

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

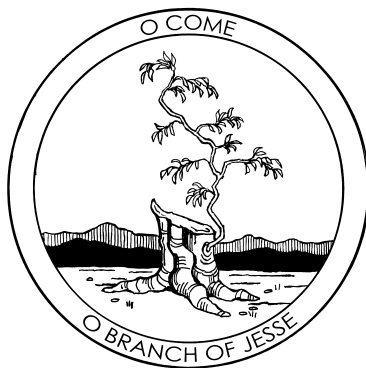
Our Mission: To share Christ's love with the greatest number of people.

Second Sunday of Advent, December 7, 2025

The Service at 8:30 and 11 am



At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.



GATHERING

PRELUDE

O Come Emmanuel, arr. Flor Peeters

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Please stand.

Pastor In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Congregation **Amen.**

Pastor Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Congregation **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor Long-expected God,
Congregation **we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

Pastor God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
+ You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.

Congregation **Amen.**


GATHERING HYMN: PREPARE THE ROYAL HIGHWAY #264

We invite you to turn and face the cross (as you are comfortable). Please turn to the front of the sanctuary after the cross has passed you. All sing.

Prepare the Royal Highway



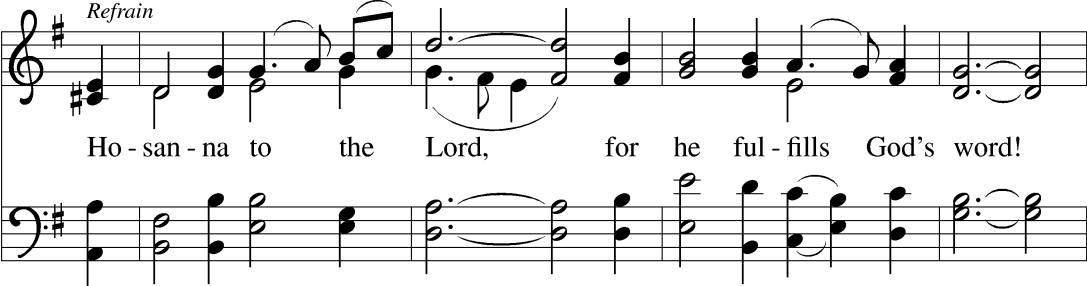
1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



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!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

Pastor The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
Congregation **And also with you.**

KYRIE

All sing..

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
Music: VENI EMMANUEL. French processional. 15th cent.

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
Refrain
un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor The Lord be with you.
Congregation **And also with you.**

Pastor Let us pray.
Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Congregation **Amen.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

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





THE WORD

Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

In today's reading the prophet describes the ideal ruler who will come in the future as a green shoot springing from a dead stump (David's royal line) of Jesse (David's father). Gifted by the Spirit, this messiah will seek justice for the poor, and the reign of this monarch will be experienced as paradise regained.

¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

²The 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.

³His 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;

⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek 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.

⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

⁷The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

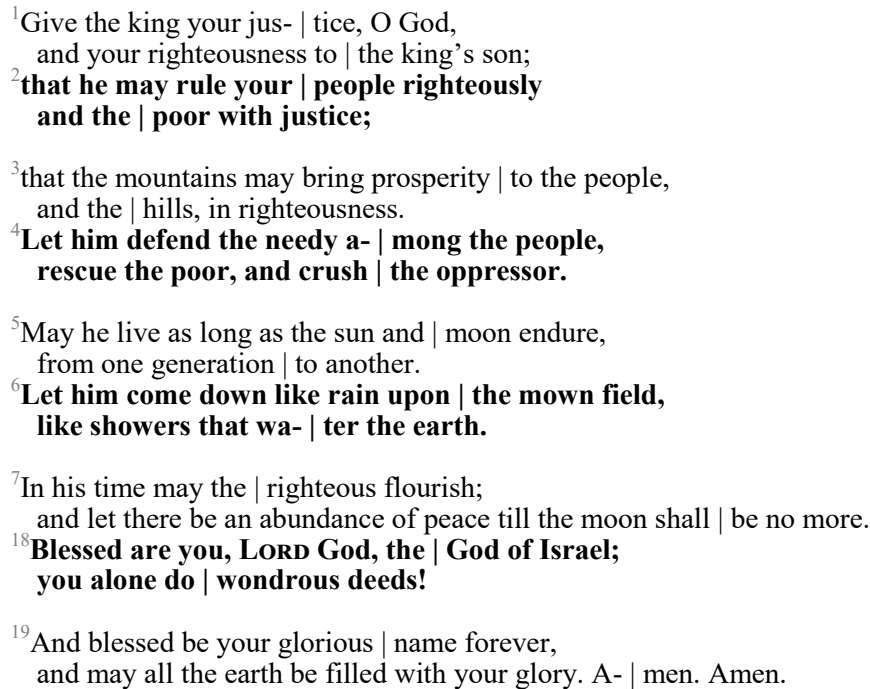
⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹They 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.

