

One who is  
more powerful  
than I is coming  
after me:  
I am not worthy  
to carry his  
sandals.

Matthew 3:11, NRSV



St. David's Evangelical Lutheran Church

**Sunday, December 8, 2019**

Second Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion

8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

ELW Setting 3

Pastor: The Reverend Faron H. Johnson

Minister of Music: Michael Busija

Guest Organist: Mrs. Judy Brotz

Church: 479-4110; Fax: 479-2994

[www.stdavidslutheran.org](http://www.stdavidslutheran.org)

## ***Welcome to St. David's Lutheran Church!***

We are blessed by your presence and honored that you have chosen to worship with us today. Please take a moment to sign the friendship sheet that is located in the booklet at the end of each pew, near the center aisle. These sheets will be collected after the service.

**The Sacrament of Holy Communion** is offered to all who are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and who recognize the Sacrament as the true body and blood of our Lord. Baptized children are also welcome to receive the elements at the Lord's table at St. David's with the guidance and consent of their parents or guardians. Persons, who may not wish to receive the bread and wine of the communion, are still welcome to come to the table to receive a blessing. To do so please fold your hands and bow your head.

**Prayer Requests** may be made by placing the request in the small wooden box at the rear, near the doors through which you entered. The acolyte will collect the requests and they will be included during the prayers of the congregation.

**For your comfort** there is a restroom, equipped with a changing table and supplies and a water fountain located upstairs. Simply exit through the double doors back into the narthex. The restroom is straight ahead in the parlor, beside the grandfather clock, and the water fountain is to the right at the beginning of the hallway.

**Devotional** – The worship folder you are holding is also a weekly devotional booklet. The prayers and Scripture readings are appropriate for use at any time during the week. The liturgy itself is a Scripturally based order for daily prayer and devotion with Scriptural references noted where they apply. Even the hymns are appropriate tools for prayer and praise. Finally, there is a daily lectionary of Scripture readings for the rest of the week on the last printed page.

### **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.

## WELCOME

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## PRELUDE

*The assembly stands.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

In the name of the Father,  
and of the † Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

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

*The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

*The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness with these or similar words.*

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

*The assembly stands.*

# GATHERING HYMN

## Fling Wide the Door



1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry  
2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's  
3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true  
4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen



comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the  
gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his  
king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the  
wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -



Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion  
scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows  
hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful  
on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and  
to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and  
Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -  
Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We



praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.  
wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.  
a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.  
praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943

Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704

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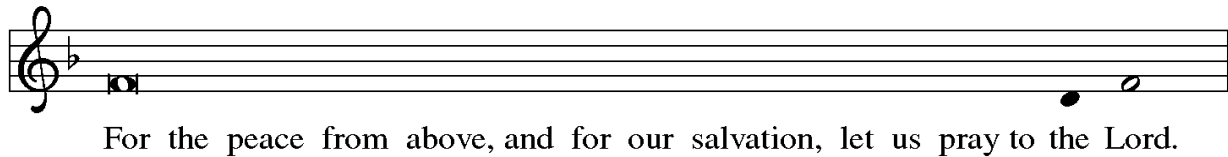
## GREETING

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.**

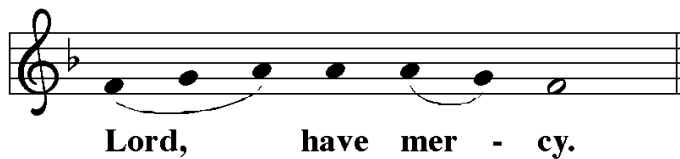
## KYRIE



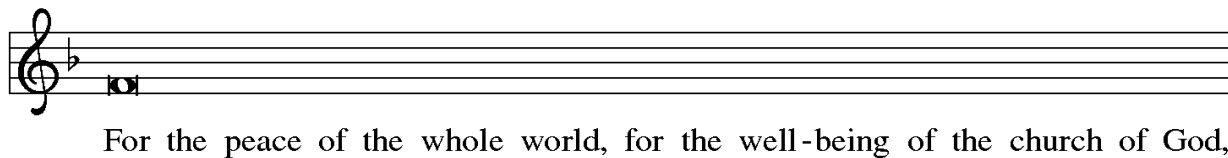
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



