ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025

Welcome to Saint Paul!

We are happy to have you here!

How to know when to stand, sit, or speak

Whenever you see an asterisk (*) at a heading, you are invited to stand as you are able. You are not required to stand, so if, for health or emotional reasons you cannot or do not wish to stand, that is okay.
You are invited to speak the words printed in **bold type**.

How to sing hymns in harmony

To save space in printing the bulletin, we usually limit what is printed to the melody. If you'd like to sing in harmony, the hymn numbers are listed in our bulletin so you can open the red books in the pews (called ELWs).

We are an Open Communion Congregation

This means that any Christian who has received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is invited to receive Holy Communion.

How to financially support us

Offerings can be made online at **stpaulpgm.org/give,** mailed to St. Paul Lutheran Church, PO Box 200, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, placed in the mail slot (outside door to Pastor Paul's office), or in the offering plate located in the lobby/narthex near the entrance of the sanctuary.

A note on Communion Wafers

To topple barriers that prevent participation in worship, we want to make it possible for individuals with Celiac Disease or gluten intolerant to be able to eat the Body of our Lord. Our default wafers are made by Parish Crossroads and are known as "Low Gluten Wafers" because they contain trace amounts of gluten. However, the wafers are tested at least once a year for how much gluten is in them. Since 2020, the wafers have routinely tested to contain 15ppm gluten or less (The US FDA defines most food products with 20ppm or less as "gluten free"). Use the QR Code and look for the link that gives the most recent test results.
If you still have concerns, we have some truly gluten-free wafers available upon request.

Gathering

The Gathering for worship began when you started readying yourself for worship

An Introduction to the day

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases, we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

Prelude – *Out of consideration for our musicians, please refrain from talking during the prelude.*

*Confession and forgiveness

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

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

P Long-expected God, A**: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*GATHERING HYMN *"Savior of the Nations, Come"* *(ELW 263)*

5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

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

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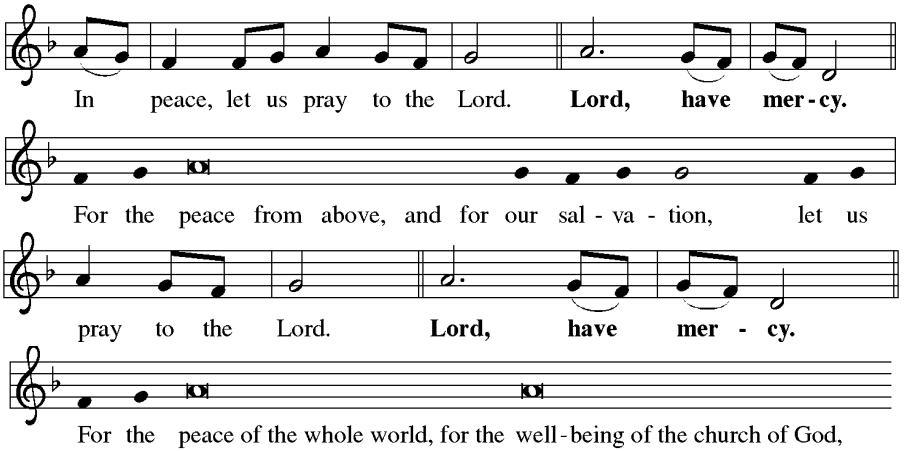
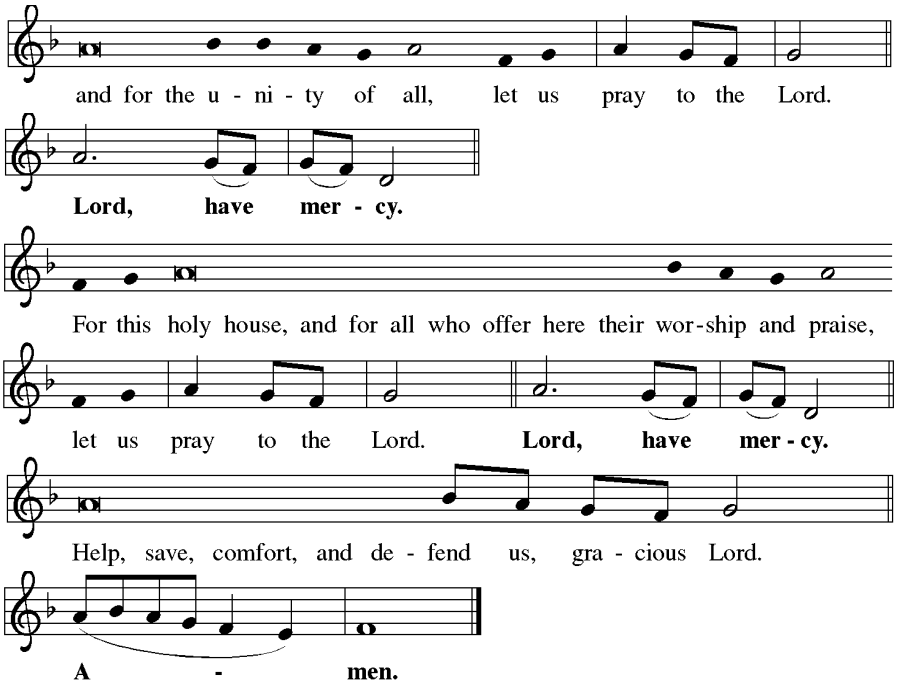
*GREETING