¹⁰On 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.

Reader	Word of God, word of life.
Congregation	Thanks be to God.

Congregation sings words in bold.



God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰and again he says,
“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹and again,
“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹²and again Isaiah says,
“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
Please stand and sing.

The Magnificat
Luke 1: 46-55

From the Holden Evening Prayer
by Marty Haugen

All:

1.3. My soul pro - claims your
2. You have cast the might - y

great-ness, O God, and my spir - it re-joic - es in
down from their thrones, and up lift - ed the hum - ble of

you, heart, You have looked with love on your
You have filled the hun - gry with

ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.
won-drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.

Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One,
Great and might - y are you, O Faith-ful One,

strong is your kind - ness ev - er - more.
strong is your jus - tice strong your love,

How you fa - vor the weak and low - ly one,
As you prom-ised to Sar-ah and A - bra - ham,

hum - bling the proud of heart.
kind - ness for - ev - er - more.



The Gospel is announced.

Pastor
Congregation

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume 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.

¹⁰Even 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.

¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

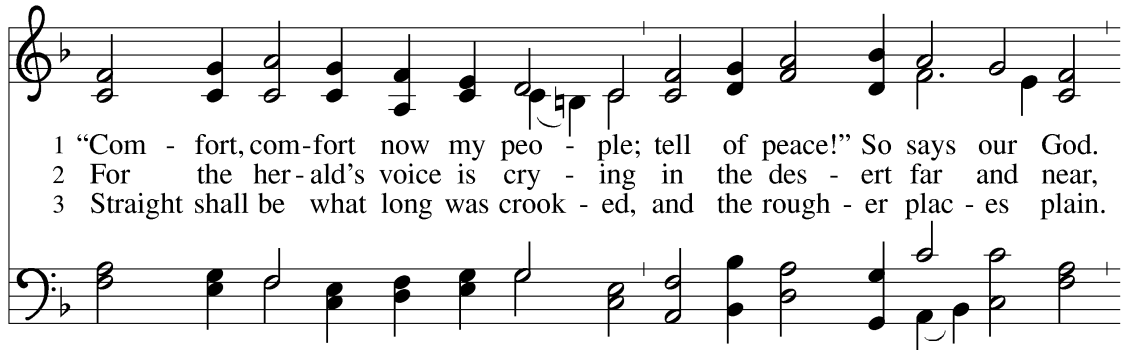
Pastor
Congregation

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

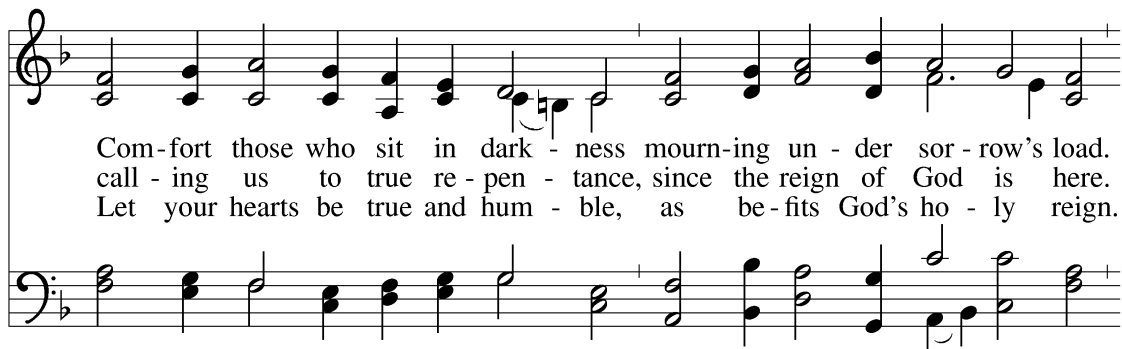
SERMON

*The Way Forward
Pastor Sharon Core*

Comfort, Comfort Now My People



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.