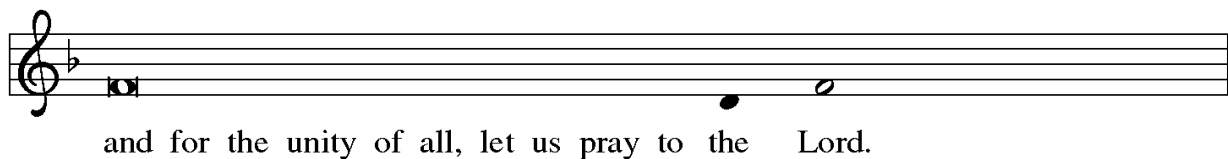
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



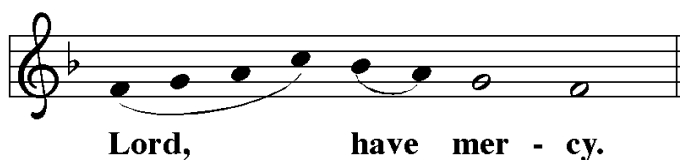
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



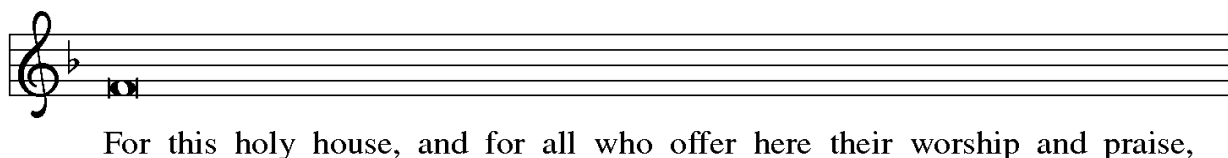
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



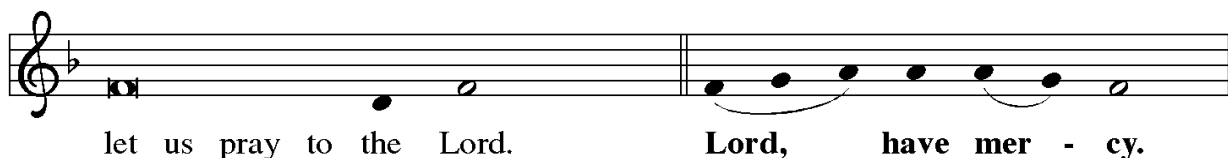
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



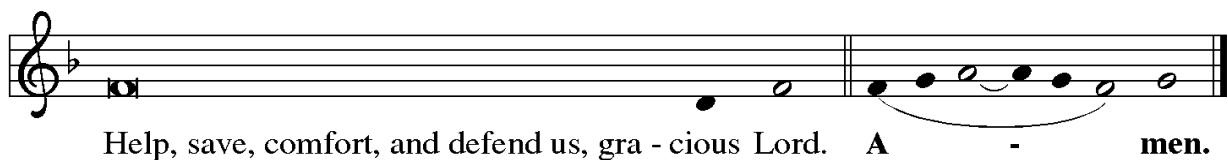
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



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 defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. . . .

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

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.

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## **WORD WITH CHILDREN**

### **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

*Use this blessing when lighting the first two candles.*

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 candles 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.**

## **FIRST READING: Isaiah 11:1-10**

A reading from Isaiah the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

*{Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.}*

<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 the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek 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 and the fatling 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.

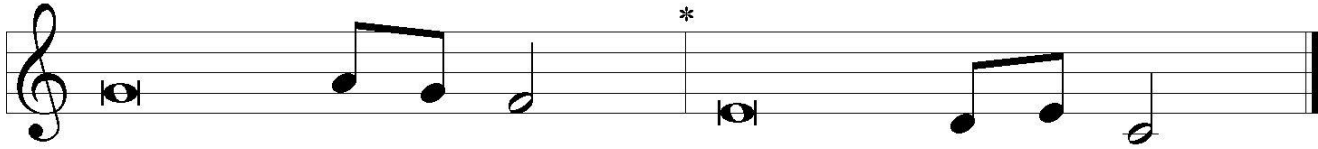
<sup>10</sup>On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

