

Advent, the beginning of the church calendar, is the period of time that includes the four Sundays immediately preceding Christmas Day. The English word Advent is derived from the Latin verb *advenire*, “to come.” Advent has to do with the Lord’s coming to us. The Lord has come to us (at the birth of Christ), continues to come to us through the power of the Holy Spirit, and will come to us again bodily at the end of this age. Advent is a time to reflect upon all of the ways—past, present, and future—in which the Lord enters into our lives and our world.

Please remember that the purpose of Advent is not to imagine ourselves to be living at the time immediately preceding Christ’s birth and so somehow pretend that we are waiting for him to be born. Neither is the purpose of Advent to think sentimental thoughts about the baby Jesus. There is no real spiritual power in any of this. Instead, the purpose of Advent is to pray for the coming of the Lord and to learn how to wait for him.

During Advent we remember his first coming and how he kept his promises to his people in the Hebrew Scriptures. Because he was faithful long ago, we can be assured he will remain faithful to the end. Dwelling on God’s faithfulness during Advent is a way of enriching and strengthening our faith. In addition, we also pray for a greater experience of his presence in our lives today. For this reason, Advent is a great time to begin a new practice of prayer, setting aside time for the Lord in our daily lives.

And, finally, Advent is a season to consider (or consider again) Jesus’ promises to return to us in bodily form. On that day, he will powerfully and graciously deliver us from all evil, overthrow his enemies, and wipe away every tear. In this way, Advent is a time where we foster and cultivate our ability to faithfully and expectantly wait for the Lord’s return.

## Sunday Schedule

10:00 Worship

Welcome to worship at All Saints! We are really glad to have you with us for worship today. Whether you have been a Christian for many years, are trying to sort out what the Christian faith is all about, or are just here as a favor to your friend, we're thrilled to have you as our guest.

### *Nursery for Ages 0-4:*

We have a safe and fun nursery located in the orchestra room near the gym. We use a Kid Check program for security.

## 2 Samuel 7:1-11

David expresses his desire to build a house for the Lord. But the Lord does not approve, and instead states on his own initiative that he will establish David's house (i.e., dynasty) eternally, promising him an eternal throne: "And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:16).

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 20, 2020 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

We urge you, in love, to please wear your face covering whenever you are in the building and throughout the duration of the service. This is an important way for us to protect our neighbor's good health—especially important for the older Christians among us today. As you have likely read in the news, Idaho has some of the highest rates of positive COVID tests in the nation right now, and hospitals are filling up with sick patients. Thank you for caring for the community in this way. If you have a medical exception for face coverings, please fill out the form on the back table to alert us of that fact.

## Call to Worship

After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent." Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you." But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:

"Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"

"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.'"

Brother and sisters, David's promised house is found in Christ Jesus our Lord, whom we worship together. Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus.

**Blessed be the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit!**

# HARK, A THRILLING VOICE IS SOUNDING

LATIN HYMN, 6TH C.



1. Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing, "Christ is nigh," it  
2. Wak - ened by this sol - emn warn - ing, Let the anx - ious  
3. Hon - or, glo - ry, might and bless - ing Be to God, the



seems to say, "Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,  
soul a - rise; Christ, the Sun, all gloom dis - pell - ing,  
Fa - ther, Son; And the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it,



O ye chil - dren\_\_ of the day."  
Shines up - on\_\_ the\_\_ morn - ing skies.  
While e - ter - nal\_\_ a - ges run.

*Refrain*



Al - le - lu - ia, Christ is com - ing,



Al - le - lu - ia, Christ is nigh;



Al - le - lu - ia, God is with\_\_ us,



Christ is come, Em - man - u - el.

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## The Creed

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The Nicene Creed is one of the most famous and influential creeds in the history of the church because it settled the question of how Christians can worship one God and also claim that this God is three persons.

It was also the first creed to obtain universal authority in the church, and it improved the language of the Apostles' Creed by including more specific statements about the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

What we call the Nicene Creed is actually the product of two ecumenical councils—one in Nicaea (present-day Iznik, Turkey) in AD 325, and one in Constantinople (now Istanbul) in AD 381—and a century of debate over the nature of the relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

# Nicene Creed

Christian, what do you believe?

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.**

**Who, for us and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and he will come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.**

**And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## Opening Prayer

## Confession of Sin

Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang,  
Proclaiming your royal degree;  
But of lowly birth you came to earth,  
And in great humility.

