

## SPIRIT OF GRACE

Fourth Sunday in Advent with Celebration of Holy Communion

December 19, 2021

The congregation's parts are in **bold**.

### PRELUDE

### O Little Town of Bethlehem

### WELCOME

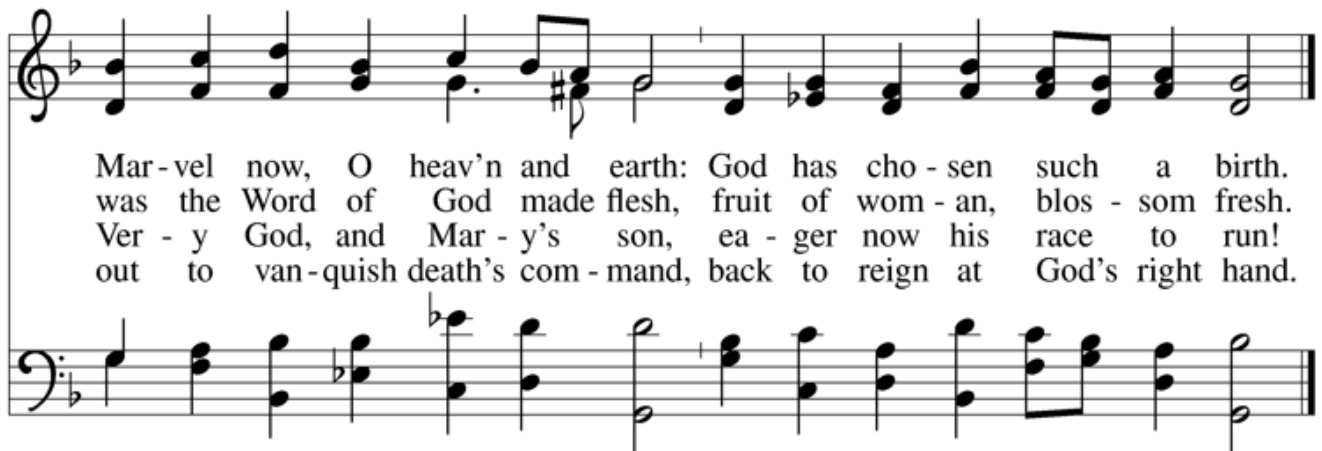
### GATHERING SONG

### SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS COME

ELW 263



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.  
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,  
3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!  
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.  
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.  
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!  
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version  
Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524  
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

### GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

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.**

## **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

**SONG DURING LIGHTING**

**HE CAME DOWN**

**ELW 253 V.1-4**

He came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have love;  
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have light;  
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we many have peace;  
he came down that we many have peace;  
he came down that we many have peace;  
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we many have joy;  
he came down that we many have joy;  
he came down that we many have joy;  
hallelujah forevermore.

Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

Arr. © 1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence in the lowly ones of this earth. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

**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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

**Thanks be to God.**

**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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-46a**

Open your hearts and your minds to the Good News as it is recorded in **Luke 1:39-45**.  
**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." <sup>46</sup>And Mary said,

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you,  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.  
Great and mighty are you, O Holy One,  
strong is your kindness evermore.  
How you favor the weak and lowly one,  
humbling the proud of heart.

You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,  
and uplifted the humble of heart,  
you have filled the hungry with wonderful things,  
and left the wealthy no part.  
Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One,  
strong is your justice, strong your love,  
As you promised to Sarah and Abraham,  
kindness forevermore.

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you,  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.

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

**MESSAGE**

*Pastor Peggy Rose*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**O COME, O COME EMMANUEL**

**ELW 257**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;  
O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

**NICENE CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith using the Nicene Creed.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary**

**and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

*A brief silence.*

Nurturing God, you give us life and care for our every need. Use the church's gifts and ministries for your service, bringing your word to all who seek your transforming grace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Creator God, you proclaim your boundless love for all that you have made. Renew barren lands, polluted waters, and melting ice caps. Make us servants of your creation that brings forth abundant life. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you proclaim your love and mercy. Show your lovingkindness to the tornado and storm victims in Kentucky and other states. Comfort people coping with chronic pain and those who await test results, are in treatment and hospice care, and others in need especially Ananda, bugs, Carol, Janet, Leila and Wilma. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, you fill the hungry with good things. Bless the feeding ministries of this congregation and community, especially the Christmas Day Dinner, the Diabetic Food Pantry, and the Blessing Box. Guide us to share your bounty with those who hunger or live in poverty. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you hold us in your arms when we are fearful. Hold our young people, their teachers and families close as they deal with the effects of the senseless gun violence and threats that endanger our schools. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Faithful God, you stir up the hearts of those who love you. We give you thanks for those who, like Mary, were courageous in their witness. Give us such courage until that day when you fulfill all things. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**God for whom we wait, in the presence of one another,  
we confess our sin before you.**

**We fail in believing that your good news is for us.**

**We falter in our call to tend your creation.**

**We find our sense of self in material wealth.**

**We fear those different from ourselves.**

**We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love.**

**Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.**

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven.

