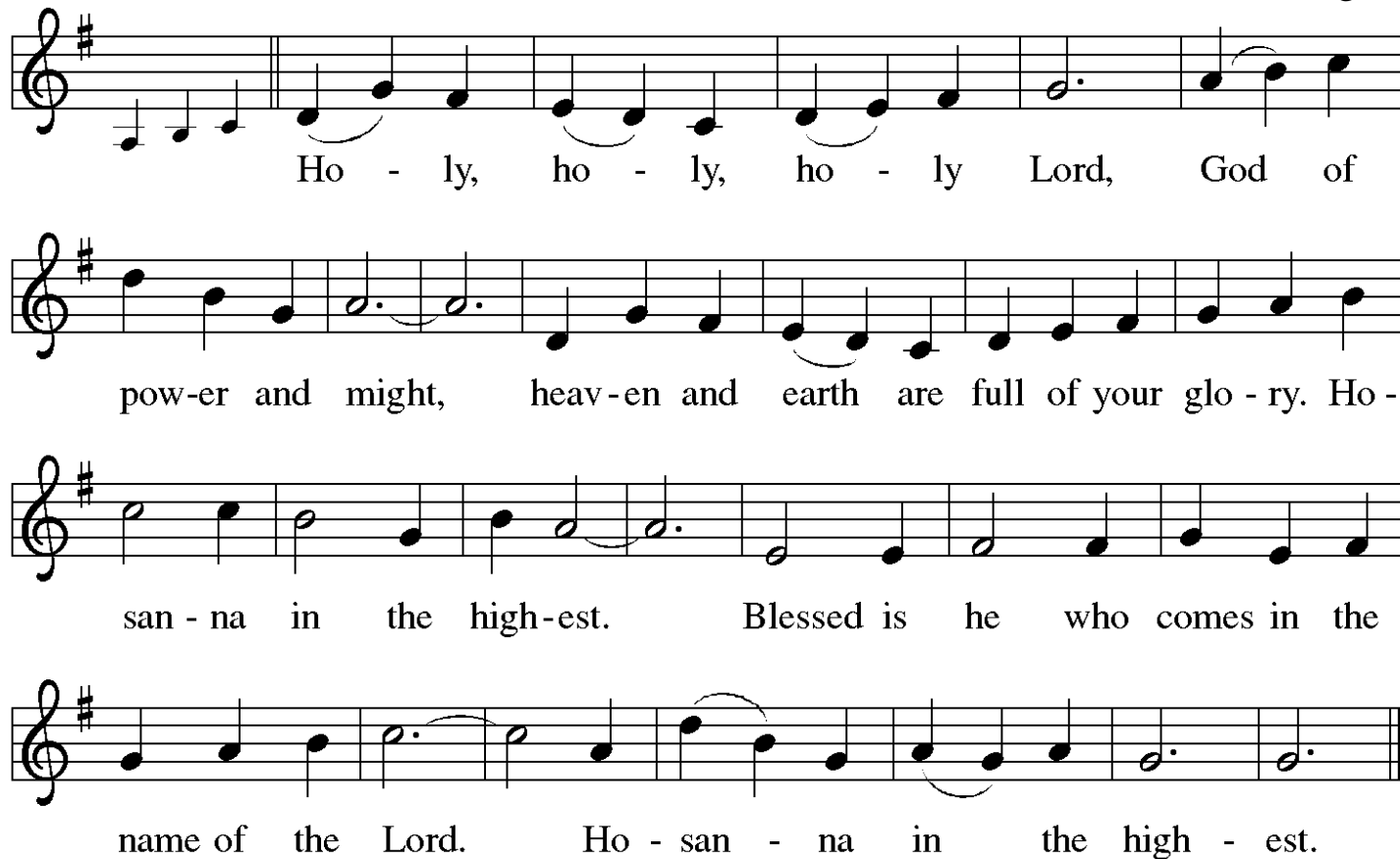


It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***THE PREFACE**

P: 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:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY:**



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. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

A: 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.

A: 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.

A: 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.

A: Amen.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Pg. 112

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

A: 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.