The foxes found rest, and the birds their nest  
In the shade of the forest tree;  
But your couch was the sod, O Son of God,  
In the deserts of Galilee.

You came, O Lord, with the living Word,  
That should set your people free;  
But with mocking scorn and with crown of thorn,  
They bore you to Calvary.

When the heav'ns shall ring, and her choirs shall sing,  
At your coming to victory,  
Let your voice call me home, saying "Yet there is room,  
There is room at my side for thee."

Emily Elliott, 1864

**Almighty God,  
who inhabits eternity  
and calls the stars by name,  
yet was incarnate of the virgin Mary and made man;  
who came to dwell with those  
who are of a humble and contrite spirit:**

**We confess that we have doubted your gracious love.  
Instead of living like you delight in us, we avoid you in shame and guilt.  
Instead of receiving your favor as a gift, we try to earn it with our efforts.  
Instead of accepting your freedom, we prefer our chains.  
Instead of pursuing your purposes, we cling to our own agendas.  
Forgive us. Embrace us. Cleanse us. Heal us. Amen.**

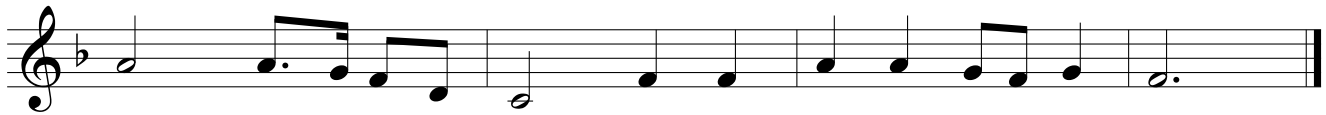
(You are invited to confess your sins silently.)

# GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills and ev-'ry - where;



Go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born.

*Fine*  
*after*  
*v. 3*



While shep - herds kept their watch - ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,  
The shep - herds feared and trem - bled when, lo! a - bove the earth  
Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born



be - hold, through - out the heav - ens there shone a ho - ly light. —  
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth. —  
and brought us God's sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

# Assurance of Pardon

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
Your sins are pardoned. The penalty is paid. **Thanks be to God!**

—based on Isaiah 40:1-2

# GOD REST YOU MERRY GENTLEMEN

ENGLISH CAROL, 18TH CENT.



1. God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle-men, let no - thing you dis - may,  
2. From God our Heav'n - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came;  
3. Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,



re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - vior was born on Christ - mas day,  
and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought tid - ings of the same:  
and with true love and broth - er - hood each oth - er now em - brace;



to save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a - stray;  
how that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name.  
this ho - ly tide of Christ - mas all oth - er does ef - face.



O — tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy,



O — tid - ings of com - fort and joy.

# HOW GREAT OUR JOY

TRADITIONAL GERMAN CAROL



1. While by the sheep \_\_\_\_\_ we watched at night,  
2. There shall be born, \_\_\_\_\_ so he did say,  
3. There shall a child \_\_\_\_\_ lie in a stall,  
4. This gift of God \_\_\_\_\_ we'll cher - ish well,



glad tid - ings brought \_\_\_\_\_ an an - gel bright. \_\_\_\_\_  
in Beth - le - hem \_\_\_\_\_ a child to - day.  
this child who shall \_\_\_\_\_ re - deem us all.  
that ev - er joy \_\_\_\_\_ our hearts shall fill.



How great our joy! Great our joy! Joy, joy, joy! Joy, joy, joy!



Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high! Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high.

## Passing of the Peace

As recipients of God's grace, we gladly receive peace from him. In response to his grace, we also extend that grace to one another with a handshake or a hug. Traditionally, Christians have greeted one another during this time in the service with the phrase, "The peace of Christ be with you."



## Litany for Advent

O God we pray, “**Your kingdom come!**”

Come bring your purpose near to make the force of evil fade,  
your goodness to appear as righteousness, a rolling stream  
to quench a thirsty land, the waiting season spent at last:  
your kingdom close at hand!

O God we pray, “**Your kingdom come!**”

Come as a marriage feast in which the first and honored guests  
shall be the last and least;  
come lift the poorest of the poor up to your finest ranks,  
the hungry fed, the naked clothed,  
the downcast filled with thanks!

