

**St. Mark's Presbyterian Church
First Sunday in Advent – November 30, 2025**

Responsive Call to Worship – Advent Liturgy

The prophet Isaiah announced that people of all nations will come to the mountain of the Lord and learn God's ways.

When we look at this suffering world, we know we need to follow God's ways.

God will settle disputes among the nations. Weapons will be transformed into tools for planting and growth. Nations will live in peace — no more will they prepare for war.

We cling to that promise and light this candle of hope, inspired by a vision of a world where children grow into adulthood, and parents live to old age.

The candle of hope is lit.

Let us pray together:

Living God, make us more aware of your presence. We trust your promises and wait with hopeful hearts. Come, Lord Jesus.

Hymn 767 Lord, speak to me

**1. Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
in living echoes of your tone;
as you have sought, so let me seek
your erring children lost and lone.**

**2. Oh lead me, Lord, that I may lead
the wandering and the wavering feet;
oh feed me, Lord, that I may feed
your hungering ones with manna sweet.**

**3. Oh teach me, Lord, that I may teach
the precious truths that you impart,
and wing my words, that they may reach
the hidden depths of many a heart.**

**4. Oh fill me with your fullness, Lord,
until my heart shall overflow
in kindling thought and glowing word,
your love to tell, your praise to show.**

5. Oh use me, Lord, use even me

just as you will, and when, and where,
until at last your face I see,
your rest, your joy, your glory share.

Prayer of Praise (*minister*)

Hymn 164 O little town of Bethlehem

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by:
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.
3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings born of heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh come to us, abide with us,
our Lord, Emmanuel.

Prayer of Confession (*congregation*)

God of hope, we confess that too often we prefer darkness to light, and our plans to your principles. We have distorted the truth and accepted lies. We have praised our own cleverness rather than your glory. We have exploited neighbours, abused the earth, and chosen strife instead of peace. In your mercy, hear our silent confession of sin; forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct who we shall be.

- silent confession -

The Lord's Prayer (*Debts/Debtors*)

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from
evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. For
ever and ever. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon (*minister*)

Hymn 118 Hark the glad sound

**1. Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long;
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song!**

**2. You come the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before you burst,
the iron fetters yield.**

**3. You come the broken heart to bind,
the wounded soul to cure,
to bring the treasures of God's grace,
good tidings for the poor.**

**4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,**

and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your most honoured name.

Responsive Reading Psalm 122 p. 575 NT & Psalms

¹I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord.”

**²And now here we are,
standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem.**

³Jerusalem is a well-built city;
its seamless walls cannot be breached.

**⁴All the tribes of Israel—the Lord’s people—
make their pilgrimage here.
They come to give thanks to the name of the Lord,
as the law requires of Israel.**

⁵Here stand the thrones where judgment is given,
the thrones of the dynasty of David.

**⁶Pray for peace in Jerusalem.
May all who love this city prosper.**

⁷O Jerusalem, may there be peace within your walls
and prosperity in your palaces.

**⁸For the sake of my family and friends, I will say,
“May you have peace.”**

**⁹For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek what is best for you, O Jerusalem.**

New Living Translation (NLT)

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Scripture Lessons

Isaiah 2:1-5 p. 554 pew Bible

Romans 13:11-14 p. 277 NT & Psalms

Matthew 24:36-44 p. 49 NT & Psalms

Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon New year, new hope?

Prayers of the People (*minister*)

Prayer of Dedication (*congregation*)

**God, our hope, and our help, receive our gifts as seeds
of gratitude for your gift to us in Christ Jesus. Bless
these seeds with growth so that hope will sprout in**

people who struggle with despair, and places trying to rebuild after devastating loss. Be their hope and their help, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn 110 Come, thou long-expected Jesus

**1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.**

**2. Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever;
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

Choral Blessing

**Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will be with you each hour of every day.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.**

Benediction

Three-fold Amen

Piano Postlude