

***“People of Christ
Making a
Difference”***

**2nd Sunday
in Advent**

December 5, 2021

8:30 & 11:00AM

WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S!

A nursery is provided for children through age 4 for both worship services and for infants and toddlers during Sunday School. The nursery is located at the end of the hall on the right side.

Children's bags can be found in the "Kid's Corner" of the narthex.

Restroom facilities are located down the hall on the left side.

First Aid, Emergency Equipment, and a wheelchair are located down the hall on the right by the stairwell.

If for any reason you must leave the sanctuary, the service is live streamed in the Men's Sunday school classroom. Any usher will be glad to direct you.

Sunday school classes are provided for 18 month olds through adults.

Listening devices and larger print bulletins are located in the narthex. Ushers are also available to assist you.

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

(We Stand)

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.

Amen.

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

God of all time,

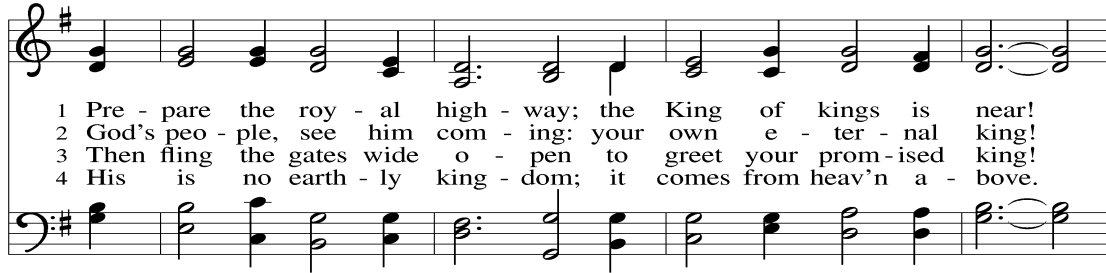
we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of spreading your love and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says our God. In + Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!


Amen.

GATHERING SONG*"Prepare the Royal Highway"*

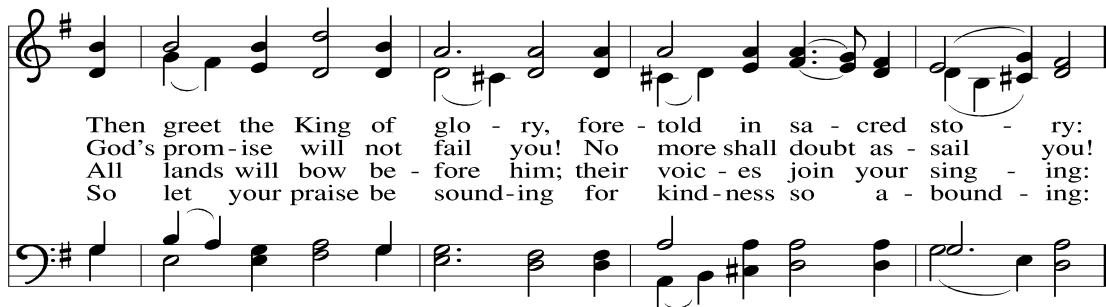
ELW 264



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!

GREETING

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.

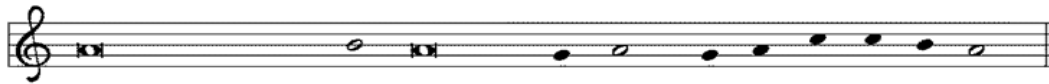
THE KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



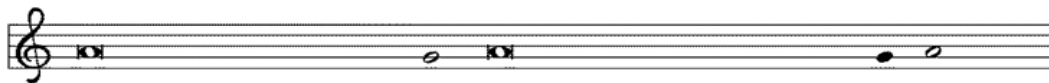
Lord, have mer - cy.



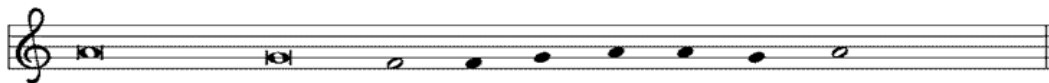
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

THE SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

(We Sit)

FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1-4

¹See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING REFLECTION

Christmas is intended to be a transforming event, not a lovely interlude in business as usual. What we do in Advent in preparation for Christmas will be our means of getting ready for a new way of looking at life -- a new way of living.

