



4th Sunday of Advent | December 24, 2023  
A Service of Lessons & Carols



*Then hear now the silence  
He comes in the silence  
in silence he enters  
the womb of the bearer  
in silence he goes to  
the realm of the shadows  
redeeming and shriving  
in silence he moves from  
the grave cloths, the dark tomb  
in silence he rises  
ascends to the glory  
leaving his promise  
leaving his comfort  
leaving his silence  
So come now, Lord Jesus  
Come in your silence  
breaking our noising  
laughter of panic  
breaking this earth's time  
breaking us breaking us  
quickly Lord Jesus  
make no long tarrying  
When will you come  
and how will you come  
and will we be ready  
for silence  
your silence*

*~ Madeleine L'Engle*

*~ cover by Lenae van der Bijl*

## Welcome

### Silent moment to prepare for worship

*Advent Colors: Purple recalls the Royalty of the present and coming King, and the candles recall the Light of the world, Jesus Christ.*



## Service of Lessons and Carols

*This morning's worship is a service of lessons and carols. Tradition suggests that in the late 19th century the Bishop of Truro in Cornwall, England designed a Christmas Eve service to lift the spirits of his poor congregation. They met in a wooden shed that served as their church sanctuary. The bishop used scripture readings from the Old and New Testaments to unfold the story of how God came to earth as a baby. In between the scripture lessons, the bishop inserted familiar Christmas songs and carols.*

### Call to Worship

Choral: *Amelia Holzhauzen*

*Once in royal David's city, Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby, In a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that Mother mild, Jesus Christ her little Child.*

All:

2 He came down to earth from hea-ven who is God and Lord of\_  
3 And our eyes at last\_ shall see him, through his own re - deem-ing\_  
4 Not in that poor low - ly\_\_ sta-ble, with the ox - en stand-ing\_  
all, and his shel - ter was\_\_ a\_\_ sta - ble, and his  
love; for that child, so dear\_\_ and\_\_ gen - tle, is our  
round, We shall see him but\_\_ in\_\_ hea - ven, where his  
cra - dle was\_\_ a\_\_ stall: with the poor and meek and  
Lord in heaven a - bove: and he leads his chil - dren  
saints his throne sur - round: Christ re - vealed to faith - ful  
low - ly lived on earth, our Sa - vior\_\_ ho - ly.  
on\_\_ to the place where he\_\_ has\_\_ gone.\_\_  
eye,\_\_ set at God's right hand\_\_ on\_\_ high.\_\_

*Once in Royal David's City, words, Cecil Francis Alexander, 1818-1895; music, Henry John Gauntlet, 1805-1876*

# Light the Advent Candle

Led by Leslie, David, Paul and Naomi Lucas

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

Reader: The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

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

Reader: We light the first candle as a sign of **hope** in the  
Christ who came and who will come again.

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

Reader: We light the second candle as a sign of the **love** of  
Christ who bore our darkness so that we could see His light.

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

Reader: We light the third candle as a sign of the **joy** that  
Christ gives through His saving grace.

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

Reader: We light the fourth candle as a sign of the **peace** that  
Christ our King gives to the world.

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



1. Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is  
2. Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, let the  
3. See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with  
4. So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the  
5. Ho - nor, glo - ry and do - min - ion to the



near," we hear the cry. "Cast a - way the works of  
earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ its sun, all sloth dis -  
par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of  
world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us with this  
Fa - ther and the Son, with the ev - er - last - ing




dark - ness, all you chil - dren of \_\_\_\_\_ the day!"  
pel - ling, shines up - on the morn - ning skies.  
sor - row, one and all, to be \_\_\_\_\_ for - giv'n.  
mer - cy and with words of love \_\_\_\_\_ draw near.  
Spi - rit, while e - ter - nal a - ges run!

## Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Faithful God, we adore you for coming to us in your son, Jesus. We wait for your return; fill us with the hope, love, joy and peace of your presence.