You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

**God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.**

**Amen.**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

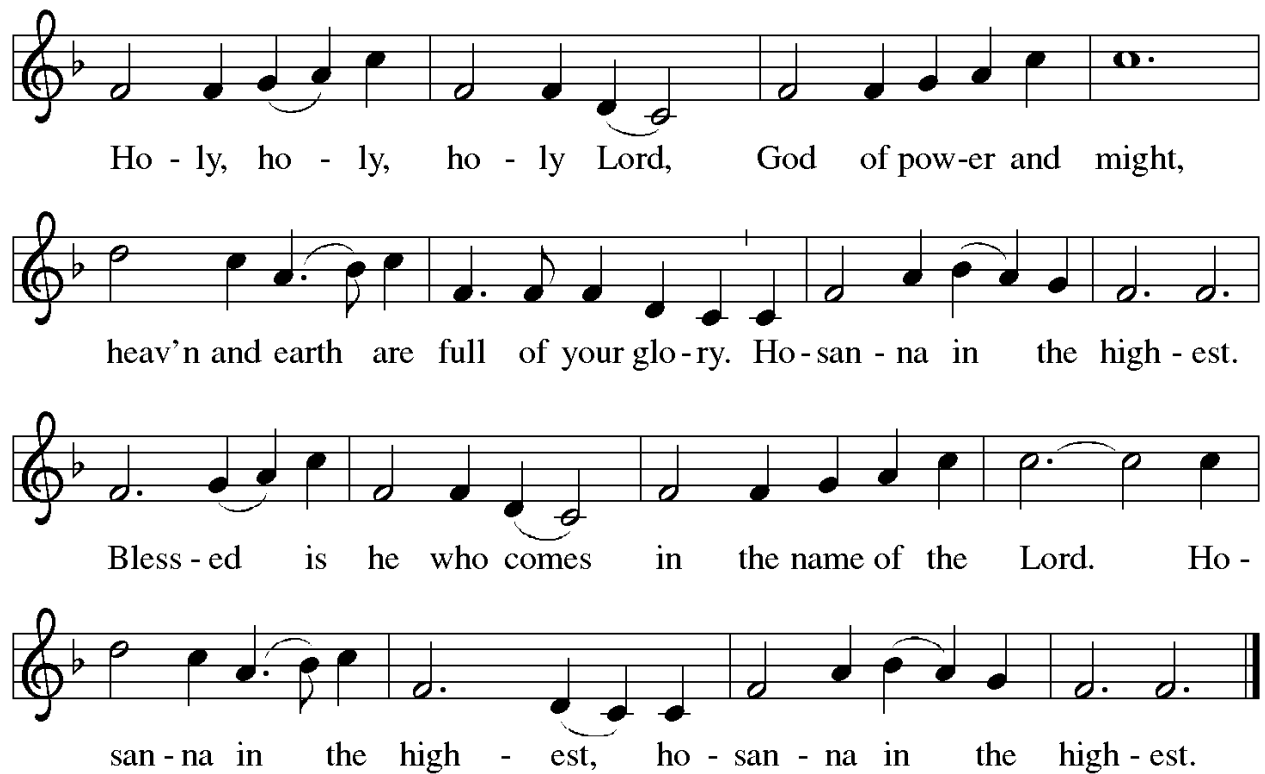
**We lift them to the Lord.**

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'n 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.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

**Blessed are you for the birth of creation.**

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

**Blessed are you for your promise to your people.**

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

**Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.**

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the  
 forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.  
We look with hope for his coming.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate,  
Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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**

Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

*All are welcome at the table. It is God's Table and He gifts you with the finest He has.  
Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. Our communion elements are  
prepackaged grape juice and wafer packets for your safety. Please enjoy the communion  
music during this time and wear a mask if you choose to sing along.*

**COMMUNION SONG THE FIRST NOEL with ABOVE ALL (Virtual Choir)**

The first Noel the angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds  
In fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night  
That was so deep

*Noel Noel*  
*Noel Noel*  
*Born is the King of Israel*

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east beyond them far  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued  
Both day and night

*Noel Noel*  
*Noel Noel*  
*Born is the King of Israel (Repeat)*

Above all powers above all kings  
Above all nature and all created things  
Above all wisdom and all the ways of man  
You were here before the world began

Above all kingdoms above all thrones  
Above all wonders the world has ever known  
Above all wealth and treasures of the earth  
There's no way to measure what You're worth (Repeat)

*Noel Noel*  
*Noel Noel*  
*Born is the King of Israel (Repeat)*

## **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

**Amen.**

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray together.

**Most High God, you have come among us at this table.**

**By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,  
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,  
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. Amen.**

## **BLESSING AND BENEDICTION**

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait. **Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **SENDING SONG**

### **CANTICLE OF THE TURNING**

**ELW 723**

My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.*

Though I am small, my God, my all,  
you work great things in me,  
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
to the end of the age to be.

Your very name puts the proud to shame,  
and to those who would for you yearn,  
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,  
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,  
not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,  
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

Though the nations rage from age to age,  
we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us  
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard  
is the promise which holds us bound,  
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,  
who is turning the world around. *Refrain*

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat  
Music: STAR OF COUNTY DOWN, Irish traditional  
Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is near.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

### **In the Bleak Midwinter**