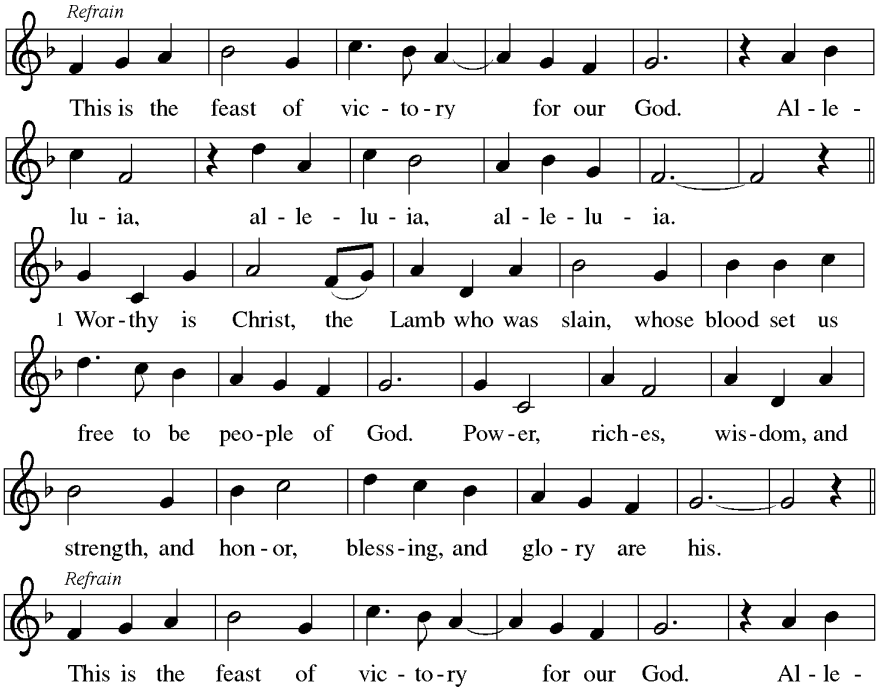
P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **A: And also with you.**

KYRIE





HYMN OF PRAISE



*Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also with you**

P: Let us pray: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Word

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah saw that God would use Assyria to punish Israel for its unfaithfulness, conquering it and ending the Davidic dynasty ("the tree of Jesse"). But he promised that God would save a remnant of the nation and re-establish the dynasty, in a time of almost unbelievable peace, prosperity, and security.

[1] A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
[2] The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,

the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
3 His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear,
4 but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

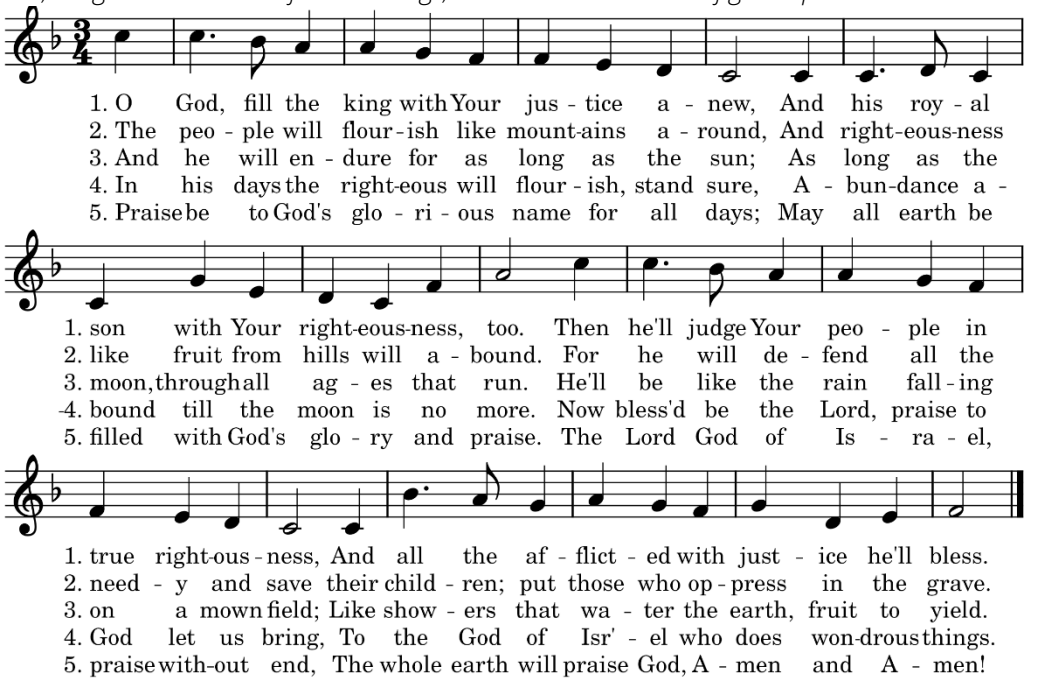
6 The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
9 They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God**.

Psalm: 72:1-7, 18-19 *(sung to the tune Away in a Manger) (ELW 793)*

This psalm, sung at coronations of Davidic kings, echoes Isaiah's themes of global peace.



Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

Paul was worried that the Christians in Rome, as elsewhere, were in danger of dividing between Jewish and Gentile factions. In his writing church unity (koinonia) is vital. That unity is given in Holy Communion, it is as certain as the unbroken body of Christ, and it is expressed in Christians' service to one another – in person and through sending resources to distant communities suffering famine.

4 Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by
steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 May
the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one
another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6 so that together you may with one voice
glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

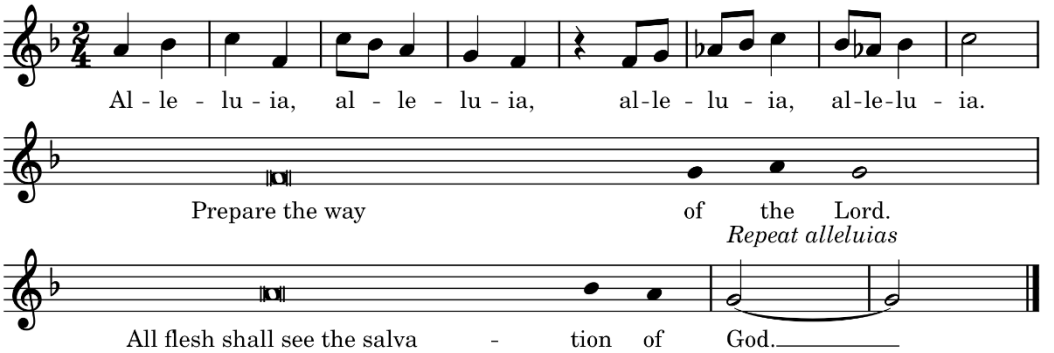
7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of
God. 8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised-on behalf of the
truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors 9 and
that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name";
10 and again he says,

"Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people";
11 and again,
"Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him";
12 and again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope."
13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation



*Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

Matthew's Gospel begins with the genealogy of Jesus, the announcement of his birth, the visit of the Magi, and the Holy Family's flight to Egypt and return to Nazareth. It then jumps forward several decades to this scene at the Jordan, as John foresees the advent of Jesus' ministry.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the third chapter.
A: Glory to you, O Lord.

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea,
proclaiming, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,
"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.' "
4 Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the River

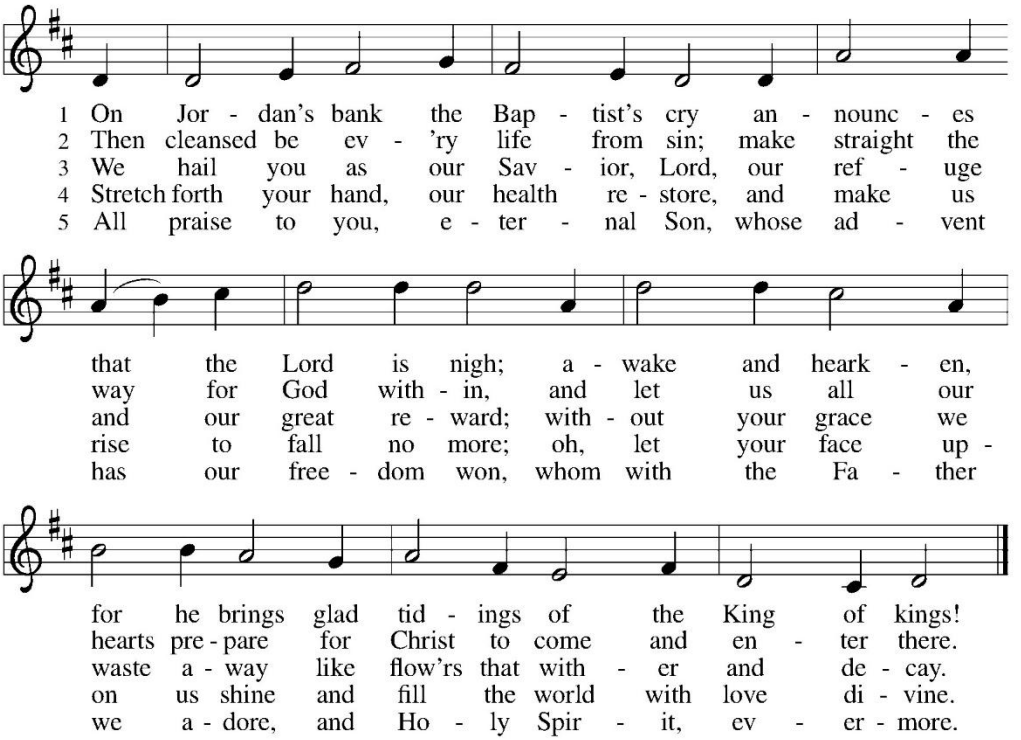
Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he
said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming
wrath? 8 Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, 9 and do not presume to say to
yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these
stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the
trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown
into the fire.

11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is
more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with
the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his
threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with
unquenchable fire." P: The gospel of the Lord. **A: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

*Hymn Of the Day *"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"* *(ELW 249)*



Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite
Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

*Invitation to Baptism

*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.

*Or, "who proceeds from the Father." The phrase "and the Son" is a later addition to the creed.

*Prayers of Intercession

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

L: With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease (*especially*). Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith especially Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today, Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, and John Ross Kessinger. Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **A: Amen.**

*Peace

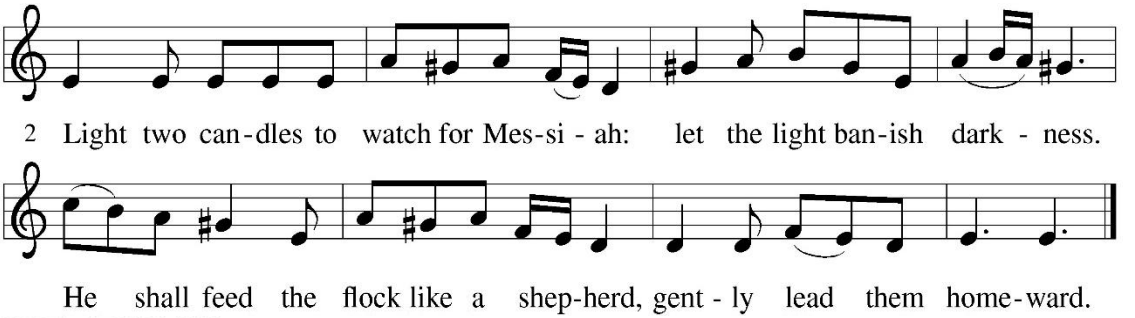
P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also with you.**

Meal

Offering

Musical Offering

*Offertory: *"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah vs.2"* *(ELW 240)*



Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
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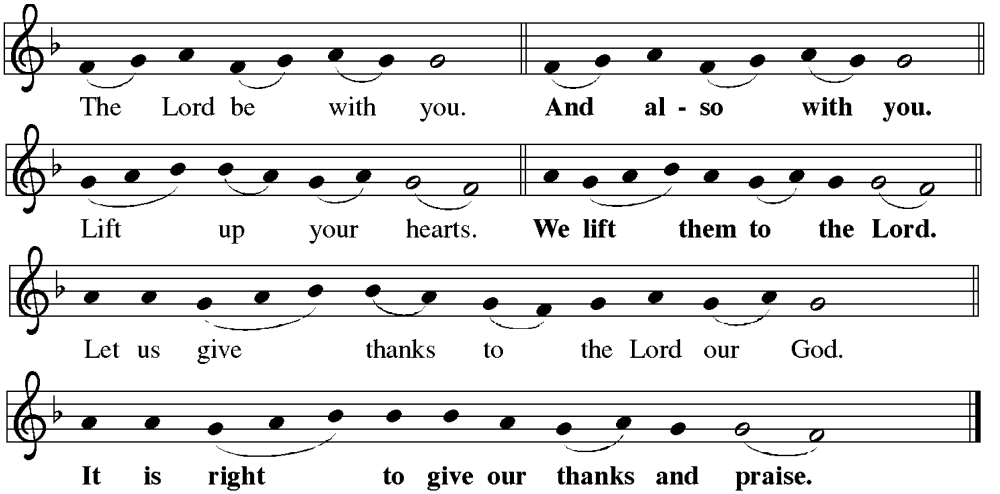
*Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

* DIALOGUE

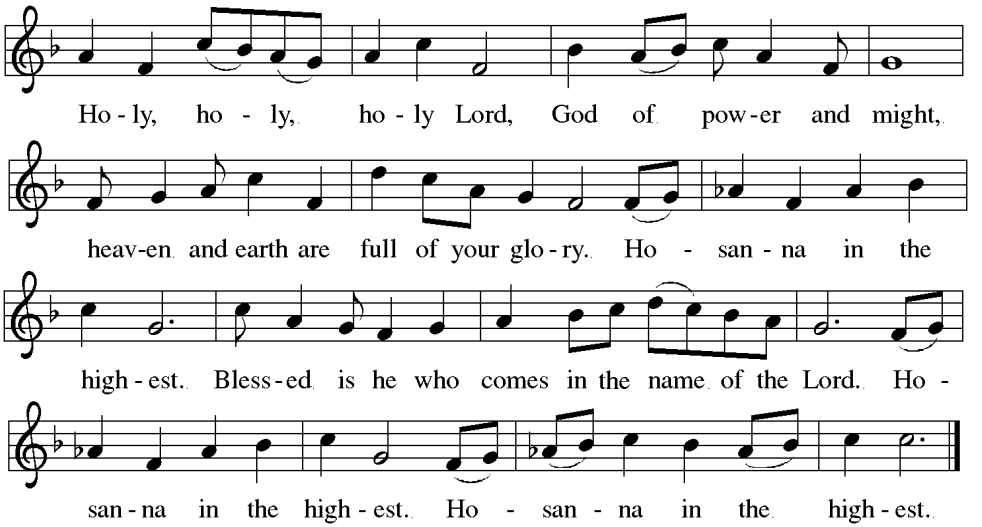


*PROPER PREFACE

P: 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:

*SANCTUS



*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope,
we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.
When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,
you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.
At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love
and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was handed over,
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.

Together we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection,
we await his coming again in righteousness and peace.

A: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share:
strengthen our faith, increase our hope,
and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

A: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, both now and forever.

A: Amen

*Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

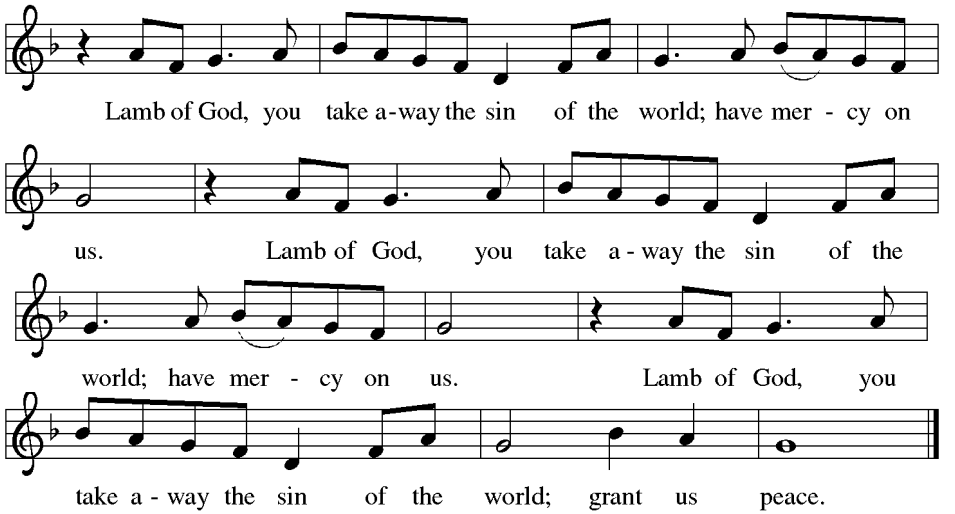
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the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

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.
Lead us not into time of trial,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
forever and ever. Amen.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

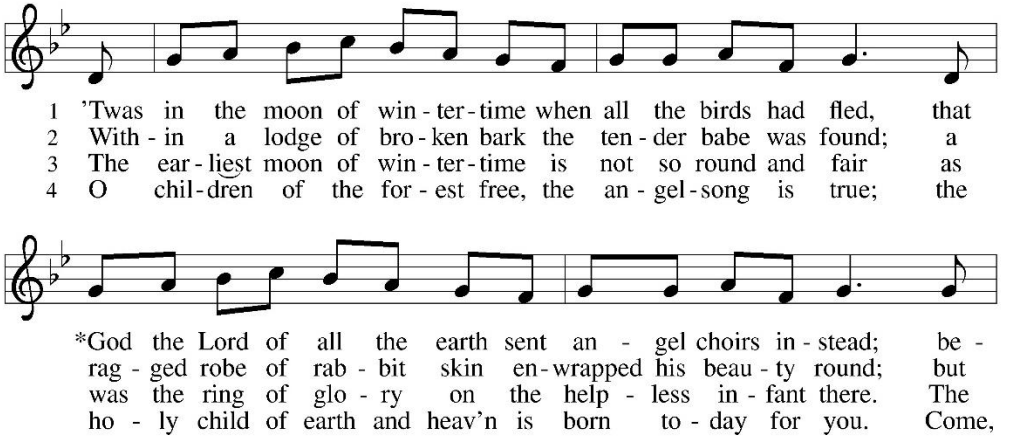
*Lamb of God

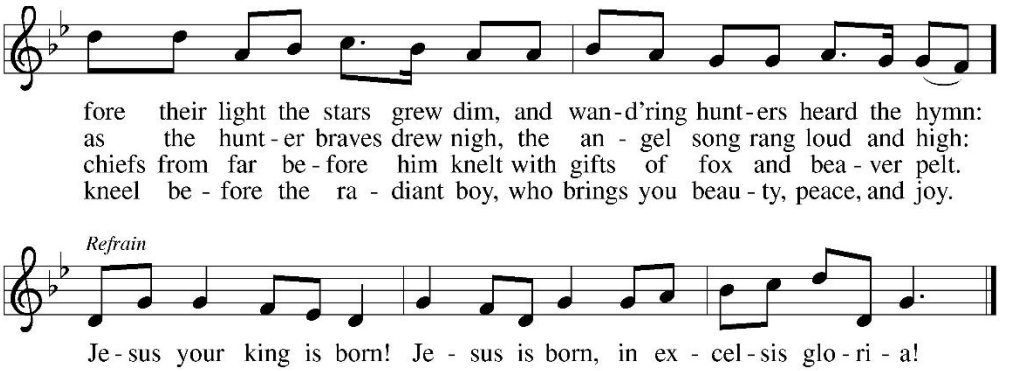


Communion

P: The body of Christ, given for you. L: The blood of Christ, shed for you. **A: Amen.**

Communion Hymn: *"'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime"* *(ELW 284)*





** original: "mighty Gitchi Manitou"*

Text: Jean de Brébeuf, 1593–1649; tr. Jesse E. Middleton, 1872–1960, alt.
Music: UNE JEUNE PUCELLE, French folk tune, c. 16th cent.
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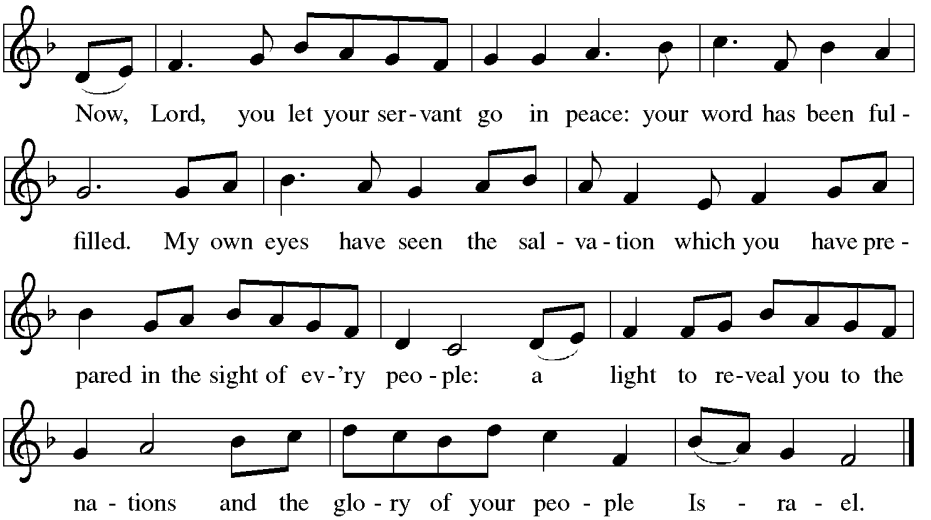
*Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you, body, mind, and soul, now, and unto eternal life. **A: Amen**

*Post-Communion Canticle** – *Nunc Dimittis* (*Now, Lord)*



*Post-Communion Prayer

L: Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **A: Amen.**

Sending

*Sending of communion

The Pastor prays a prayer for members to bring communion to fellow Christian siblings who could not attend worship this morning.

Announcements

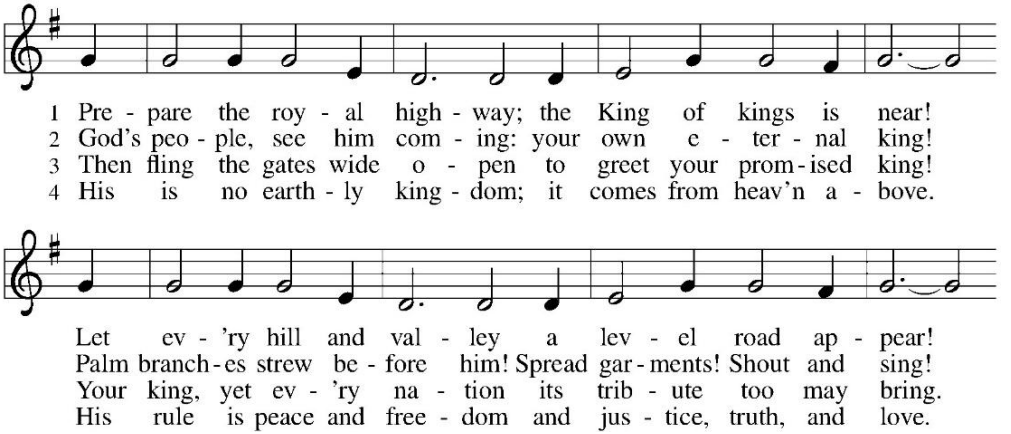
You may be seated.

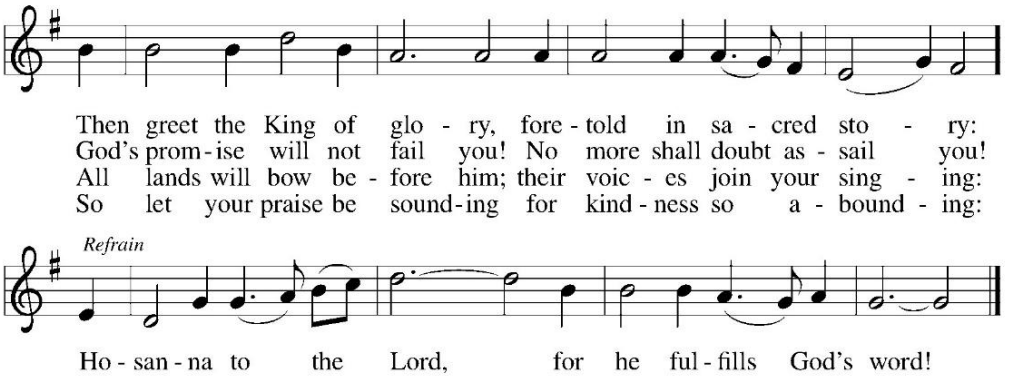
*Charge to the People

*Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, ☩ and the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*Sending hymn: *"Prepare the Royal Highway"* *(ELW 264)*





Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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*Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Keep awake.
A: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Serving Today

Presiding Minister..... Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister..... Eleanor Bird
Musician..... Jacob Heller
Sacristan..... Delorse Homan
Reader..... Karen Magnuson

About St. Paul

Purpose

We are a beacon, boldly sharing the light of Jesus' grace and love.

Mission

Guided by Jesus, we strengthen faith, deepen compassion, extend generosity, and serve community.

Core Values

Faith • Compassion • Generosity • Community

Our Bible Verses

As Paul was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [Jesus said,] 'Paul is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the nations.'– Acts 9:3,15

Land Acknowledgement

St. Paul is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Conestoga-Susquehannock people, where we gather. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, Lenne Lenape, as well as all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it their home.
Find out more about the Conestoga-Susquehannock at www.conestogasusquehannocktribe.com

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