



first community

December 7, 2025

10 am SOUTH

ADVENT 2

GREETING – Seth

PRELUDE – Robert, organ

*Carol Improvisation on Quem pastores ("He
Whom Shepherds Came Praising")*

Paul Manz (1919-2009)

CALL TO WORSHIP⁽¹⁾ – Mary Kate

ONE: From the root of Jesse, new life springs
forth.

**MANY: What was once cut down now
begins to grow again.**

ONE: A child shall lead, and creation shall rest
in harmony.

**MANY: The wolf and the lamb shall share
the meadow.**

ONE: Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight the paths of peace.

MANY: We come, pruning away despair, clearing the way for mercy.

ONE: The Dreamer still plants seeds of peace among us.

ALL: Come, people of God—let us walk in the growing light and tend God’s dream together.

OPENING HYMN

O Day of God, Draw Near

**O day of God, draw near in beauty and in power,
Come with your timeless presence now to match our present hour.**

**Bring to our troubled minds, uncertain and afraid,
the quiet of a steadfast faith, calm of a call obeyed.**

**Bring justice to our land, that all may dwell secure,
and finely build for days to come foundations that endure.**

**Bring to our world of strife your sovereign
word of peace,
that war may haunt the earth no more and
desolation cease.**

WELCOME – Seth

**LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE 2
– Ethan, Alexa, Margot, Jacy, and
Charlotte Molitor with Rev. Seth
Stearns**

LEADER (clergy at lectern): Last week we lit
the Candle of Hope, remembering that even
small light can guide our steps.

R1: Today we light the second candle—the
Candle of Peace.

(Pause as the second candle is lit.)

R2: The prophet Isaiah dreamed of peace so
bold that even predators would forget to fear.

LEADER: John the Baptist carried that dream
into the desert, crying out, “Prepare the way
of the Lord!”

R1: Peace does not come by accident; it grows where hearts are willing to change.

R2: It begins with a single turning—a step toward forgiveness, a voice lifted for justice.

R1 AND R2: Holy Dreamer, plant your peace in us. Let our lives become rivers of reconciliation flowing through the world you love.

LEADER: Come, Lord Jesus—our Path and our Peace. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT – Mary Kate

ANTHEM- Sean Hooper, piano
Carol of the Bells (Advent Medley)
arr. Sean Hooper

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER – Seth

OFFERTORY

Invitation to Dream – Mary Kate

Receiving the People's Gifts

Anthem – Cambridge Choir

Carol of the Advent Philip Dietterich (b. 1931)

Presentation of Gifts and Prayer of Dedication⁽²⁾– Mary Kate

ONE: As the gifts are presented, will all rise in body or spirit?

ALL: God of Peace, bless these offerings and the hands that give them. Like seeds scattered in faith, may they take root in the soil of your kingdom— bringing reconciliation, healing, and hope to all who hunger for peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Doxology LASST UNS ERFREUEN - verse 1

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS – Glen

Brooklyn Bigler

Chad Bigler

Vivienne Bigler

AN INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE – Glen

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Glen

ONE: God of new growth, let the roots of your Word go deep within us. May old fears fall away like winter leaves and your peace take hold in our hearts. Through Christ, the Branch of Jesse, we pray. Amen.

PROPHETIC LESSON–Deacon

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,

and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor

and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist

and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;

the leopard shall lie down with the kid;

the calf and the lion will feed together,

and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;

their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,

and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy

on all my holy mountain,

for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord

as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

SERMON – Glen

“Dreaming of Peace”

HYMN OF PREPARATION

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night,
and death's own shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion – Mary Kate

Receiving Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving – Mary Kate

ONE: Holy God, we give you thanks for this meal of grace, for the peace that Christ plants in us like a tender shoot, and for the promise that even in places that feel cut down, your dream is still growing. Nourished at this table, send us out as bearers of your peace—eyes open to your light rising in the dark, hearts ready to make room for reconciliation, and lives shaped by the hope of your new creation. Let the world glimpse your dream through us until wolf and lamb can truly rest together and all your children dwell in harmony. In the name of the One who is our peace, we pray. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines

**O day of peace that dimly shines
through all our hopes and prayers and
dreams,
guide us to justice, truth, and love,
delivered from our selfish schemes.
May swords of hate fall from our hands,
our hearts from envy find release,
till by God's grace our warring world
shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.**

**Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,
nor shall the fierce devour the small;
as beasts and cattle calmly graze,
a little child shall lead them all.
Then enemies shall learn to love,
all creatures find their true accord;
the hope of peace shall be fulfilled,
for all the earth shall know the Lord.**

BENEDICTION – Seth

ONE: Go forth as gardeners of peace. May the Christ who roots us in love water your spirit until peace blossoms wherever you walk.

POSTLUDE – Robert, organ

*Herr Christ, der einzig Gott's Sohn ("Lord Christ,
the Only Son of God")*

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)