***THE PRESENTATION:** The gifts of God for the people of God. Come for all is now ready.

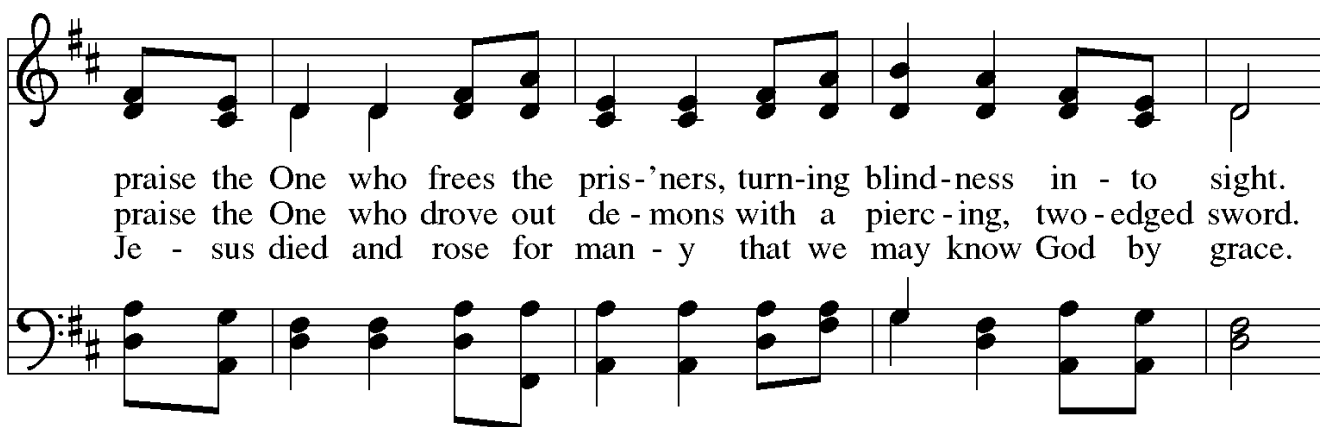
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
 mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
 world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
 way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION

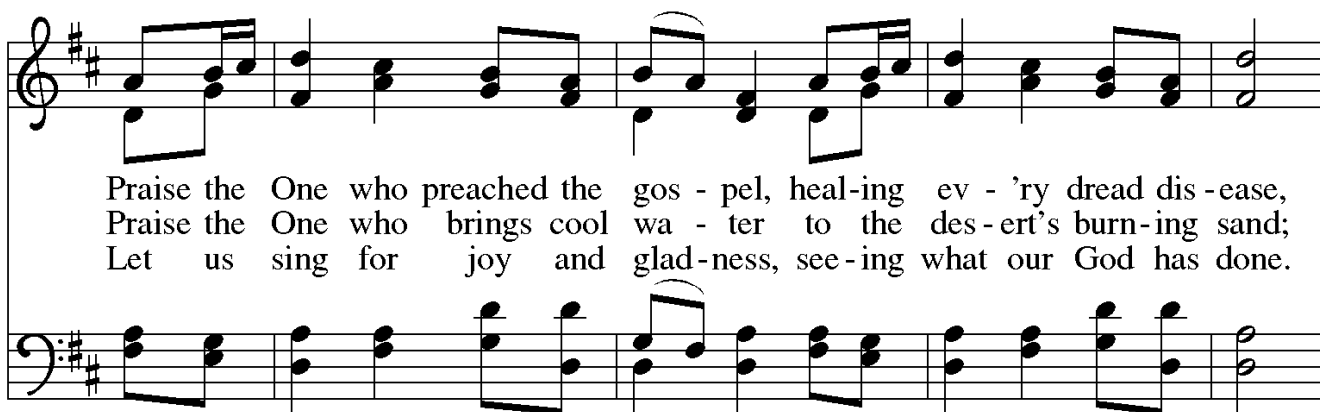
There is a grape juice option in cups located in the communion trays for those who wish to abstain from wine. If you desire a gluten free wafer in lieu of the bread for communion, please let Pastor know.



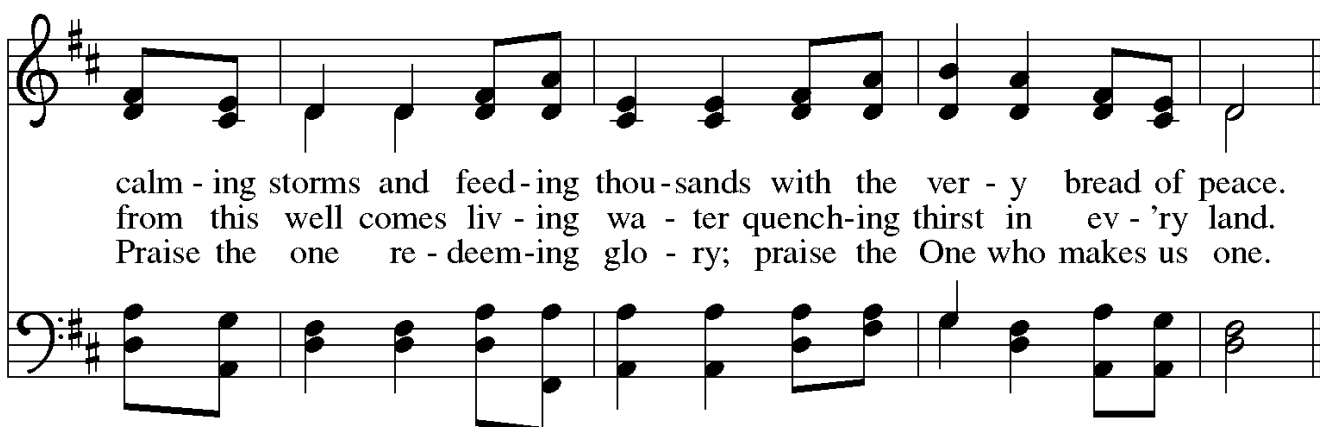
1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;
 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;
 3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;



praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners, turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight.
 praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.
 Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.



Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,
 Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;
 Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.



calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.
 from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
 Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

*TABLE BLESSING

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

A: Amen

*POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

pg.113



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -



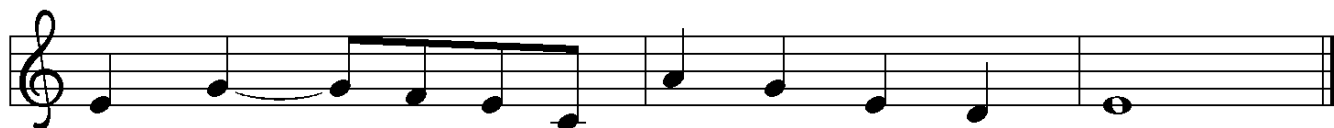
filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre-pared in the



sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions



and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.



Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace.

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

W: Let us Pray. Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

A: Amen.

* BLESSING

P: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, † bless and keep you now and forever. A: Amen.

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!

*DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

A: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

* Announcements *

Join us after worship today for our **annual Christmas Brunch** and join the children in singing Happy Birthday to Jesus.

Join us for a **pop-up choir**, singing on December 22 (Advent 4) and on Christmas Eve. All voices are welcome! Rehearsals will be held: December 17 at 7pm and December 24 at 6pm. Please contact our organist, Alex Bednar at bednarahorn@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us and if you have any questions. Hope to see you there!

Advent Calendars and Devotionals are available in the Narthex for you to take home.

Social Ministry is looking for volunteers in 2025 to deliver donations collected for the NHCO food pantry and sharing projects. The sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board across from the kitchen and on Sign-Up Genius. Please see Carol Huffman or Charlene Ott with any questions, or if you would like to assist in other ways. Volunteers will be provided with specific delivery details upon signing up.

North Hills Community Outreach Food Pantry Needs: Cereal, Macaroni & Cheese, Pasta Sauce, Granola Bars/Snacks, Chunky Soups, Peanut Butter. Please place all donations in the box labeled NHCO. *updated: 11/27/24*

The 2025 Flower chart is now available across from the nursery and on-line. Please remember to fill out a flower card indicating the reason when signing up.

We are in need of worship helpers and offering tellers each week. Feel free to use either the paper signup sheet by the flower chart or the on-line signup genius to volunteer.



The Rev. Jennifer Soltis, Pastor



Organist: Alex Bednar
 Worship Assistant: Tom Beecher
 Lector: Ken Saunders
 Usher: Bonnie Varley
 Greeter: Kevin & Pam Hoskins
 Videographer: Heather Johnson
 Altar Guild: Linda Ryan
 Offering Tellers: Merlinda Bisese & Tom Beecher

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 The flowers in the chancel this morning are presented by Jerry & Nancy Sever in  
 memory of Ed & Ethel Sever  
 ~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~\*\*~~~~

TODAY
MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

For the Week of December 15-21

Christmas Brunch after worship
 Art Group Meeting – 1pm
 AA meeting – 7pm
 WELCA (Bible Study) – 10:00am
 Choir rehearsal - 7pm
 Gathered in Grace – 10am

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|              | <u>In-person</u> | <u>YouTube</u> | <u>Offering</u> |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Dec 8</b> | 33               | 20             | \$ 3,846        |

**YTD Financial Summary as of November 30, 2024**

Revenue YTD \$83,241  
Expenses YTD \$76,819  
 Difference YTD \$6,422

For Pastoral care, you can contact Pastor Jennifer:  
[pastorjennifersoltis@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjennifersoltis@gmail.com) (570) 401-1764