



# FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 21, 2025

Our reading today from Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. Today's gospel reading is the Matthean account of the birth of the One named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days in Advent, we pray and sing "Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. We prepare to celebrate the birth of the One born to save us from the power of sin and death.

## Prelude

## *Pastorale*

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming  
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Michael Mazzatenta  
arr. Michael E. Kastner  
arr. Hal Hopson

## Order for Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen**

P: Let us prepare to welcome the Christ by turning from our sin and seeking God's tender mercy and compassion.

*silence for reflection*

P: Almighty God,

C: **we confess that we have sinned against you and against our sisters and brothers. Our words and deeds have not proclaimed your reign of justice and truth. We have failed to watch and pray for the signs of your advent among us. Forgive our sin and come quickly to save us. Amen**

P: In the advent of the Christ, the dawn from on high breaks upon us with light and healing. Through Jesus Christ, God looks with favor upon you ☩ and forgives you all your sins.

C: **Amen**

## ENTRANCE RITE

## Entrance Hymn

### Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



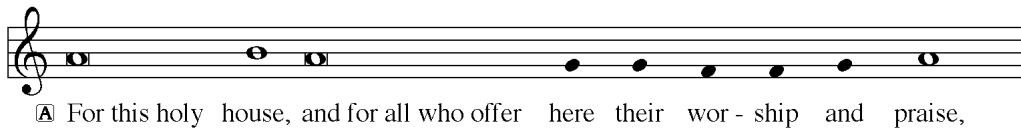
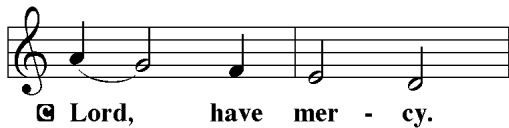
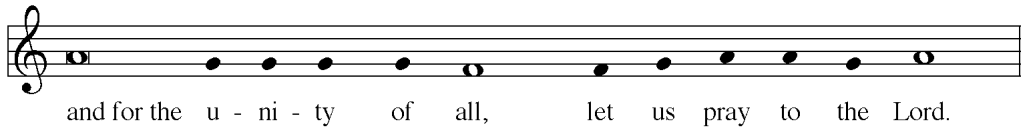
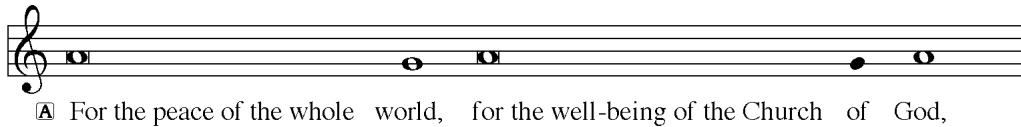
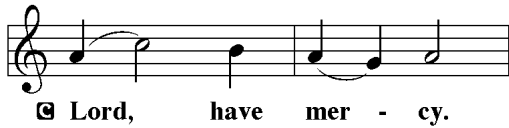
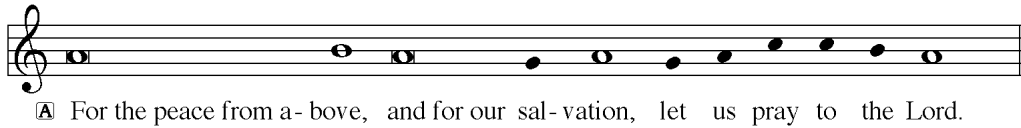
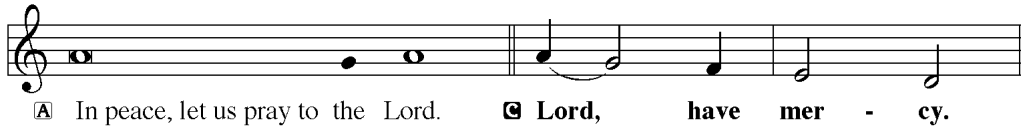
Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788  
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

### Greeting

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

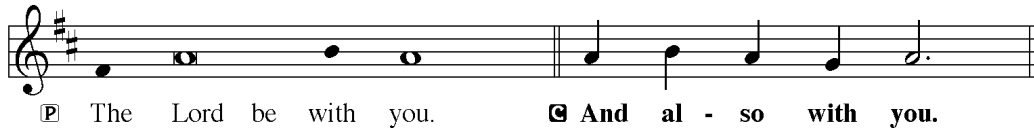
**C:** And also with you.

### Kyrie



(The Hymn of Praise is omitted during Advent because of the reflective, preparatory nature of the season.)

## Salutation and Prayer of the Day



P: Let us pray.