APOSTLES' CREED

Asst. Min.
Congregation

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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

Prayers are included for the whole Church, the nations, those in need, the parish and special concerns.

After each portion of the prayers:

Asst. Min. God of grace,
Congregation **hear our prayer.**

At the end of the prayer:

Pastor Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray,
 trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Congregation **Amen.**

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Our offerings to God are first of all just that – offerings of thanksgiving to God. As you are able please continue to support our ministry with your financial gifts.

Please sign the red attendance book and pass it down the pew.

OFFERTORY

"E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come" by Paul Manz

COME TO THE TABLE

OFFERTORY SONG
Please stand and sing.

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*



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

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Asst. Min.
Congregation

Let us pray.
Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.
Through this meal,
satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice
and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.
Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

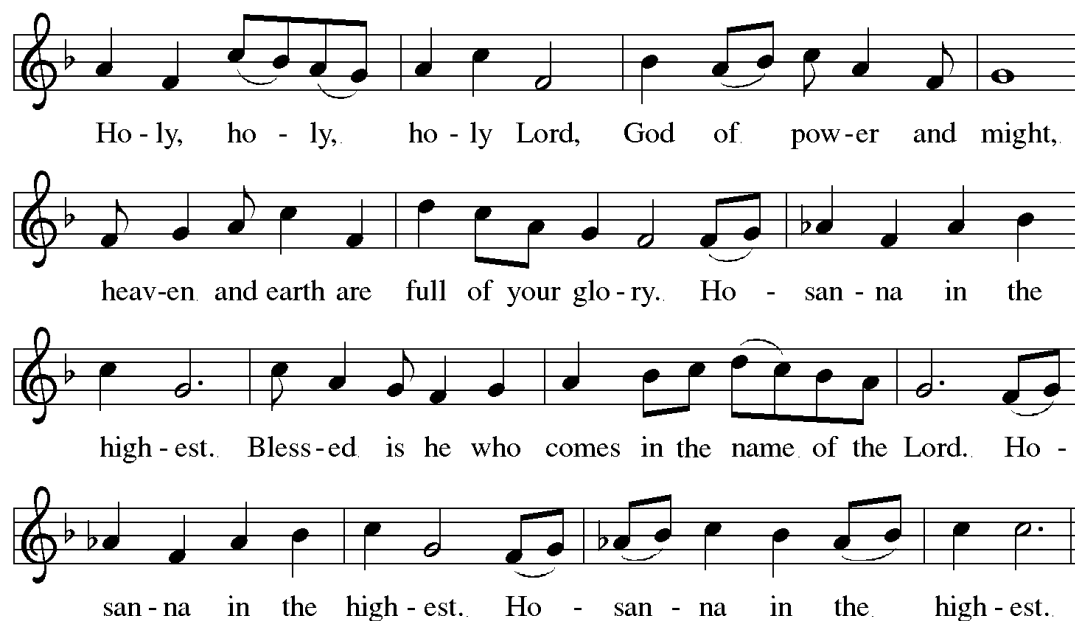
Pastor The Lord be with you.
Congregation **And also with you.**

Pastor Lift up your hearts.
Congregation **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
Congregation **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Pastor 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:

All sing.