*silent moment of adoration*



Let all mor - tal flesh keep\_ si - lence, And with fear and  
trem - bling\_ stand; Pon-der noth-ing earth - ly\_\_ mind - ed,  
For with bless-ing in His\_\_ hand, Christ our God to  
earth de - scend - eth, Our full hom-age to de - mand.

*Let All Mortal Flesh, Words: Liturgy of St. James, 5th cent.; Trad. French melody, 17th cent.*



### *First Lesson: The Fall*

*Michele Dillon*

*God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.  
From Genesis 3*

**Reader:** And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

All:

2. King of kings, yet born of Ma - ry, As of old on  
 3. Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-gaurd  
 4. At his feet the six - wing - ed Ser - aph, Cher - u - bim, with

earth He stood, Lord of lords, in hu - man ves - ture,  
 on the way, As the Light of light de - scend - eth  
 sleep - less eye, Veil their fac - es to the pres - ence,

In the bod - y and the blood, He will give to  
 from the realms of end - less day, That the pow'rs of  
 as with cease-less voice they cry, Al - le - lu - ia,

all the faith - ful. His own self for heav'n - ly food.  
 hell may van - ish. As the dark-ness clears a - way.  
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Lord most high!



## Second Lesson: The Promise

Brad Lewis

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. From Genesis 12,15

Reader: Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

All:

For You, O Lord our souls in still - ness wait.

For You, O Lord, our souls in still - ness wait.

Tru-ly our hope is in You. Tru-ly our hope is in You.

Come Light Our Hearts, words and music by Sandra McCracken, 2016

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

All:

1.O Lord of life, our on - ly hope, Your ra - diance  
2.O Joy a - bove all oth - er loves, in You we  
shines on all who look to You in the  
find more than e - nough We come as we  
dark. E - man - u - el come, come light our hearts.  
are, O heal and re - store, come light our hearts.  
For You, O Lord our souls in still - ness wait.  
For You, O Lord, our souls in still - ness wait.  
Tru-ly our hope is in You. Tru-ly our hope is in You.



### Third Lesson: The King Reigns

Mark Faasse, The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour. From Isaiah 9.

Reader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.  
For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood  
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

All: **For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Reader: Of the increase of his government and of  
peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
It will be established and upheld with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.



1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let earth re-ceive her King;  
 2. Joy to the earth! the Sa-vior reigns; Let men their songs em-ploy;  
 3. No more let sins and sor-rows grow, Nor thorns in-fest the ground;  
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the na-tions prove



Let ev'-ry heart pre-pare Him room,  
 While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 He comes to make His bles-sings flow  
 The glo-ries of His right-eous-ness,



And heav'n and na-ture sing, And heav'n and na-ture sing,  
 Re-peat the soun-ding joy, Re-peat the soun-ding joy,  
 Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is found,  
 And won-ders of His love, And won-ders of His love,



And heav'n and heav'n and na-ture sing.  
 Re-peat re-peat the soun-ding joy.  
 Far as far as the curse is found.  
 And won-ders won-ders of His love.

*Joy to the World, Words: Isaac Watts, 1719; Music: Antioch, arranged by Lowell Mason, 1836*



## Fourth Lesson: Peace Reigns

Ranya Sweis

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown. From Isaiah 11*

**Reader:** There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. With righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall destroy the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

**All:** For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
 as the waters cover the sea.

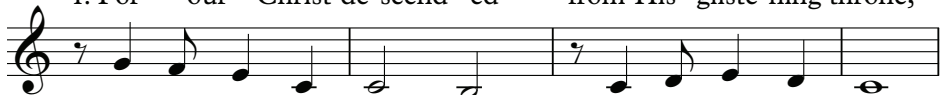
**Reader:** The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.

**All:** For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
 as the waters cover the sea.





1. Beth - le - hem re - joi - ces!      Hark the voi - ces clear,  
 2. Heav'n can - not con - tain Him,      Nor the bounds of earth,  
 3. Now the light a - ris - eth      In the dar - kened skies,  
 4. For our Christ de - scend - ed      from His glis - te - ning throne,



Sing - ing in the star - light      Near - rer and more near.  
 Yet, oh glor - ious my - stery      Vir - gin gives Him birth.  
 Now the proud are hum - bled      And the low - ly rise.  
 bear - ing sins and sor - rows,      to re - deem his own.