**ALL: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

### First Lesson - Isaiah 7:10-16

*An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presents a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decides to secure his throne and kingdom by asking mighty Assyria for help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will only fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel – God-with-us!*

<sup>10</sup>The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup>Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. <sup>13</sup>Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup>He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup>For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

### Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

(sung in unison)

*This is a psalm of lament and a plea to the Lord, the shepherd of Israel, that God will turn away divine anger and restore the people.*

<sup>1</sup>Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;\*  
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on the cherubim.  
<sup>2</sup>In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,\*  
stir up your strength and | come to help us.  
<sup>3</sup>Restore us, O | God of hosts;\*  
show the light of your countenance, and we | shall be saved.  
<sup>4</sup>O LORD | God of hosts,\*  
how long will you be angered despite the prayers | of your people?  
<sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the | bread of tears;\*  
you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.  
<sup>6</sup>You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,\*  
and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.  
<sup>7</sup>Restore us, O | God of hosts;\*  
show the light of your countenance, and we | shall be saved.  
<sup>16</sup>Let your hand be upon the man of | your right hand,\*  
the son of man you have made so strong | for yourself.  
<sup>17</sup>And so will we never turn a- | way from you;\*  
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.  
<sup>18</sup>Restore us, O LORD | God of hosts;\*  
show the light of your countenance, and we | shall be saved.

## Second Lesson - Romans 1:1-7

*Most of the followers of the risen Christ in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening, he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of the Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.*

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,<sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures,<sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh<sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,<sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name,<sup>6</sup> including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,<sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

L: The word of the Lord.

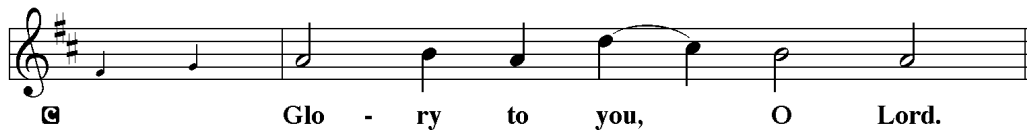
C: Thanks be to God.

### Alleluia Verse



### Holy Gospel - Matthew 1:18-25

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

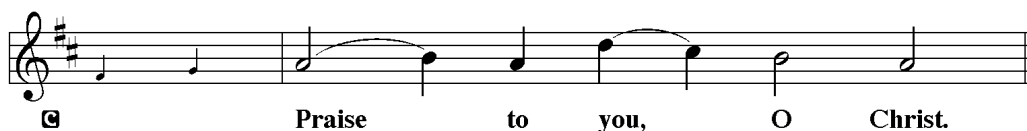


*The story of Jesus of Nazareth's birth in the gospel according to Matthew focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."*

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.



P: The Gospel of the Lord.



silence for reflection

Hymn of the Day

## Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 2 Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on  
 3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's  
 4 Oh, come, blest Day-spring, come and cheer our spir - its by your  
 5 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times once gave the law  
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save  
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,  
 heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.  
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re-joice! Re - joice!  
 and death's dark shad-ows put to flight.  
 and close the path to mis - er - y.



Em-man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–1866, alt.  
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.

The Apostles' Creed

P: Using the words of our ancestors in the faith as expressed in the Apostles' Creed, we proclaim the triune God whom we believe:

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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**

### The Prayers

- A: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.
- A: In the anticipation of these days, O God, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. God of grace,
- C: hear our prayer.**
- A: The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. God of grace,
- C: hear our prayer.**
- A: You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors. God of grace,
- C: hear our prayer.**
- A: When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill. God of grace,
- C: hear our prayer.**
- A: Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them. God of grace,
- C: hear our prayer.**
- A: We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love for all eternity. God of grace,
- C: hear our prayer.**
- P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- ALL: Amen**