O God we pray, “**Your kingdom come!**”

Come with your gift of growth; you scatter seed upon the ground,  
mix leaven in the loaf!  
What’s sown in secret, soon reveal to claim your harvest’s goal,  
till we attain your lasting aim:  
the leavening of the whole!

O God we pray, “**Your kingdom come!**”

Come grant your unity. You seek and tend the wayward ones  
to form community, so that the lost may enter in  
your good and holy place, and find their joy is centered in  
a heavenly embrace!

O God we pray, “**Your kingdom come!**”

Come claim creation wide; then shall the power of evil break,  
and sin no more divide.  
Your love shall launch a lasting reign as earth’s old ills are healed;  
by mercy, justice, peace anew,  
in perfect joy revealed! Through our Lord Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

## Offering

The offering is part of our regular worship. Our hope is that all gifts offered will come from an understanding that we give because God first gave to us, and that every penny will be carefully and thoughtfully invested in cultivating faith in Jesus Christ. If you would like to give online, visit our website; or text GIVE to 208-591-8044 and follow the instructions that are texted in reply.

## Sermon

**Luke 2:13-18, 67-79**

13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. 16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, 17 and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

18 And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.”

67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
for he has visited and redeemed his people  
69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David,  
70 as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,  
71 that we should be saved from our enemies  
and from the hand of all who hate us;  
72 to show the mercy promised to our fathers  
and to remember his holy covenant,  
73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us  
74 that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear,  
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.  
76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people  
in the forgiveness of their sins,  
78 because of the tender mercy of our God,  
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high  
79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

“When You See the Sunrise”  
Rev. Brad Chaney

# INFANT HOLY, INFANT LOWLY

POLISH CAROL, 1908



1. In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, for his bed, a cat - tle stall;  
2. Flocks were sleep-ing; shep-herds keep-ing vig-il till the morn-ing new;



Ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ, the Babe, is Lord of all.  
Saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift are wing-ing, an - gels sing-ing, No - els ring-ing, tid - ings bring-ing;  
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais-es voic-ing greet the mor - row:



Christ, the Babe, is Lord of all! Christ, the Babe, is Lord of all!  
Christ, the Babe, was born for you! Christ, the Babe, was born for you!

# The Lord's Supper

## Communion

Please pick up your communion cups on the entry table. The bread is gluten-free. The grape juice is white and wine red.

Just as the climax of all history will be the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, we conclude our worship in the presence of God by feasting. The Spirit takes the common elements of bread and wine and feeds us spiritually with the body and blood of Jesus, for our nourishment and growth in grace, and so strengthens us to be sent out into the world as God's agents of his generous hospitality.

## Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and acknowledge you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Supper, also called the Eucharist or Communion, is the family meal of Christians. We invite all baptized followers of Jesus Christ who acknowledge their sins against God and their neighbors, and confess their need for the grace of Christ to partake of this meal. If you are a Christian and haven't been baptized, please talk with one of our pastors. We would be honored to baptize you.

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is right, our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,  
who gave your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ,  
for our salvation: the Supreme Gift!

Therefore we praise you,  
joining our voices with angels and archangels  
and with all the company of heaven,  
who for ever sing this hymn  
to proclaim the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest!

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

All glory and blessing are yours, our holy God,  
for in your mercy you gave your Son.

**Dying, you destroyed our death;  
rising, you restored our life.  
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on this sacramental meal,  
that in eating and drinking we may be made one with  
Christ and one another.

# JOY HAS DAWNED

KEITH GETTY & STUART TOWNEND, 2004



1. Joy has dawned up - on the world, prom - ised from cre - a - tion:  
2. Son of A - dam, Son of Heav'n, giv - en as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled, hope for ev - 'ry na - tion.  
re - con - cil - ing God and man: Christ our might - y Cham - pion!



Not with fan - fares from a - bove, not with scenes of glo - ry,  
What a Sav - ior, what a Friend, what a glo - rious mys - t'ry:



but a hum - ble gift of love: Je - sus born of Ma - ry.  
once a babe in Beth - le - hem, now the Lord of his - t'ry.



Joy has dawned up - on the world!

## Benediction and Sending

Let us go forth and serve the world as those who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**Thanks be to God!**

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you; wherever he may send you; may he guide you through the wilderness; protect you through the storm; and may he bring you home rejoicing at the wonders he has done.