(vs. 1-3) Un - to God be glo - ry,      Peace on earth be giv'n  
 (vs. 4) Praise and Ha - lle - lu - jahs,      To the Lord of hosts

*Bethlehem Rejoices, Words: St. John of Damascus, 780 AD; Music and addl. words, Paul van der Bijl, Advent 2018*



## Fifth Lesson: The Christ Revealed

Christie Kay

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary. From Luke 1*

**Reader:** In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."

**Choral:** *Mary's Song, Rachael Holzhausen, by John Michael Talbot, 1993*

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord  
 And my spirit exalts in God my savior  
 For he has looked with mercy on my lowliness  
 And my name will be forever exalted.*

*For the mighty God has done great things for me  
 An his mercy will reach from age to age  
 And holy is His name.*



## Sixth Lesson: The Christ is Born

Cora Passis

Luke tells of the birth of Jesus. From Luke 2

Reader:

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.



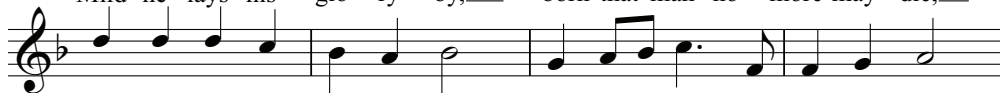
1 Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, — "Glo - ry to the new - born King:  
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ, the e - ver - las - ting Lord,  
3 Hail the heaven - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Right - eous - ness!



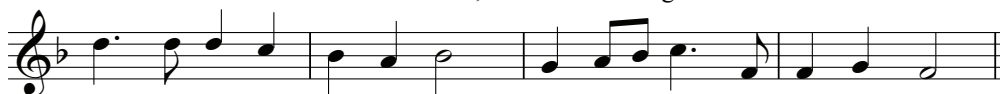
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, — God and sin - ners re - con - ciled!"  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb:  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, — join the tri - umph of the skies; —  
veiled in flesh the Go - dhead see; — hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty, —  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, — born that man no more may die, —



with th'an - ge - lic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is — born in Beth - le - hem!"  
pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, — our Im - ma - nu - el.  
born to raise us from the earth, born to — give us se - cond birth.



Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry — to the new - born King."

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Words: Charles Wesley, 1739. Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840.*



## Seventh Lesson: Worship the King

Dave and Chris Jarvis

*The shepherds and wisemen go to the manger. From Luke 2 and Matthew 2.*

**Reader:** And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**Choral:** *Shining Star, David Dillon, Carolyn Dillon, Paul van der Bijl, Sacred Harp tune, 1786*

*While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.  
On this day is born to you  
A Savior meek and mild;  
Haste ye all to Bethlehem  
And kneel before the Child.*

*Lay down your crooks and quit your flocks,  
To Bethlehem repair;  
And let your wand'ring steps be squared,  
By yonder shining star.  
Seek ye not in palaces,  
Nor regal curtains draw.  
Search the stable, see your God  
Extended on the straw.*

**Reader:** Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.



So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is wrapp'd in fear,



He will shield us with his mer - cy and with words of love\_ draw near.



## *Eighth Lesson: The Word*

Jeanie Hoover

*John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation. From John 1*

Reader: In the beginning was the Word,  
**All: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

Reader: He was with God in the beginning.  
**All: Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.**

Reader: In him was life, and that life was the light of men.  
**All: The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.**

Reader: There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.  
**All: The true light, that gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.**

Reader: He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.  
**All: He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.**

Reader: Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.  
**All: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**



