

**Sunday, December 22, 2024**



**Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd**

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## INTRODUCTION

*Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."*

## PRELUDE

### WELCOME

*Please stand*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

*The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.*

Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that lead us to participate in evil systems. 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.**

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. **Amen.**

## Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



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

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.**



*Refrain*  
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 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.



*Refrain*  
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 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.



*Refrain*  
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



3 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.



*Refrain*  
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*Please sit*

## **FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a**

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. <sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5a</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM: Luke 1:46b-55**

<sup>46b</sup> My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup> my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**  
**From this day all generations will call me blessed:**  
<sup>49</sup> you, the Almighty, have done great things for me  
and holy is your name.  
<sup>50</sup> **You have mercy on those who fear you,**  
**from generation to generation.**  
<sup>51</sup> You have shown strength with your arm  
and scattered the proud in their conceit,  
<sup>52</sup> **casting down the mighty from their thrones**  
**and lifting up the lowly.**  
<sup>53</sup> You have filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> **You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,**  
**to remember the promise of mercy,**  
<sup>55</sup> the promise made to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his children forever.

## **SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10**

<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).” <sup>8</sup> When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.

<sup>10</sup> And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

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.

## **GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-45**

The holy gospel according Luke. **Glory to You, O Lord!**

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

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

## **HOMILY**

*Please stand*

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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

6

Is - ra - el Than ourns in lone - ly ex - ile here un -  
 far and high. In strength and beau - ty come and stay, teach  
 Si - nai's height. In an - cient times you gave the law in  
 tyr - an - ny. From depths of Hell your peo - ple save, and

13

til the son of God ap - pear.  
 us your will and guide our way. Re - joi ce Re - joi ce. Em -  
 cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.  
 give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

19

man - u - el shall come to you O Is - ra - el

## **APOSTLE'S CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostle's 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.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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.*

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

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

### **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

### **OFFERING**

*The gifts we use and share matter! Thank you for sharing your gifts for the sake of the world. Ushers will come by to collect today's offering, or you can use the green Give button on our church's website to support our mission of nurturing lives for following Christ.*

### **CHOIR ANTHEM**

*The Coming Joy*

### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

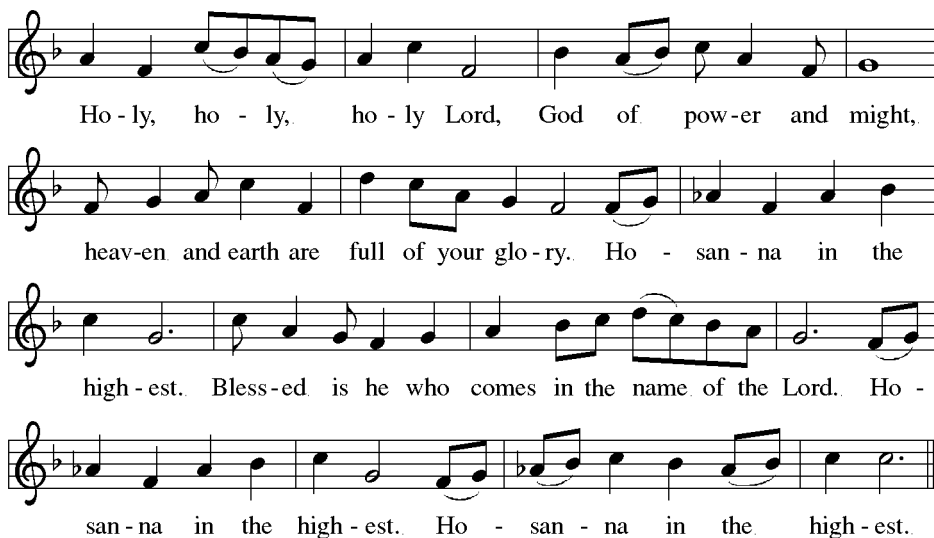
Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

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, God of pow - er and might,  
heav - en 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.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

### LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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.**

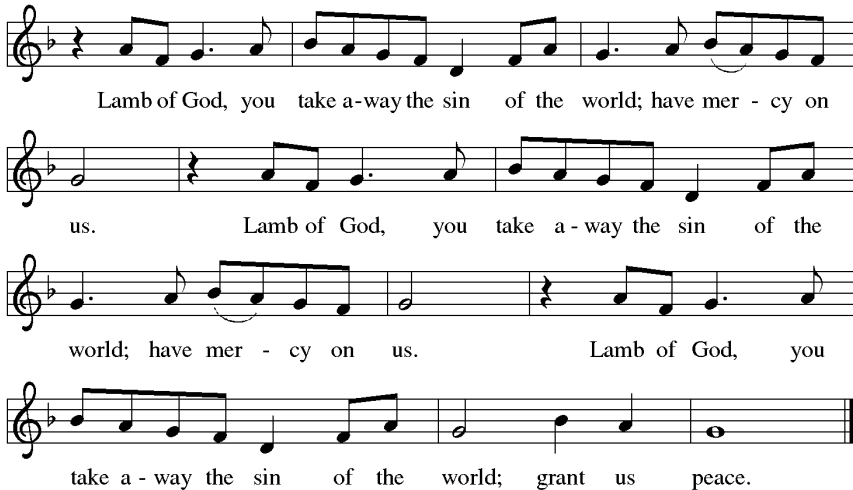
**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

*Please sit*

## 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.

## MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

### SENDING OF COMMUNION

Gracious God, when your Son Jesus gathered a crowd and blessed the loaves and fish, all ate and were filled. And still there was more. In your love and care, extend this meal to all who will come after to receive it. Give us all the comfort of your abiding presence and the courage to be the body of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

### FAMILY TIME

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BLESSING

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. **Amen.**

Please stand

## SENDING HYMN

### Soon and Very Soon



1 Soon and ver - y soon  
2 No more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
3 No more dy - in' there,  
4 Soon and ver - y soon



soon and ver - y soon  
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
no more dy - in' there,  
soon and ver - y soon



soon and ver - y soon  
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
no more dy - in' there,  
soon and ver - y soon



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu -



jah, hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah.

Text: Andraé Crouch, b. 1945

Music: VERY SOON, Andraé Crouch

Text and music © 1976 Bud John Songs, Inc./Crouch Music, admin. EMI Christian Music Publishing

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## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, nurturing lives for following Christ.

**Thanks be to God!**

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"Come Though Long Expected Jesus"

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

"Soon and Very Soon"

Offering Envelopes for 2025 are on the table in the narthex.



Following this morning's service we will meet in Fellowship Hall for Messy Church.

**Tuesday, December 24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service**

**Our Stewardship  
For the month ending November 2024**

	Church	Little Lambs	
Needed monthly	\$ 28,324.92	\$ 54,174.25	
Giving/Income for the month	11,740.65	59,222.01	
Monthly Expenses	\$ 21,128.43	\$ 52,074.75	
Giving/Income YTD	151,039.22	745,757.02	
Expenses YTD	274,448.40	684,149.21	
Total Profit/Loss YTD	\$(123,409.18)	\$54,460.61	\$(61,801.37)

**Through the Roof capital campaign transitions to our Building & Repair Fund**

Thank you to everyone who has helped support the ministry of Good Shepherd by contributing to the Through the Roof campaign. Since 2022, you contributed nearly \$30,000 towards major roof repairs. Now, two years later, we are closing the Through the Roof campaign, but we are not stopping our commitment to maintaining our property where so much ministry happens each week.

A recent large bequest was used to open an ELCA Ministry Growth account that we are calling our "Building & Repair Fund". Donations to this account will not only support the building, but will grow over time. Please consider making additions to the account by indicating this on your donation. If you have recurring contributions to the old roof appeal they can be easily transitioned to the new designated account. Please speak with any member of our finance team if you have questions.

Dave Mickley  
Finance Committee Chairperson