The Prophet Malachi speaks of a messenger:

- . . one who will prepare the way of the Lord
- . . . one who reminds us of the covenant of God
- one who refines and purifies us in faithfulness

How then do we prepare to be transformed by the coming of the Lord?

- . . by allowing the light of hope to awaken our spirits?
- . . . by making room for the Lord to write the covenant on our hearts?
- by living in gratitude for what we receive in the Lord?

If we prepare ourselves by renewing our covenant with God, then we will be truly transformed as Christ comes again into our lives.

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, says the Lord of hosts.

The light of hope has awakened our spirits.

A voice cries out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Renew in us your covenant, O God, that we may be ready for the dawn of your salvation.

As we light a second candle to bring light to every darkness, and to guide us in the way of peace,

With gratitude for your light, O God, we will prepare to welcome a new birth of your love.

(Light the Second Advent Candle.)

CANDLELIGHTING HYMN “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

ELW 257

Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. John the Baptist calls all people to prepare the Lord's way for the kingdom of heaven is near. Bless us as we light the second candle on this wreath. Baptize us with the fire of your Spirit, that we may be a light shining in the darkness welcoming others as Christ has welcomed us, for he is our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God forever. Amen.

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:3-11

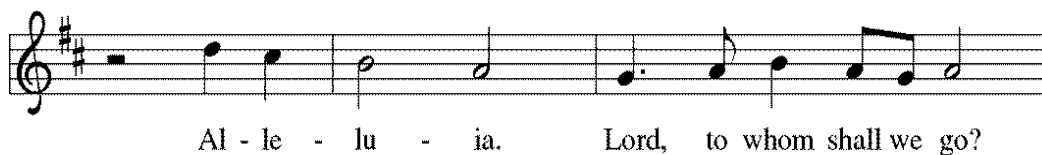
³I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

(We Stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-6

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3rd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

(We Sit)

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Jason

SERMON

Pastor Jason

(We Stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

"On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry"

ELW 249



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.

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 FAITHFUL

(We Sit)

OFFERING

At this time in the service we pause to reflect on all the gifts that God has given us. God calls us to be generous stewards of those gifts for the sake of our ministry near and far. You can support our ministry by putting your offering in the offering plate, mailing your offering to the church, giving online (www.sslc.org) or through the Givelify app. If you would like more details on direct deposit giving please contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, at (803) 359-6562.

Anthem

"When a Star Is Shining"

ACS # 915

When a star is shining over eastern hills, when the air is silent, and the clamor stills, when the night is waiting, and the old hopes rise, then the time has ripened and the heart grows wise.

Refrain: Lead us on, lead us on, to a morning where the promise shines.
Lead us on, lead us on, to a morning where the promise shines.

Where the world is waiting for an unknown day, where a voice forgotten cries, "Prepare the way!" Where an earthly power makes the heart turn cold, there the gifts are offered - incense, myrrh, and gold. *Refrain*

Lead us on, O Daystar, in the quiet night; guide us through the shadow with your gentle light; show us in a manger our redemption's sign; bring us to a morning where the promise shines.
Refrain

(We Stand)

OFFERTORY SONG

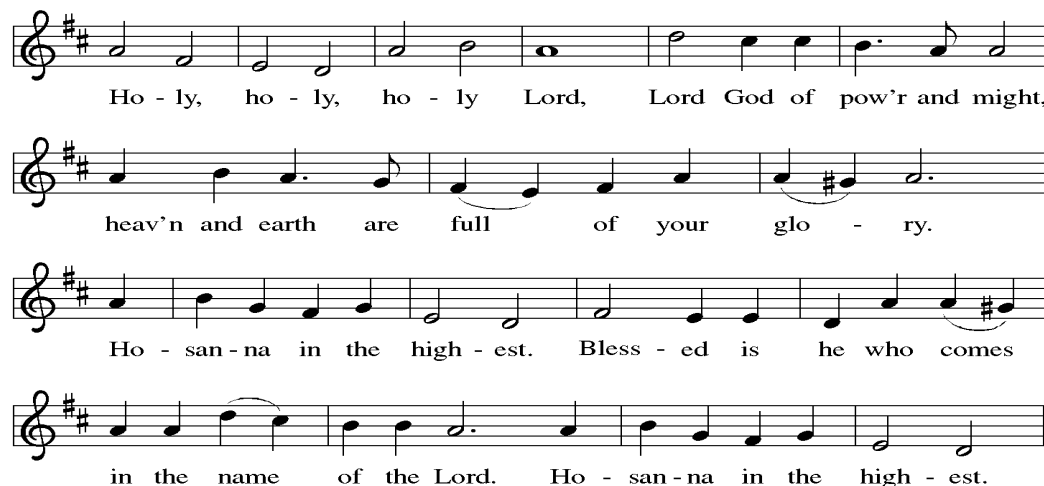
Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us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

THE 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 our thanks and praise.