## LITURGY OF THE MEAL

### The Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

### Offering

#### Offertory Anthem

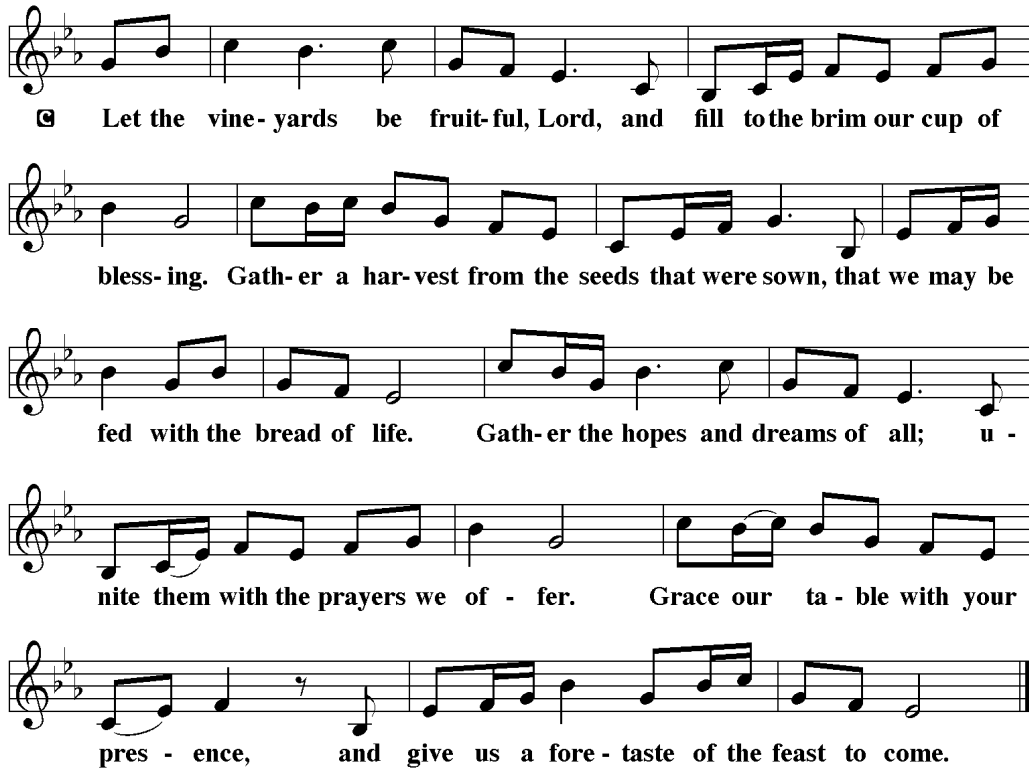
#### *The Linden Tree*

Fourteenth century carol  
arr. Crawford Thoburn (b. 1933)

*In heaven stood a linden tree With pure white flowers laden;  
Yet not a bloom was fair as she, Sweet Mary, chosen maiden.  
Great Gabriel, God's angel bright, From high above came winging  
To one, the purest in God's sight, A joyful message bringing.  
"Hail Mary, blessed virgin mild, With God you have found favor,  
You shall conceive and bear a child, To all the world a Savior."  
"My soul does magnify the Lord! I am His servant lowly;  
Be all according to His word," Said Mary, meek and holy.*

*Away the angel flew to share The news of Mary's duty;  
And heaven rejoiced that she would bear The Blossom of all Beauty.*

### Offertory



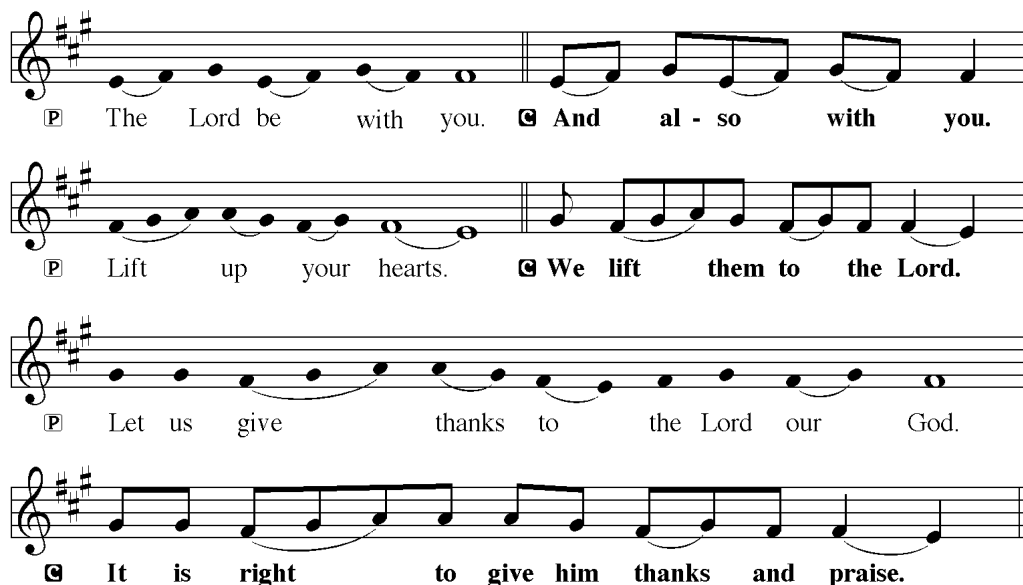
**☐** Let the vine- yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless- ing. Gath- er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
fed with the bread of life. Gath- er the hopes and dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