**Meditation:** Pastor Dan Adamson

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### **Celebrate the Table**

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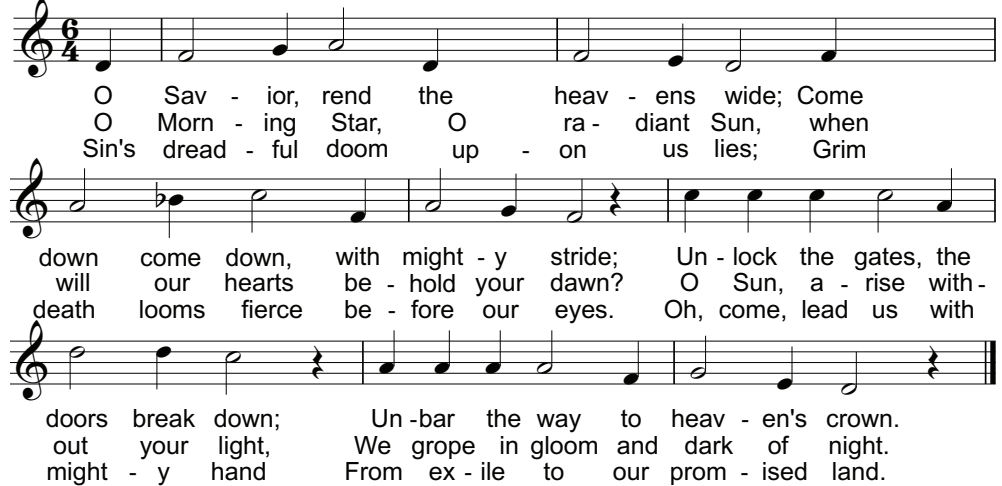
*Prepare for the Table: Confession and Assurance*

Leader: **Confession of Sin** from 1John 1

*God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

*Silent time to pray and confess*

## Sing to Confess

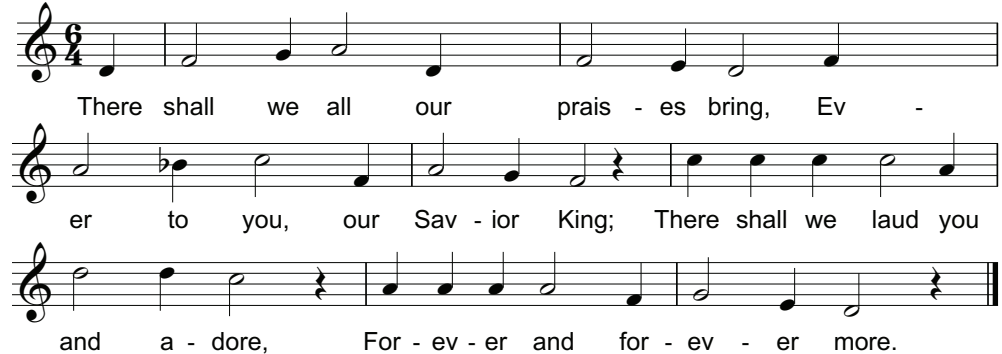


O Sav - ior, rend the heav - ens wide; Come  
O Morn - ing Star, O ra - diant Sun, when  
Sin's dread - ful doom up - on us lies; Grim  
down come down, with might - y stride; Un - lock the gates, the  
will our hearts be - hold your dawn? O Sun, a - rise with -  
death looms fierce be - fore our eyes. Oh, come, lead us with  
doors break down; Un - bar the way to heav - en's crown.  
out your light, We grope in gloom and dark of night.  
might - y hand From ex - ile to our prom - ised land.

*O Savior, Rend..., Words, Friederich von Spee, 1591, Music, German Spiritual song, 1623, arr. PvdBijl*

Leader: **Assurance of Pardon** from 1John 1

*If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*



There shall we all our prais - es bring, Ev -  
er to you, our Sav - ior King; There shall we laud you  
and a - dore, For - ev - er and for - ev - er more.

