

**4th Sunday of Advent
December 18, 2022 Worship Bulletin**

Gathering for God's Word

Prelude

*Welcome & Passing the Peace of Christ

*Song of Praise

#106, "Prepare the Way, O Zion," vs. 1, 3

Prepare the way, O Zion; your Christ is drawing near!

Let ev'ry hill and valley a level way appear.

Greet One who comes in glory, fore told in sacred story.

Oh, blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace.

And tidings of salvation proclaim in ev'ry place.

All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing.

Oh, blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Text: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812; re. 1819; trans. Augustus Nelson, 1958.

adap. Charles P. Price, 1980, alt.

Music: Then Svenska Psalmboken, 1697; arr. American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930

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Announcements

Time of Silence & Ringing of the Bell

Preparing for God's Word

Call to Worship

[based on Romans 13: 11-12]

Leader: You know what time it is; how it is now the moment for us to wake from sleep.

People: For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near.

Leader: Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

People: Come, let us worship our great God.

Christmas Carol Sing

Prayer of Confession

[time of silence for private confession].

All: Wonderful Lord, we have not always done a good job keeping watch for you. Too often we have occupied ourselves with our own concerns. We have not waited to find your will for us. We have not noticed the needs of the people around us. We have not acknowledged the love that has been shown to us. Forgive us for our lack of watchfulness. Help us to wait to know your will. Help us to look out for the needs of others. And help us to work and watch for your coming. We ask all this in Christ's name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

[based on 1 Timothy 1: 15]

Leader: Hear the Good News! The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

People: In Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

Children's Message & Lighting the Advent Candle

Ages 12 and under gather up front as congregation sings, #115, "Away in a Manger."
After the Advent Candle Lighting, the children may return to sit with their families.

Advent Liturgy

Readings: From the Catechism

Leader: Christ is the light for all people.

Children: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Leader: Let us pray...

Congregational Prayer: Dear God, in the fullness of time you sent the One promised through the prophets who looked forward in hope. You have given us a living hope by raising him from the dead. Enliven our hope as we live in the expectation of your coming and your coming again. Amen.

Hearing God's Word

Anthem

"A Song of Christmas," Union Choir

Prayer of Illumination

New Testament Reading: Mathew 2: 13-18

13 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

14 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, 15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. 17 Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: 18 "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

Sermon

"Wise Men... How Much Will It Hurt"

Responding to God's Word

Affirmation of Faith

[based on Philippians 2: 6-11]

Leader: What do we believe about God being with us in Christ?

All: I believe the Word was in the form of God and did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped. He emptied himself, took the form of a servant, and was born in our own likeness. I believe he humbled himself and became obedient unto death. I believe God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. I believe that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, every knee in heaven and on earth and under the earth. I believe that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Offering

Offertory

Anthem

#123, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," vs. 1, 4, 5

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,

and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

Text: Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1849, alt.
Music: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850
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*Response

#606, The Doxology, "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, all creatures here below
Praise Him above the Heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Amen

Text: Thomas Ken, 1695, 1709
Music: Genevan Psalter, 1551
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*Prayer of Dedication

Hymn of Response

#134, "Joy to the World," vs. 1, 3, 4

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove

The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

Music: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742; arr. Lowell Mason, 1836
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*Benediction

*Benediction Response

#155, "Raise a Song of Gladness"

Raise a song of gladness, peoples of the earth.
Christ has come, bringing peace, joy to ev'ry heart.
Alleluia, alleluia, joy to ev'ry heart!
Alleluia, alleluia, joy to ev'ry heart!

Text: Taize Community, 1978

Music: Jacques Berthier 1978

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*Postlude

*Postlude

*Please Stand if Able