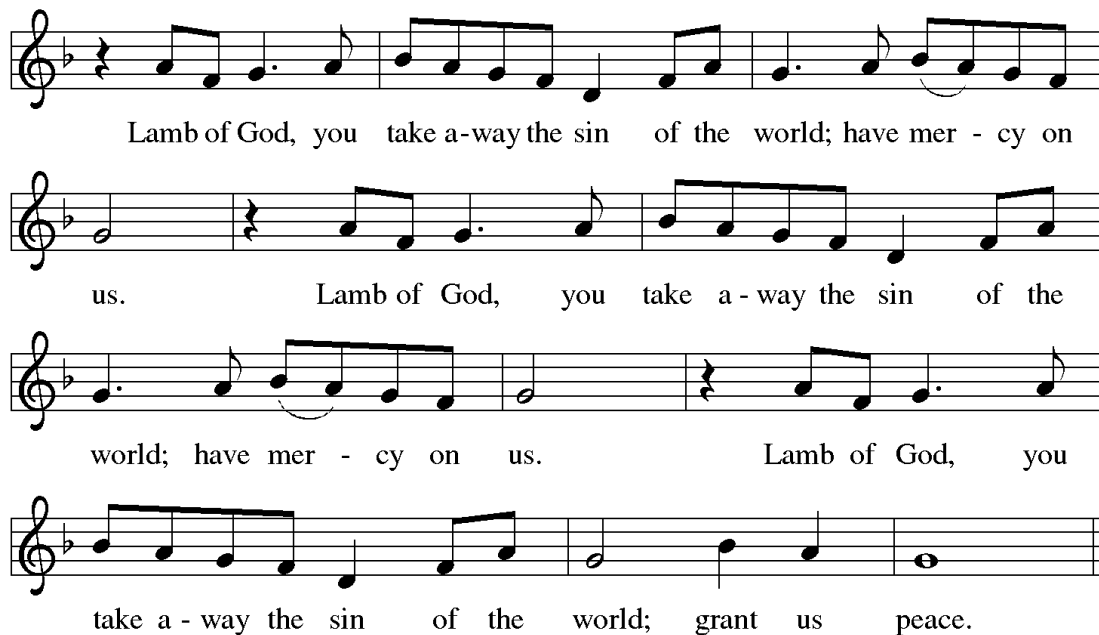


EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
Congregation **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.**

All sing.



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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNE



COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

Communion will be offered by intinction.

For those not comfortable receiving from those who are distributing the elements, a separate tray is available.

Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

Anyone not comfortable receiving the bread or the wine is invited to come forward for a blessing.

To receive a blessing, please cross your arms.

You are an important part of our faith community.

In Holy Communion we receive the true body and blood of Christ.

COMMUNION HYMN: THERE'S A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS #255

All sing.

There's a Voice in the Wilderness



1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a
 2 O Je - ru - sa - lem, her - ald good tid - ings, as -
 3 But the word of our Sav - ior is faith - ful, the

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a
 cend to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late
 arm of our God is strong, who stands in the midst of the

high - way, a high - way for our God!
 peo - ple the com - ing of their king.
 na - tions and soon will right the wrong.

The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the
 Like flow'rs of the field we per - ish, like
 Lord, feed your flock like a shep - herd, the

loft - y hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed
 grass our works de - cay; the pow'r and the pomp of
 lambs so gent - ly hold; in pas - tures of peace now

plac - es where God, our God, may go!
 na - tions shall pass like a dream a - way.
 lead them, and bring them to your fold.

Text: James Lewis Milligan, 1876-1961, alt.
 Music: ASCENSION, Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1904-1988
 Music © Estate of Eldred Bancroft. B. Burrows, Executor.

Please stand.

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

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Asst. Min. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will
 be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the
 greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
 Congregation Amen.

THE SENDING

BLESSING

Pastor

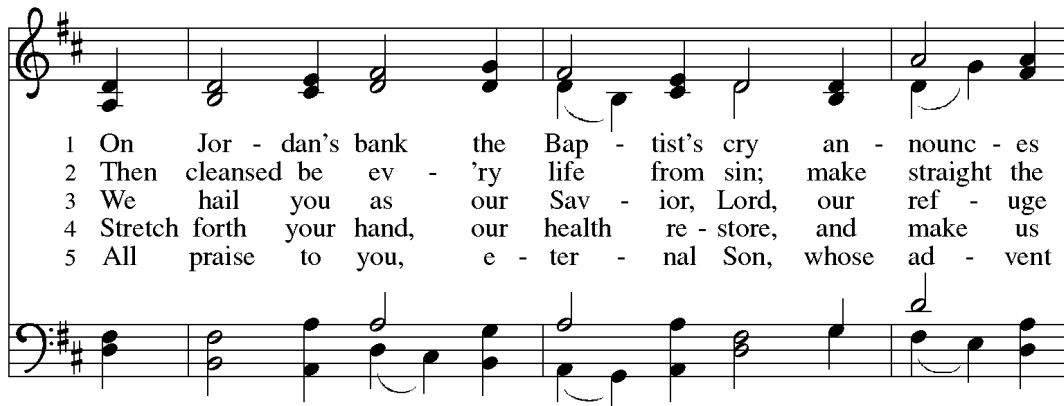
Congregation

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.