## Sacrament of Communion

2 Corinthians 13:11-14: Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

Leader: The Lord be with you

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts

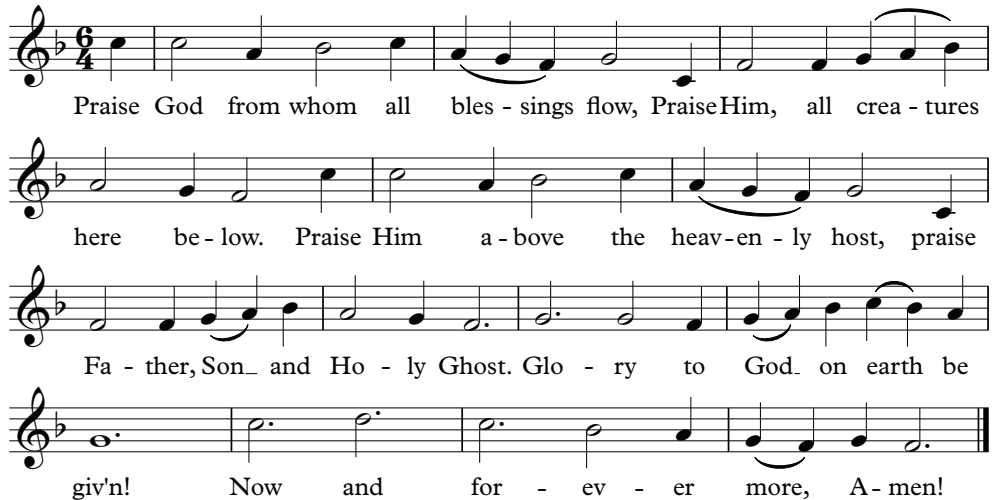
**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**All: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

## Greet each other in the name of Christ

Giving back to God a portion of what he's already given us is an important part of the Christian life. The bread and wine we use in communion are a picture of the gifts that God has given us, offered back to him as an act of worship. You can offer your resources back to God in support of the work of the church by placing your offering in the boxes in the back on the way out. You can also give online at [covenantchicago.org/give](http://covenantchicago.org/give), use the QR code on page 15, or text a donation amount to 84321.



Praise God from whom all bles - sings flow, Praise Him, all crea - tures  
here be - low. Praise Him a - bove the heav - en - ly host, praise  
Fa - ther, Son\_ and Ho - ly Ghost. Glo - ry to God. on earth be  
giv'n! Now and for - ev - er more, A - men!

Doxology, Words: Thomas Ken, 1709, Music, Sussex Carol by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1900

## The Great Thanksgiving, *from the Anglican Church, 1998*

Leader: As we approach your table, grant us the peace with each other that we find in you so that we can come to this feast united in love. Accept now our offerings of bread, wine and gifts to you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to the work of your kingdom.

**All: It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,  
almighty God and everlasting Father, through Jesus Christ your Son.**

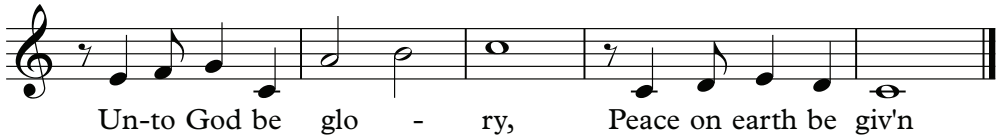
Leader: For when he humbled himself to come among us in human flesh,  
he fulfilled the plan you formed before the foundation of the world  
to open for us the way of salvation.

**All: Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,  
we now watch for the day when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.**

Leader: And so we join our voices with angels and archangels  
and with all the company of heaven  
to proclaim your glory  
forever praising you and saying:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
 God of power and might,  
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
 Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
 Hosanna in the highest.



### Distribute the Bread & Cup

Please note that we serve both red wine and white grape juice.  
 There is individually wrapped gluten free bread available.

#### Receiving Communion

Communion (also called The Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and seek strength to live more faithfully for him.

1. Come you wan-dering wea - ry chil-dren lost and with - out peace.  
 2. Ga - ther for - lorn trav - elers at the gates of Beth - le - hem.  
 3. Ga - ther freed and hum - bled pil - grims, at the Sta - ble - Throne.  
 4. In the gar - den shade of eve - ning, walk with God, a - toned.

hun - gry, thirs - ty worn and burd - ened, wel - come to the feast!  
 Find our Sa - vior in the man - ger, en - ter E - dens' rest.  
 Praise the Christ who o - pened E - den, find your world re - stored!  
 Drink the joy of his for - give - ness, in Him find your home.

