

Order of Worship
Second Sunday of Christmas
and Epiphany
January 4, 2026



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Second Sunday of Christmas and Epiphany. Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

*=ALL STAND for this part of worship

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* arr. Richard Ellsasser

*CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, †
one God, Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.

Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
**we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.**

**We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.**

**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.**

**We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.**

**Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.
Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you.

☩ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!

Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN**

When Long before Time

ELW 861



1 When long be - fore time and the worlds were be - gun,
2 The si - lence was bro - ken when God sang the Song,
3 The sounds of the crea - tures were one with their Lord's,
4 Though down through the a - ges the Song dis - ap - peared,



when there was no earth and no sky and no sun,
and light pierced the dark - ness and rhy - thm be - gan,
their har - mo - nies sweet and be - fit - ting the Word;
its har - mo - nies bro - ken and al - most un - heard,



and all was deep si - lence and night reigned su - preme,
and with its first birth - cries cre - a - tion was born,
the Sing - er was pleased as the earth sang the Song,
the Sing - er comes to us to sing it a - gain,



and e - ven our Mak - er had on - ly a dream—
and crea - ture - ly voic - es sang praise to the morn.
the choir of the crea - tures re - ech - oed it long.
our God - is - with - us in the world now as then.

*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.

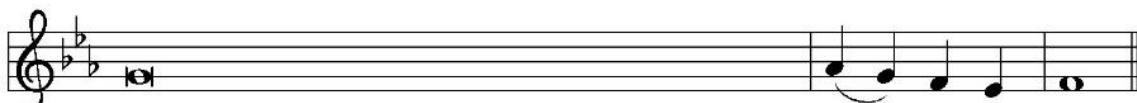
* KYRIE (*Continued on next page*)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



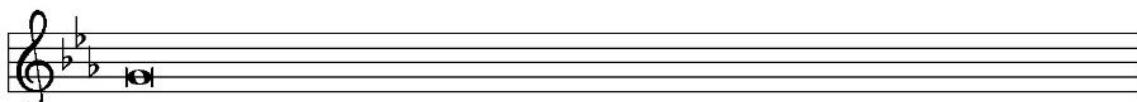
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



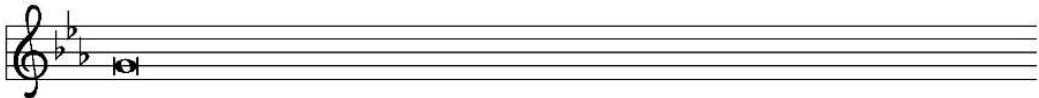
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



A - men, a - men.

***GLORIA** (*Continued on next pages*)



Glo - ry to God in the high -



est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and



Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we



praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus



Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world: have mer - cy on us; you are scat - ed at the



right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a -



lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of
 God the Father. Amen.
 Glory to God in the highest.
 Highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together:

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING:

Jeremiah 31:7-14

⁷ Thus says the Lord:
 Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
 and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
 proclaim, give praise, and say,
 "Save, O Lord, your people,

the remnant of Israel.”

⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,

those with child and those in labor together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹ With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back;
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path where they shall not stumble,
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him
and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock.”

¹¹ For the Lord has ransomed Jacob
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy;
I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 147:12-20 (*We will read the Psalm responsively, by whole verse.*)

- ¹² Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem;
 praise your God, O Zion,
- ¹³ **who has strengthened the bars of your gates
 and has blessed your children within you.**
- ¹⁴ God has established peace on your borders
 and satisfies you with the finest wheat.
- ¹⁵ **God sends out a command to the earth,
 a word that runs very swiftly.**
- ¹⁶ God gives snow like wool,
 scattering frost like ashes.
- ¹⁷ **God scatters hail like bread crumbs.
 Who can stand against God's cold?**
- ¹⁸ The Lord sends forth the word and melts them;
 the wind blows, and the waters flow.
- ¹⁹ **God declares the word to Jacob,
 statutes and judgments to Israel.**
- ²⁰ The Lord has not done so to any other nation;
 they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING:

Ephesians 1:3-14

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked

with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

We stand for the reading of the Gospel.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

***GOSPEL:**

John 1:1-18

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 1st chapter:

Glory to you, O Lord.

[¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of

the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Olga-Maria Cruz

Silence is kept for reflection.

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Word of God, Come Down on Earth

ELW 510



1 Word of God, come down on earth, living rain from
2 Word e - ter - nal, throned on high, Word that brought to
3 Word that speaks God's ten - der love, one with God be -



heav'n de - scand - ing; touch our hearts and bring to birth
life cre - a - tion, Word that came from heav'n to die,
yond all tell - ing, Word that sends us from a - bove



faith and hope and love un - end - ing. Word al - might - y,
cru - ci - fied for our sal - va - tion, sav - ing Word, the
God the Spir - it, with us dwell - ing, Word of truth, to



we re - vere you; Word made flesh, we long to hear - you.
world re - stor - ing, speak to us, your love out - pour - ing.
all truth lead us; Word of life, with one bread feed us.

***APOSTLE'S CREED**

We now profess the faith we share using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God, you reveal yourself wherever two or three are gathered in your name. Be with us now, not only in the infant Jesus and resurrected Christ, but in the beloved people of this assembly. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in the waters of the womb; in brooks, ponds, and oceans; and in the waters of baptism. Grant us wisdom to tenderly care for the earth as a garden watered by your grace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in blessed diversity. Help us to look for you in people near and far, in bodies of all kinds, and in kindred young and old. Let us seek you in many places, praising you in many tongues. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in new life. Support those beginning a new job, a new relationship, or a new living situation, especially those displaced because of tragedy or loss. Be with all others who need your life-giving touch this day, especially for *Mary, Mabel, Doris, June, Ann, Julie, Carol, Anne, Judy, Jeff, Gloria, Lydia, Brian, James & Grace, Katie, Wil, Amy, Bob & Jane, Scott, Lynda, Ron & Flo, Mac, Monica, Avery, Doris, John, Abby, Mike, Tim, Arleen & Richard, Betty, Linda, Kristen, Natalie, Henry, Glenn, Gary, Connie, Greg, Beverly, Helen & Ron, and Max*. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in Holy Communion. Sustain all who provide food and fellowship in this congregation and in the wider community, especially VISTE, and our Backpack Ministry. Make our tables signs of your welcoming presence among us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You promise to turn mourning into joy and to comfort those who weep. We remember those who have died and look to being united with them in your glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

GRATITUDE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Your Light Has Come

Becker/Duck

*OFFERING SONG

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

ELW s.181

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 the 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.

*OFFERING PRAYER

God of glory,

great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow.

Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,

that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,

through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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.