SENDING HYMN: ON JORDAN'S BANK THE BAPTIST'S CRY #249

Please follow the cross, turning toward the cross as it passes by your pew. As the cross leads, so Christ leads us out into the community to share Christ's love.

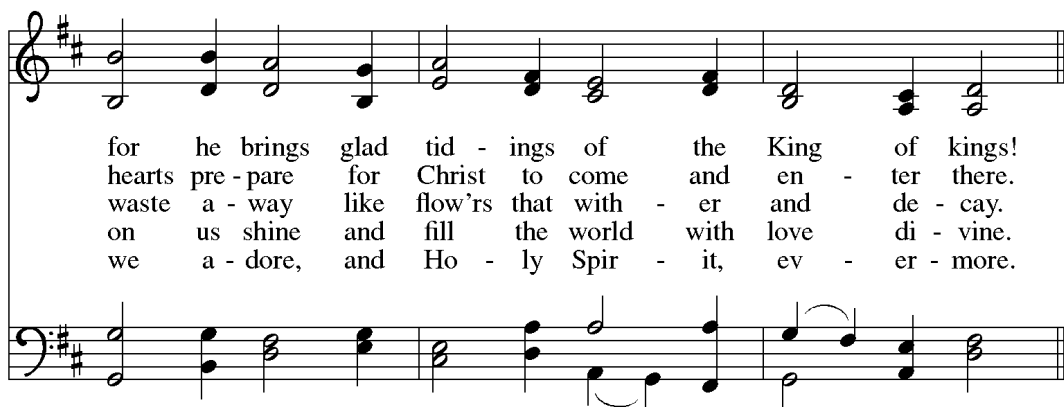
On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



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

Asst. Min.
Congregation

Go in peace. Share the good news.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Toccata on "Lift Up Your Heads" - Gilbert Martin

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

Children are welcome in our worship. There is a children's worship bulletin for them. If you prefer, a nursery and/or childcare is available for children up to age 3 during all worship services.

Hearing help available: We have personal hearing amplification units available for your use. Please speak with the person at the sound board.

Church Phone: 703-356-3346
Email: church@redeermclean.org

Sunday Services:

8:30 and 11 am for traditional services and 9:45 am for the contemporary service

Next Sunday's Scripture: Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146:5-10 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11

Turning and Mending (Again)

Being on the receiving end of sharp language can be heartbreaking. Indeed, words can wound—or worse. John the Baptizer, a key figure in our Advent narratives, finds himself at odds with other religious leaders of the time, and uses the tool he has (language) to call attention to their broken relationship. It's unclear what exactly led to this prickly, pointed exchange between John and the Pharisees and Sadducees, but there is a growing chasm between them.

"Prepare the way of the Lord," John cries out in the wilderness, echoing the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah cried out in his own day centuries prior, testifying to God's desire to mend the world (though the world seemed to be at an end). Perhaps John repeats Isaiah's plea in order to remind the people of his day of God's intent for all things: for the world to be mended, healed, made right; for the reign of heaven to be revealed on earth, here and now. Often, however, mending brokenness requires honesty first about the wounds that have been inflicted and the death that has been wrought. With John's painful honesty, his strained relationship with other leaders of his time takes a step toward healing, toward justice, so that a new beginning might take hold. This is a starting point, as difficult as it may be.

Every Advent, as the church year begins again, we hear the familiar call: Repent. Turn back to God. Repentance is no easy thing, but thankfully, God draws us back to this imperative, year after year, day after day, hour after hour. With infinite mercy, once again God invites us to turn toward healing, toward justice, toward the righting of the world, one relationship at a time.

The flowers are given to the glory of God.

Today we are using Setting 2 from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal.

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