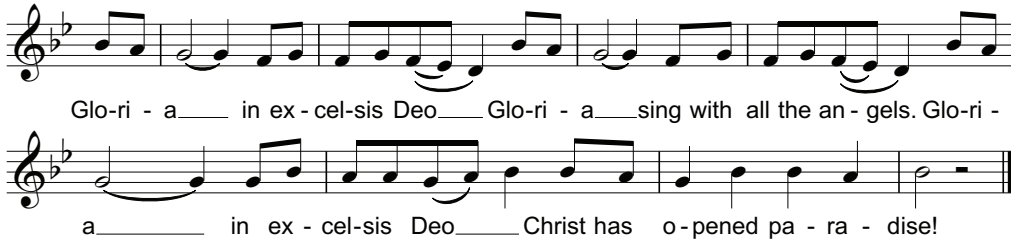
Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis Deo Glo - ri - a sing with all the an - gels. Glo - ri -  
 a in ex - cel - sis Deo Christ has o - pened pa - ra - dise!

Eden's Rest, by Paul van der Bijl, Christmastide, 2023

## Respond to the Table

Leader: Remembering your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we take from your creation this bread and this wine  
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising,  
as we await the day of his coming.  
With thanksgiving we offer our very selves to you  
to be a living and holy sacrifice  
dedicated to your service.

All: **Great is this mystery of faith:  
Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**



Glo-ri - a in ex - cel-sis Deo Glo-ri - a sing with all the an - gels. Glo-ri -  
a in ex - cel-sis Deo Christ has o-pened pa - ra - dise!

## In Community

Announcements about Covenant events and opportunities during the coming weeks.



Glo - ri - a in excel-sis De - o!



## Ninth Lesson: The Christ Returns

*John envisions the return of Christ in power and judgment. From Revelation 22.*

Reader: Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. And Jesus says "Behold I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."



1. An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet ly\_\_\_ sing - ing\_\_\_ o'er the plains:  
 2. Shep - herds, why this\_ ju - bi lee?\_\_\_ Why your\_ joy - our\_ strains pro - long?  
 3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see\_\_\_ Him whose birth the\_ an - gels sing;  
 4. See Him in a\_\_\_ man - ger laid\_\_\_ Je - sus\_\_\_ Lord of\_ heav'n and earth!

And the moun tains in re - ply,\_\_\_ E - cho - ing their joy - our strains.  
 See what may the\_ ti - dings be\_\_\_ Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
 Come a - dore on\_\_\_ ben - ded knee\_\_\_ Christ the\_ Lord the\_ new - born King.  
 Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid,\_\_\_ With us\_\_\_ sing our\_\_\_ Sa - vior's birth!

Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ri - a in excel - sis De - o!

*Angels We Have Heard on High, Words: Traditional French carol, 18th Century*

## Benediction

*Romans 15:5-7 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

# Welcome to Covenant Presbyterian Church

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## TODAY AT COVENANT

Service, 10:15am

- Nurseries, ages 0-4, lower level

### Advent and Christmas Calendar:

**December 24:** Fourth Sunday of Advent, A Service of Lessons & Carols, only one service at 10:15 (nursery provided for children 0-4); no Common Ground

**December 24:** Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7 pm (nursery provided for children 0-4)

**December 31:** Only one service at 10:15 am (nursery provided for children 0-4); no Common Ground

### Volunteers in Service Today:

Communion Servers: Jenna Hammond, Ryan and Jennie von Drehle

Ushers: Paul Kamp

Large Print orders of worship and electronic hearing assistance devices are available in the back of the sanctuary. An usher can assist you with finding and using these items.

## COMMON GROUND CLASSES

**Communicants Class:** The staff will teach a two-week communicants class for children beginning Sunday, January 7. The class will address the sacraments, repentance, faith, and how we are to take the Lord's supper. The class is intended to prepare children who may be ready to take communion to talk with one of the pastors about being admitted to the table. We ask that each child in the class have a parent in attendance with him or her. The class will meet during Common Ground at 10:15 on January 7 and 14. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Ian Troll ([ian@covenantchicago.org](mailto:ian@covenantchicago.org)).