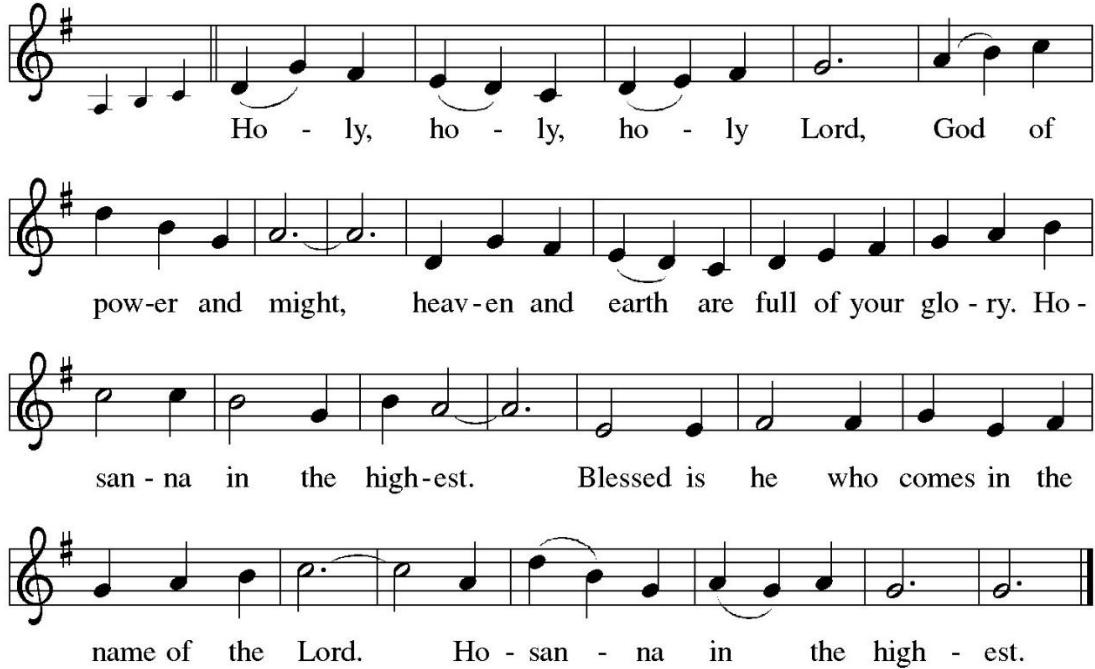
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

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.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
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:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal:
you we praise and glorify, you we worship and adore.

You formed the earth from chaos; you encircled the globe with air;
you created fire for warmth and light; you nourish the lands with water.
You molded us in your image, and with mercy higher than the mountains,
with grace deeper than the seas, you blessed the Israelites
and cherished them as your own.

That also we, estranged and dying, might be adopted to live in your Spirit,
you called to us through the life and death of Jesus.

In the night in which he was handed over,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks.
He 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 as the body of Christ,
we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Son,
the first-born of your new creation. We remember his life lived for others,
and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth.
We await his coming, when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom,
all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, holy and merciful one, holy and compassionate,
send upon us and this meal your Holy Spirit,
whose breath revives us for life, whose fire rouses us to love.
Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food.
Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit,
that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world.
Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

***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.**

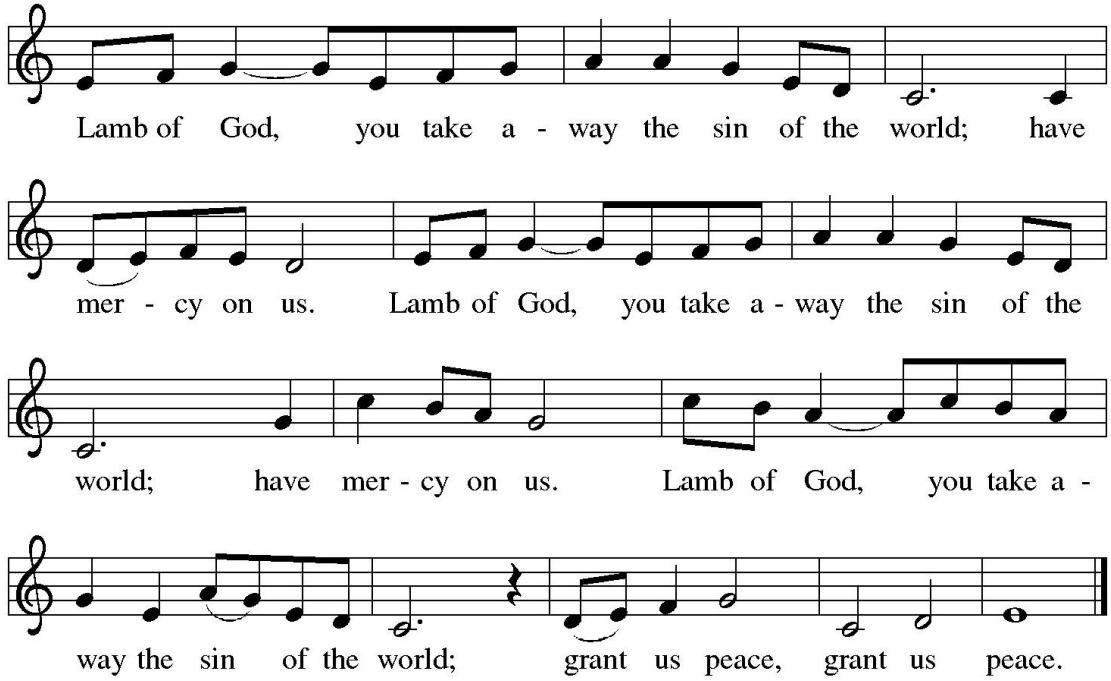
***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**God is now in flesh appearing.
Come to the feast of joy! Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION

The baptized children of God are invited by the Lord to the Lord's Table where we receive Jesus' very body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine. We commune at the communion rail where we receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Gluten free bread and grape juice are available. If you wish to commune, but cannot come forward, let an usher know and Pastor will come to you. If you do not wish to commune, you are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing. You may wish to remain at the rail for a time of personal prayer following which you may return to your pew down the side aisle.

LAMB OF GOD



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.

COMMUNION HYMN(S)

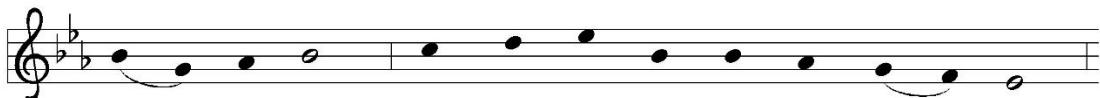
*Of the Father's Love Begotten
He Comes to Us as One Unknown
(on the following pages)*

ELW 295

ELW 737



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,
3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with
4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his
5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him
Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -
prom-ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -
and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be
and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
deem er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
pect ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord
si lent, ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring
min ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more!

A - men.



1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un - seen, un -
2 He comes when souls in si - lence lie and thoughts of day de -
3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o - cean's fume and
4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and
5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be - lieved, o - obeyed, a -



heard; as though with - in a heart of stone, or shriv - eled seed in
part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a fall - ing star a -
foam; yet small and still up - on the breeze, a wind that stirs the
birth; to bear with - in our mor - tal frame a life, a death, a
dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as yet un - seen, but



dark - ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred.
cross the sky of night with-in the heart, of night with-in the heart.
tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home.
sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth.
not un - known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

***POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

**Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.
May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts
the mystery of your presence.
Move us to discover the wonders of your love
in the everyday moments of our lives,
through Christ born in us. Amen.**

SENDING HYMNLet All Together Praise Our God*

ELW 287



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God be - fore the
2 From God's right hand the Son de - scends, is born an
3 O ten - der Child, you veil in flesh the splen - dor
4 Your moth - er feeds you ten - der - ly, sings you a



high - est throne; to - day God o - pens heav'n a - gain and
in - fant small, and lies in pov - er - ty, his bed a
of your might; a ser - vant's garb now wraps the one who
lul - la - by, while an - gels, hail - ing Da - vid's heir, your



sends the on - ly Son, and sends the on - ly Son.
man - ger in a stall, a man - ger in a stall.
clothed the sky with light, who clothed the sky with light.
glo - ry mag - ni - fy, your glo - ry mag - ni - fy.



5 A wonderful exchange you make:
you take our flesh and blood,
and in return give us to share
the shining realm of God,
the shining realm of God.

6 Unlock the door again today
that leads to paradise;
the angel bars the way no more.
To God let praises rise,
to God let praises rise!

*BENEDICTION

The triune God,
Glorious Mystery,
Holy Incarnate One,
Abiding Comforter,
☩ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.
Amen.

*DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!
And peace to God's people on earth!
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

J.S. Bach

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