### Offertory Prayer

**A:** Let us pray. Merciful Father,

**ALL:** we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, our time,  
and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him  
who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

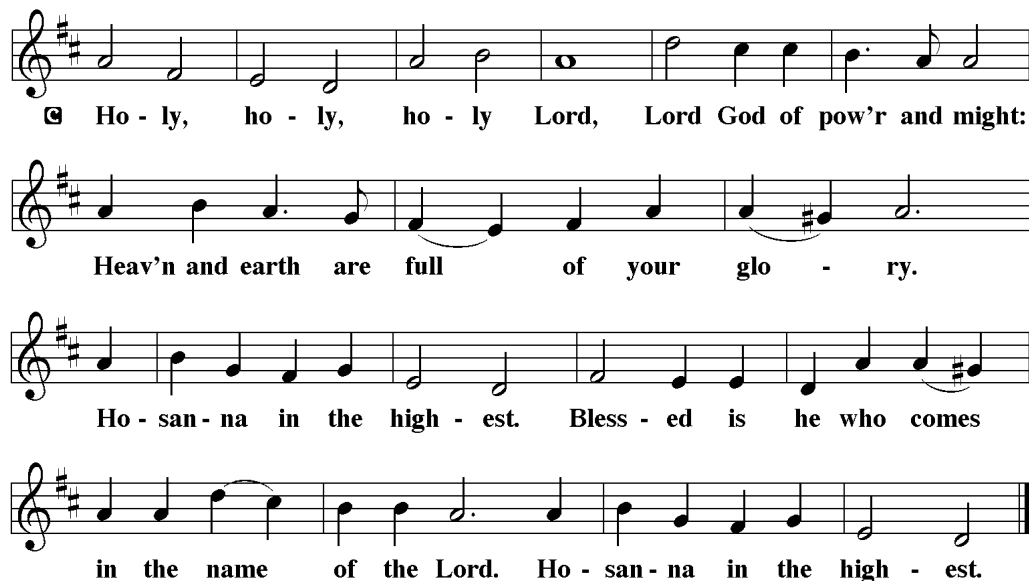
### Great Thanksgiving



**☐** The Lord be with you. **☑** And al - so 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 him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. 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 again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

### Sanctus



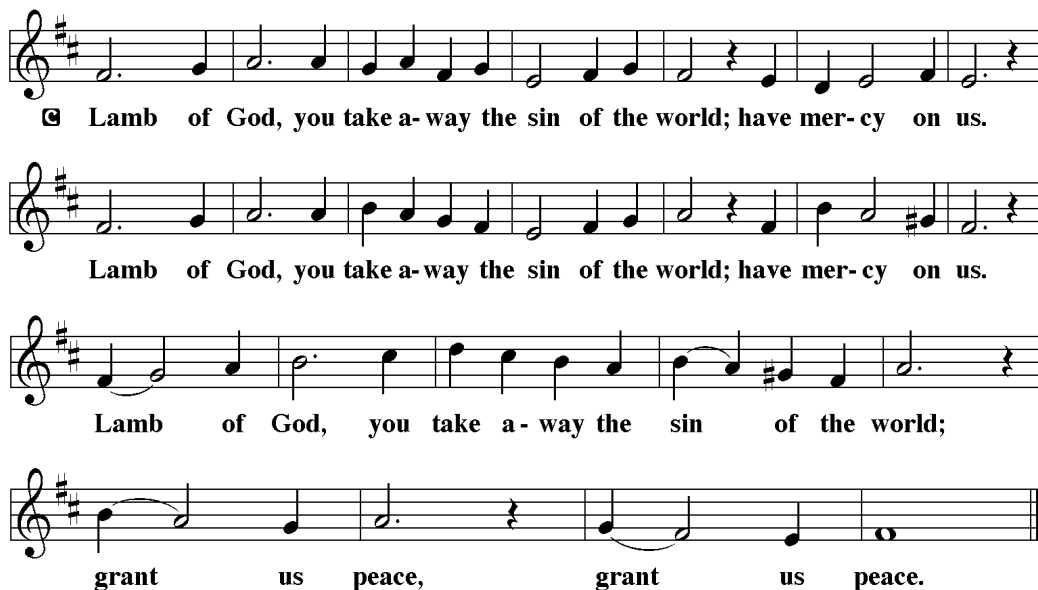
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:  
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

### Eucharistic Prayer

#### Lord's Prayer

**C: 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**

### Communion with our Risen Lord



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, grant us peace.



## Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and  
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on  
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard  
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with



trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed,  
 earth he stood, Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture,  
 on the way; as the Light of light, de - scend - ing  
 sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the pres - ence,



for with bless - ing in his hand Christ our God to earth de -  
 in the bod - y and the blood, he will give to all the  
 from the realms of end - less day, comes, the pow'rs of hell to  
 as with cease-less voice they cry: "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -



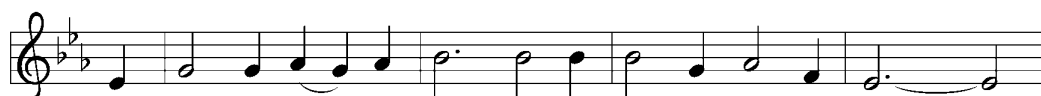
scend - ing comes our hom-age to de - mand.  
 faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.  
 van - quish, as the dark-ness clears a - way.  
 lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829–1885, alt.  
 Music: PICARDY, French folk tune, 17th cent.

## Around You, O Lord Jesus



1 A - round you, O Lord Je - sus, your own you gath - er still  
 2 We hear your in - vi - ta - tion, and heed, O Lord, your call;  
 3 We are your own for - ev - er; un - til our fi - nal breath



to share the feast you give us with grace our lives to fill.  
 your word of con - so - la - tion is spo - ken here to all.  
 we will be true and nev - er—in joy, in grief, in death—



You say to us so lov - ing - ly, "Take, eat! This is my  
It draws us to your lov - ing heart; it brings to us your  
de - part from you, for you are still a - mong your peo - ple

bod - y! Take, drink! This is my blood!"  
bless - ing, which nev - er will de - part.  
dwell - ing, as you have said you will.


Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. composite  
Music: O JESU, ÅN DE DINA, H. Thomissön, *Den danske Psalmebog*, 1569  
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

### Post-Communion Blessing

**P:** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C:** **Amen**

### Post-Communion Canticle



☐ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev- 'ry-one what he has done.

Let ev- 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re- joice and proud- ly bear his name.

He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy

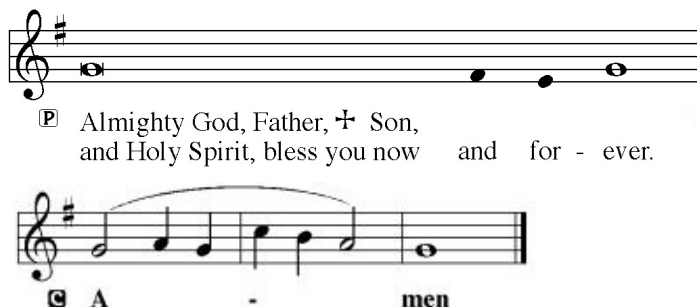
with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

### Post-Communion Prayer for Advent

**A:** Let us pray.

**C:** **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 Lord. Amen**

### Benediction



☐ Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son,  
and Holy Spirit, bless you now and for - ever.

☐ A - men

## Hymn

### Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

## Dismissal

**A:** Our service now begins. Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

*Joy to the World!*

arr. J. William Greene



The sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God by Karen & Eric Kenny  
in memory of lone Fischer.

The candles are given to the glory of God by Terri & Dean Campbell  
in honor of their fifty-fourth wedding anniversary.

### THIS WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY

<b>Sunday, December 21</b>	8:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion
	9:30 a.m. Children's Nativity Rehearsal & Sunday Church School
	10:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion with Livestream via YouTube
	12:30 p.m. Senior Youth (grades nine - twelve)
	3:00 p.m. Youth Caroling
<b>Monday, December 22</b>	9:00 a.m. Strength and Balance Exercise Class
	9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga Class
<b>Wednesday, December 24</b>	12:10 p.m. Service of Holy Communion
	5:15 p.m. Prelude and Christmas Carol Sing
	5:30 p.m. Festival Candlelight Service of Holy Communion and Children's Nativity
	10:45 p.m. Prelude and Christmas Carol Sing
	11:00 p.m. Festival Candlelight Service of Holy Communion with Livestream via YouTube
<b>Thursday and Friday</b>	Church Office Closed
<b>Sunday, December 28</b>	10:15 a.m. Prelude and Christmas Carol Sing
	10:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion and Chrismons & Carols for Christmas with Livestream via YouTube

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***Our Mission: "To care actively in the name of Jesus Christ."***

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
1000 Langhorne Road  
Lynchburg, Virginia 24503**

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***President:*** Eric R. Kenny  
***Organist-Choirmaster:*** J. William Greene  
***Parish Administrator:*** Carol Dee Robertson  
***Parish Nurse:*** Gail Midkiff

***Pastor:*** Dennis S. Roberts  
***Director of Youth and Campus Ministries:***  
Susan H. Williams  
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