**Winter Class Break:** On December 24 and 31, there will be no Common Ground. On January 7 and 14, we'll gather together in the Fellowship Hall for bagels as a full congregation. Common Ground nurseries, Sunday School and adult classes will take a break with the exception of the communicants class. Classes will resume on January 21.

## NEWS AND UPDATES

**Staff Gift:** Each holiday season, the elders and deacons collect a special offering for a staff gift, which is distributed to the pastoral and support staff. If you would like to contribute you can use the envelopes available at the Welcome Table, write "staff gift" in the memo line of a check or give online (<https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/staffgift>). Please note: staff gift is not tax deductible.

**Year End Giving:** Please note per IRS regulations, contributions to Covenant must be submitted or postmarked by December 31, 2023 in order to appear on your 2023 Contribution Statement. If you have any questions, contact Gene Pierson ([gpierson@covenantchicago.org](mailto:gpierson@covenantchicago.org)).

### Staff Gift QR Code



## Pastoral Staff

Aaron Baker  
Pastor, [abaker@covenantchicago.org](mailto:abaker@covenantchicago.org)

Dan Adamson  
Associate Pastor, [dadamson@covenantchicago.org](mailto:dadamson@covenantchicago.org)

## Support Staff

Larissa Bossemeyer  
Director of Ministries: [lbossemeyer@covenantchicago.org](mailto:lbossemeyer@covenantchicago.org)

Gene Pierson  
Director of Finance & Property: [gpierson@covenantchicago.org](mailto:gpierson@covenantchicago.org)

Ian Troll  
Director of Children and Youth Ministries: [ian@covenantchicago.org](mailto:ian@covenantchicago.org)

Paul van der Bijl  
Director of Worship and Music: [pvanderbijl@covenantchicago.org](mailto:pvanderbijl@covenantchicago.org)

## Session

Aaron Baker (Moderator), Dan Adamson, David Dillon, Dave Hoover, Brad Lewis, Steve Lehmann, Joshua Norton

*Please direct correspondence for the Session to [session@covenantchicago.org](mailto:session@covenantchicago.org).*

## Diaconate

Andrew Dykstra, Jonathan Ellison, Phil Koerner, Joel Miller, Margret-Ann Natsis, Shane Rector, Jon Skinner, Deb Van Der Molen, Matt Ver Steeg, Kylene Young

**Treasurer:** Ben Harvey

*If you're in need or wish to speak with a deacon, you can email us at [diaconate@covenantchicago.org](mailto:diaconate@covenantchicago.org).*

## Welcome to Covenant

Please fill out this form, tear it out, and put it in one of the offering boxes at the back of the church.

circle one:

New to Covenant | Regular Attender | Member

Name:

Email:

Address:

Phone:

↑ *This is new or updated information* ↑

### **I am interested in:**

- More information
- Small Groups
- Service Opportunities
- Membership
- Receiving the Email Letter
- Children and Youth Ministry
- Other:

Prayer Requests:

## **Covenant Life**

### **Worship Together:**

*We are made to worship the Triune God, and our worship is always ordered around Jesus Christ and the forgiveness and grace he secured for us by his cross, resurrection and ascension. Gathering around this good news together on Sundays strengthens our appetites, imaginations and abilities to live as followers of Jesus.*

### **Grow and Learn Together:**

*Learning about our faith and growing together in it forms us into human beings who are fully swept up into the work God is doing to reconcile all things to himself in Jesus. Learning is more than simply knowing; it is the internalization of truth that leads to mature thinking and acting.*

### **Serve Together:**

*The natural outcome of receiving and experiencing grace is to be propelled outward into mission and service. All of us have been given gifts to use for the good of our common life and for the good of the broken world around us, and we encourage everyone to regularly use their gifts in service.*



*a church, a city,  
and a world  
continually made new  
by the grace of Christ*

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[covenantchicago.org](http://covenantchicago.org)