# PSALM 72:1-7, 18-19 (sung responsively)

## Psalm Tone 1



- <sup>1</sup>Give the king your jus- | tice, O God,  
and your righteousness to | the king's son;  
<sup>2</sup>**that he may rule your | people righteously  
and the | poor with justice;**  
<sup>3</sup>that the mountains may bring prosperity | to the people,  
and the | hills, in righteousness.  
<sup>4</sup>**Let him defend the needy a- | mong the people,  
rescue the poor, and crush | the oppressor.**  
<sup>5</sup>May he live as long as the sun and | moon endure,  
from one generation | to another.  
<sup>6</sup>**Let him come down like rain upon | the mown field,  
like showers that wa- | ter the earth.**  
<sup>7</sup>In his time may the | righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall | be no more.  
<sup>18</sup>**Blessed are you, LORD God, the | God of Israel;  
you alone do | wondrous deeds!**  
<sup>19</sup>And blessed be your glorious | name forever,  
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. A- | men. Amen.



## **SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13**

A reading from Romans the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter.

*{God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.}*

<sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup>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 patriarchs, <sup>9</sup>and in order 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”;

<sup>10</sup>and again he says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

<sup>11</sup>and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,  
and let all the peoples praise him”;

<sup>12</sup>and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,  
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;  
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

<sup>13</sup>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.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly stands.*

# VERSE



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12**

The holy gospel according to Matthew the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*{Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.}*

<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 the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, <sup>6</sup>and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruit worthy of repentance. <sup>9</sup>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; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup>“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; 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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

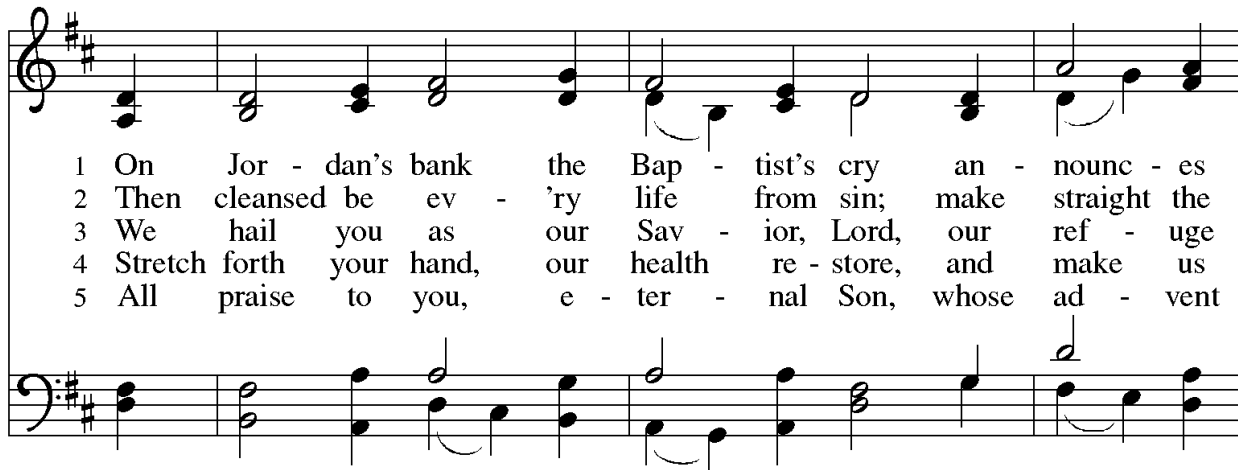
## **HOMILY**

*Silence for reflection may follow.*

*The assembly stands.*

# HYMN OF THE DAY

## On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



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.

Together we confess our faith:

## **APOSTLE'S 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**

Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

God of promise, your reign has come near. Call your people to the way of repentance and inspire your church to bear fruit in the world through acts of faithful service. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, we pray for the wolf and the lamb, the lion and the calf, and all species whose lives are intertwined. Repair and preserve ecosystems (*here local examples may be named*), that all life on earth may be sustained. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, teach those with power and privilege to serve the vulnerable. Give to all leaders wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, and a heart of compassion for the world you so love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the poor, set tables of abundance in all places where hands are empty, where stomachs ache with hunger, and where hearts and minds suffer pain. Feed and heal all who are in need. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of hope, renew in your people all joy and peace in believing, especially those facing anxiety, depression, or alienation. Guide this community of faith to welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of eternal life, you promise to take away our sin and gather us in your care forever. We give thanks for those who now rest from their labors on earth, freed from pain and the power of death (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You hear the cries of our hearts, O Lord. Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in each day and hour we may love and serve our neighbors, in Jesus' name.  
**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

Peace be with you.

**Peace be with you.**

*Please be seated after the Peace is shared.*

## **OFFERING**

## **OFFERTORY**

# OFFERTORY HYMN

## Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath  
2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in  
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the  
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as  
mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the  
air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the  
woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who



seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so bright, a -  
vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right, she  
dark-ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from  
dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to



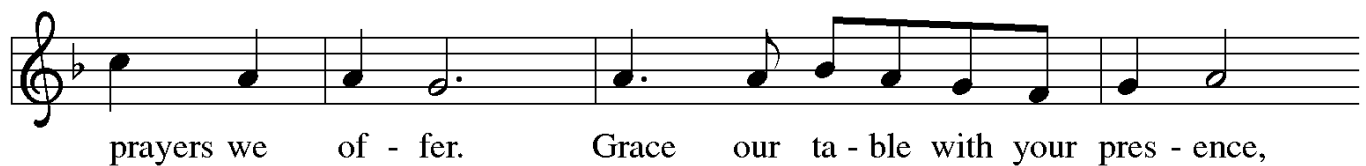
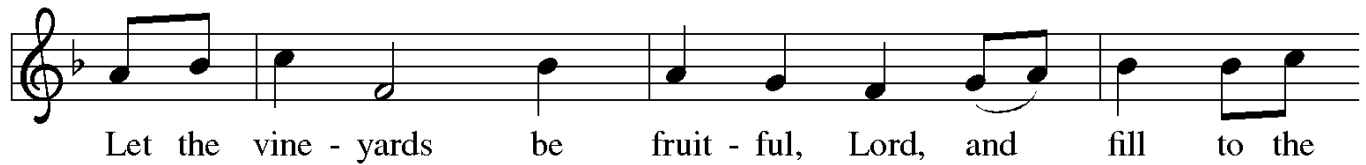
mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.  
bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.  
sin and death he saves us and light-ens ev - 'ry load.  
the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, sts. 1–2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845–1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876–1948, st. 4  
Music: ES IST EIN ROS, *Alte catholische geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1599

# OFFERTORY RESPONSE

*The assembly stands.*

## Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **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**

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. 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.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup  
we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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,**

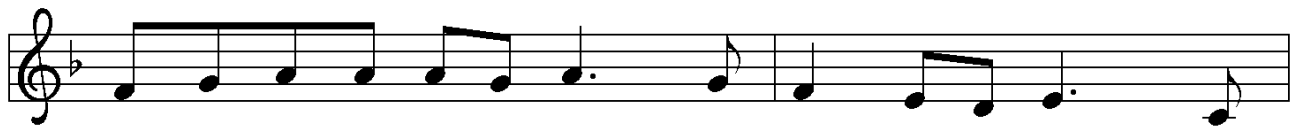
**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,**

**and the power, and the glory,**

**forever and ever. Amen.**

## 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.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION** is offered to all who are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and who recognize the Sacrament as the true body and blood of our Lord. Baptized children are also welcome to the Lord's table at St. David's with the guidance and consent of their parents or guardians.

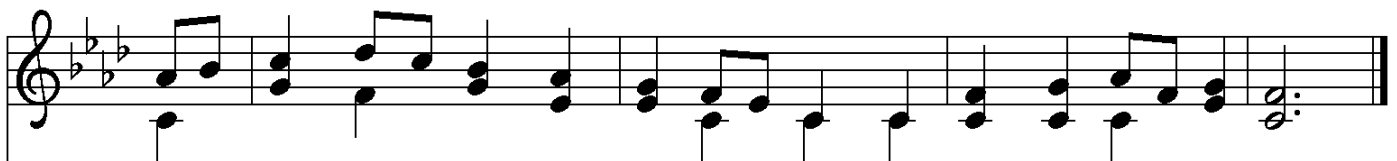
This morning we Commune by **intinction**. The congregation will proceed down the center aisle and receive the host from the pastor. Then, those seated on the right will go right and those seated on the left will go left, receive the chalice from one of the Communion assistants by dipping the host into the chalice. Then everyone returns by the side aisles.

## COMMUNION HYMN

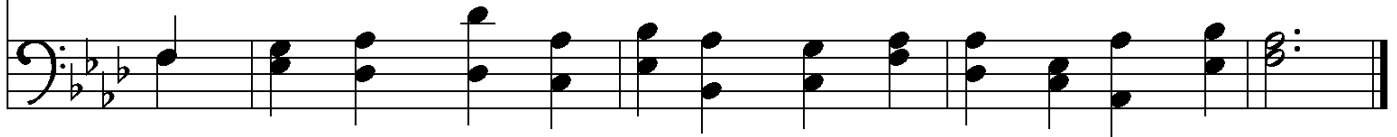
# The King Shall Come



- 1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,
- 2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, to bear and fight and die,
- 3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn when Christ, vic - to - rious, rose
- 4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race
- 5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.



when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.  
but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn-ing sky.  
and left the lone - some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes.  
the day when Christ in splen - dor comes, and we shall see his face.  
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick - ly, King of kings.



Text: John Brownlie, 1859-1925

Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davisson, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929-2003

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*The assembly stands.*

*After all have returned to their places, the minister may say these or similar words.*

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

**Amen.**

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care:

As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread,  
assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament  
with those who are *sick, homebound, and imprisoned*.

In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

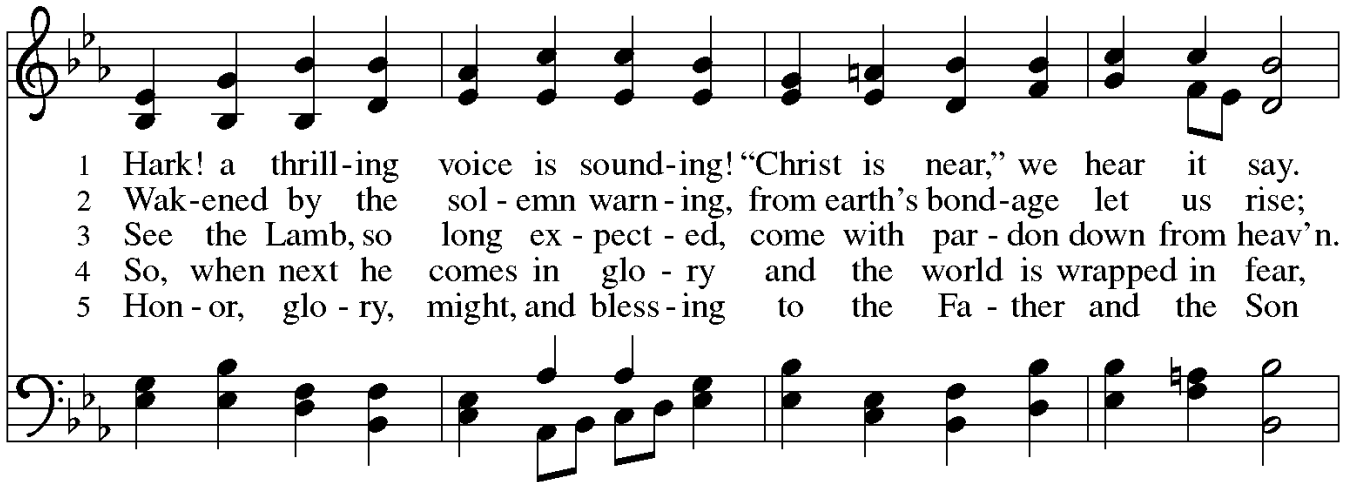
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

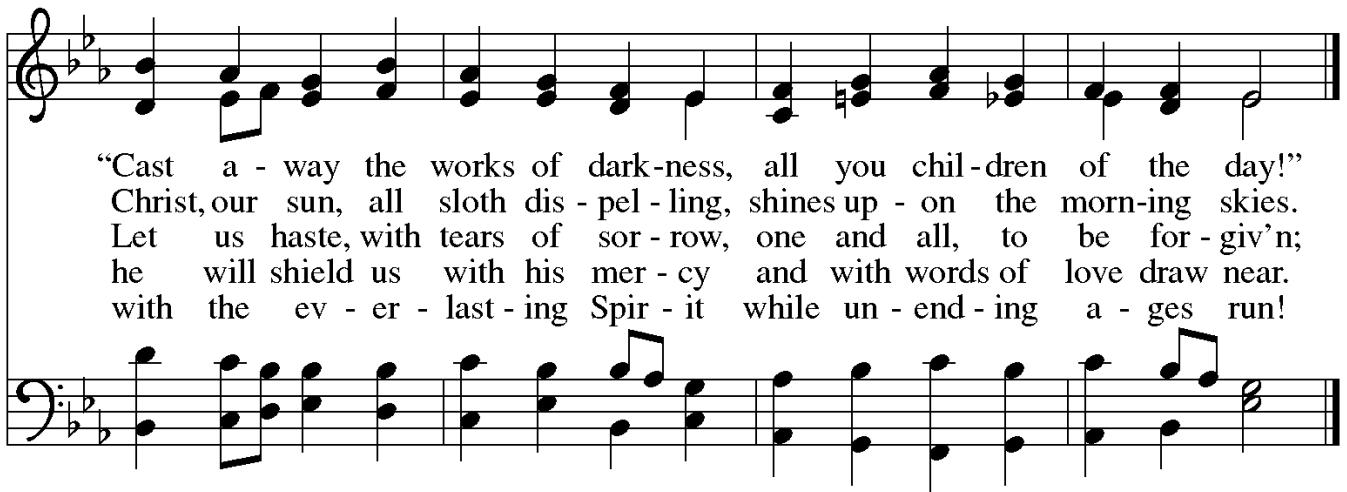
## **QUIET MEDITATION**

## SENDING HYMN

### Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.  
2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn-ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;  
3 See the Lamb, so long ex-pect-ed, come with par-don down from heav'n.  
4 So, when next he comes in glo-ry and the world is wrapped in fear,  
5 Hon-or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa-ther and the Son



"Cast a-way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"  
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.  
Let us haste, with tears of sor-row, one and all, to be for-giv'n;  
he will shield us with his mer-cy and with words of love draw near.  
with the ev-er-last-ing Spir-it while un-end-ing a-ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878  
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE



## **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

**December 8, 2019**

### **SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

#### **Name Your Wilderness**

Name your wilderness. Do not read on yet. Name it now, this moment. No one else needs to describe it for you. It is *your* wilderness. Aches. Burns. Howls. Shadows. Echoes. Fears. Shames. Hungers. Jeers. Memories. Futures. Scars. Catastrophes. Wastes. Falls. These may comprise your wilderness.

In Judea, the wilderness is dusty, dry, rocky, and hot. The land is rugged and steep, dangerous and threatening. But it is not a hopeless place. When the wadis, where the rivers run, fill up with rainwater, the brown, broiled-crisp hillsides dress in green, and flowers emerge as if scraps of rainbows have dappled the earth. In a seemingly desolate place, grace startlingly appears.

Name your wilderness.

John the Baptist was in the wilderness. He went there with a message. It takes courage to cry out to the occupiers of the wilderness with a vision of hope. He did it with nerve, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

The crowds were there from all regions. It seems they came hoping for hope. Naming their wilderness, the crowds found the courage to "repent, for the kingdom of heaven [had] come near."

"Repent": John's persistent refrain in the wilderness. He was "crying out," the gospel tells us, not whimpering or gently prompting. The word *repent* muscles and presses, carving a new path where all the other occupiers leave drought and ruin. The river Jordan flows in the wilderness; in its current the Spirit moves, the call "Repent!" carried in its quickening flow. The message is both warning and promise. In naming your wilderness, you discover not desolation but opportunity for new life. Name your wilderness. See the grace flower and spring into abundance. The one who is coming—the embodiment of the kingdom of heaven come near to us—offers repentance and grace.

## ***Daily Readings for the Week December 8-14***

Sunday:	Second Sunday of Advent Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12
Monday:	Psalm 21 Isaiah 24:1-16a 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12
Tuesday:	Psalm 21 Isaiah 41:14-20 Romans 15:14-21
Wednesday:	Psalm 21 Genesis 15:1-18 Matthew 12:33-37
Thursday:	Psalm 146:5-10 Ruth 1:6-18 2 Peter 3:1-10
Friday:	Psalm 146:5-10 Ruth 4:13-17 2 Peter 3:11-18
Saturday:	Psalm 146:5-10 1 Samuel 2:1-8 Luke 3:1-18

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