THE PREFACE

THE 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.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

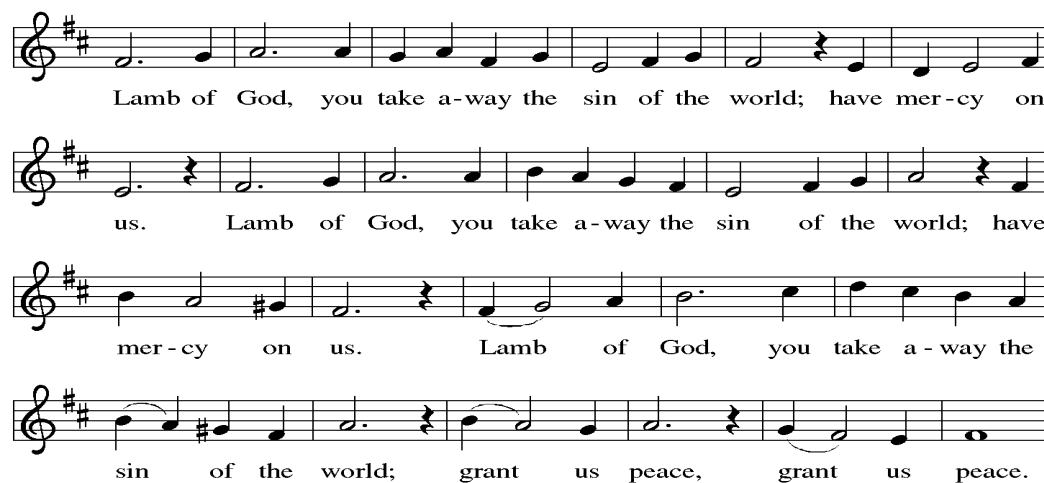
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

(We Sit)

AGNUS DEI



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.

RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Christ welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! We receive communion this morning at the altar rail. Communion will be brought to the front pews for those who wish to remain seated. Children who commune should be assisted by adults near them. Those unable to partake of wine or wheaten bread are assured of our Lord's presence in, with and under each element alone. For those with a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

*The Congregation is encouraged to participate in the following Communion Hymn.
The hymn can be found in the back portion of the LBW (Green) Hymnal in your pew rack.*

Communion Hymn *"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"* LBW 30
(We Stand)

BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS

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

Amen.

BENEDICTION

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path, and almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *"Blessed Be the God of Israel"* ELW 250



1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free
2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,
3 My child, as proph - et of the Lord you will pre - pare the way,



and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.
the oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all;
to tell God's peo - ple they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.



So have the proph - ets long de - clared that with a might - y arm
that we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise,
Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine forth and nev - er cease



God would turn back our en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
in ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.
to drive a - way the gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in memory of Dot Hendrix Hundley and Betty Wilder Hendrix.

SERVING TODAY:

Ushers: (8:30) Eric Wessinger, Ivan Black, Pat Bowen, Bill Carroll, Aaron Rawl, Otis Rawl, and Vernon Hester;

(11:00) Randy Huber, Alon Cox, James Renwick, Roy Welch

Readers: (8:30) Bill Carroll; (11:00) Gay Clark

Communion Assistants: (8:30) Steve Fowler; (11:00) Cathy Mathias

Order of St. Stephen's: (8:30) [A] Bia Oxley [C] Andrew Tworzyanski [BB] Drake Glover;
(11:00) [A] Susannah Howell [C] Paul Waites [BB] Abby Burnett

The Church Staff

Crisis Care Line: 808-6471

Website: www.sslc.org

The Rev. Jason T. Antley

Mrs. Bailey Slice Parker, Music Director

Mrs. Beth Haggard, Preschool Director

Mr. Eric Abramson, Sexton

Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life

Mr. Tyler Meade Young, Organist

Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator

Mr. Stephen Abbott, Seminarian

The Rev. Dr. Dennis Bolton, Pastor for Welcome and Visitation

Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus