



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025  
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



### Introduction

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.

## GATHERING

### WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

### GATHERING MUSIC

### 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:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*  
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.  
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

### CALL TO WORSHIP

**Leader:** A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow from ancient roots.

**People:** We come longing for the Spirit of the Lord— the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and peace.

**Leader:** The prophet cries out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"

**People:** We come to make straight the paths, opening our hearts to God's transforming grace.

**Leader:** In God's kingdom, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

**People:** We come seeking that holy peace where justice blooms and hope takes root.

**Leader:** The One who is coming baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

**All:** We gather to worship in hope and anticipation. Come, Lord Jesus, renew your creation!

## APOSTOLIC 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.**

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH Second Sunday of Advent —Peace (Bethlehem Candle)

*Today, we light the second candle, the **Candle of Peace**, known as the **Bethlehem Candle**. It reminds us that God's peace entered our world in the humility of Bethlehem. As we prepare the way of the Lord, we open our hearts to the peace Christ gives.*

**Leader:** Prepare the way of the Lord.

**People:** For Christ comes to bring peace to all.

**Leader:** From Bethlehem came the Prince of Peace.

**People:** In Him, peace overcomes fear and division.

**Leader:** We light this candle as a sign of the peace Christ brings.

**People:** Come, Lord Jesus, our Peace and our Redeemer.

## Prayer of the Day

God of peace, calm our anxious hearts and teach us to walk in Your ways. Make us instruments of Your peace in our homes, our church, and our world. **Amen.**

## ————— WORD —————

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

## PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

<sup>1</sup> A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

<sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Congregation:*

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we  
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal  
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Optional Repeat*

## GOSPEL

## MATTHEW 3: 1-12

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> 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.’” <sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>7</sup> 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? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> "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. <sup>12</sup> 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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## SERMON

MICHELLE YOUNG

## HYMN OF THE DAY - GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN - Choir Anthem

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition will end with "God of grace" and the response will be "**hear our prayer.**"

## SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

## ———— MEAL ————

## OFFERING

*Thank you for your continued generosity in supporting the ongoing ministry of Bethel Lutheran Church! In-person gifts may be placed in the offering plates, mailed to Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (2077 N. Frederick Pike, Winchester, VA 22603), given online at [www.bethelwinchester.com](http://www.bethelwinchester.com) or using the adjacent QR code.*



## MUSIC FOR REFLECTION – CAROL OF THE BELLS- Choir, Piano

## OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God,

**Everything in heaven and earth belongs to you . We joyfully release what you have entrusted to us. May these gifts be the signs of our whole lives returned to you, dedicated to the healing and unity of all creation, through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## THE 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.**

## PREFACE

## HOLY HOLY HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and



might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!



Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

## JESUS' WORDS ABOUT COMMUNION

### LORD'S PRAYER



Our God \_\_\_\_\_ in heav-en, \_\_\_\_\_ ho - ly is your name, \_\_\_\_\_ your



reign come, \_\_\_\_\_ your will done, \_\_\_\_\_ on earth as in heav-en \_\_\_\_\_



Give us today our dai-ly bread, and help us forgive as we have been for - giv-en \_\_\_\_\_



Words: Matthew 6:9-13; adapt by Mark A Miller and Laurie Zelman Music: Mark A Miller Adapt and music ©2008 Abingdon Press admin by the Copyright Company

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Emmanuel.

### THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

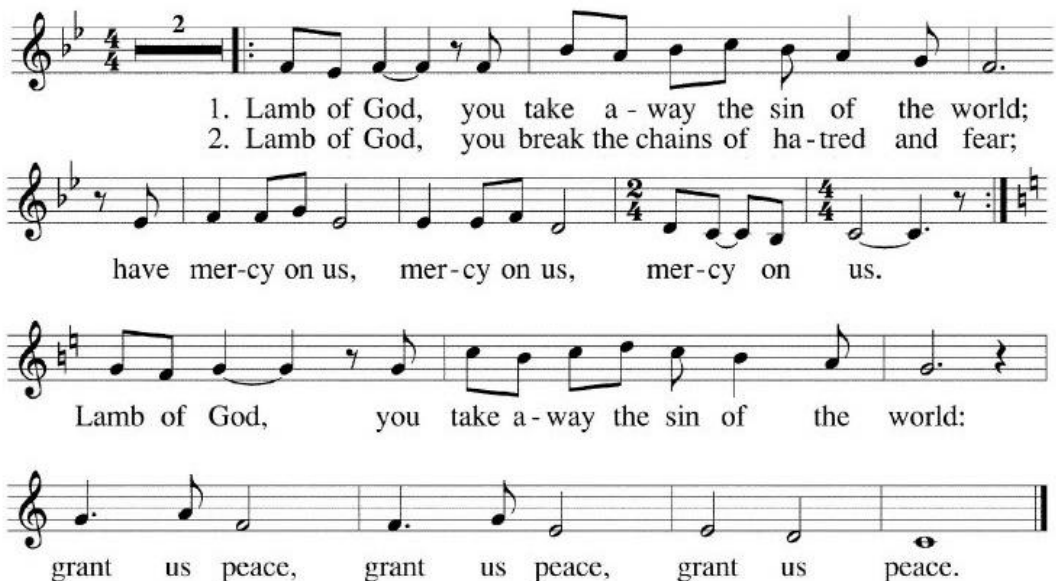
Welcome to the Lord's Table!

Everyone, regardless of age and denomination, is invited to join us for Holy Communion. If you prefer a blessing, simply inform the communion distributors. The ushers will direct your row when it is time to come forward.

You will receive the bread from the first Holy Communion distributor. You will pick up the cup of wine or juice from the tray held by the second distributor. For those who need gluten free a pre-packaged **gluten-free** wafer and a cup of **grape juice** is also available.

Once you have communed, you are invited to return to your seat for silent reflection or singing

## LAMB OF GOD



COMMUNION HYMN- LO, HOW A ROSE E’ER BLOOMING-Piano Solo

COMMUNION BLESSING

SENDING

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG

PEOPLE LOOK EAST (ELW #248)



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing  
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is  
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the  
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,  
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,  
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,  
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look  
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look  
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look  
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.  
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.  
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965 Music: Besancon French carol Text ©Miss E Farjeon Will trust by permission of David Higham Assoc.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

