

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 10, 2023

PRELUDE “*Prepare the Royal Highway*” R. Hobby

WELCOME

ELW 240 “*Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*” - Verses 1 & 2



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.  
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.  
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

### BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,  
who opens the heavens  
and draws near to us with salvation.

**Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.  
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

*(brief pause)*

Everlasting God,  
**you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.**  
**We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness**  
**that make us reluctant to work against oppression.**  
**We are complicit in systems of exploitation.**  
**We choose comfort over courage.**  
**We are careless with creation’s bounty.**  
**Look upon us with mercy.**  
**Turn our hearts again to you.**

**Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways  
for the sake of our waiting world.**

**Amen.**

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation  
and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In the tender compassion of ✝ Jesus Christ,  
your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal,  
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

**Amen.**

### **GATHERING SONG ELW 264 "Prepare the Royal Highway"**

*Congregation: Verses 1,3,4 Verse 2, Choir only*



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



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

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

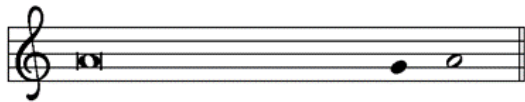
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## GREETING – *Pastor*

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.



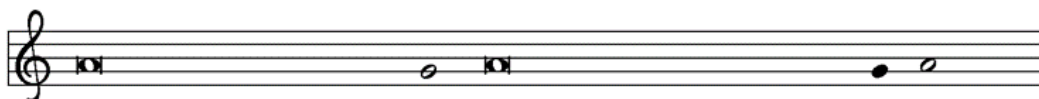
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



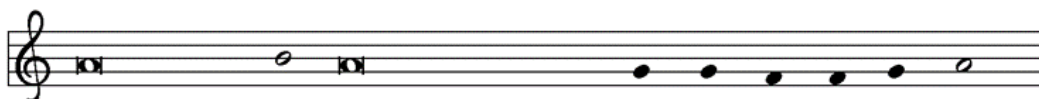
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 wor-ship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.

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

**PRAYER OF THE DAY – *Assisting minister***

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 strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*Say: You may be seated.*

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11**

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that she has served her term,

that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD’s hand

double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all people shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,

their constancy is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,

when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;

surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades;

but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain,

O Zion, herald of good tidings;

lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,

lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,

“Here is your God!”

<sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might,

and his arm rules for him;

his reward is with him,

and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd;

he will gather the lambs in his arms,

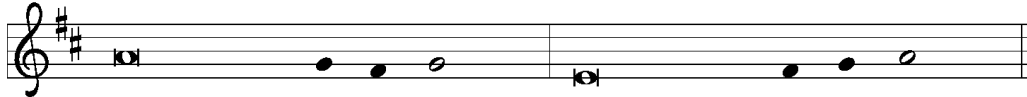
and carry them in his bosom,

and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**



<sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your <sup>1</sup>land, O LORD;  
you have restored the good for- <sup>1</sup>tune of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>**You have forgiven the iniquity <sup>1</sup>of your people  
and blotted out <sup>1</sup>all their sins.**

<sup>8</sup>I will listen to what the LORD <sup>1</sup>God is saying;  
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their <sup>1</sup>hearts  
to you.

<sup>9</sup>**Truly, your salvation is very near to <sup>1</sup>those who fear you,  
that your glory may dwell <sup>1</sup>in our land.**

<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have <sup>1</sup>met together;  
righteousness and peace have <sup>1</sup>kissed each other.

<sup>11</sup>**Faithfulness shall spring up <sup>1</sup>from the earth,  
and righteousness shall look <sup>1</sup>down from heaven.**

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed <sup>1</sup>grant prosperity,  
and our land will <sup>1</sup>yield its increase.

<sup>13</sup>**Righteousness shall go be- <sup>1</sup>fore the LORD  
and shall prepare for <sup>1</sup>God a pathway.**

## SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter.

<sup>8</sup>Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15a</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The congregation rises to welcome the gospel.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



## **GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.’”

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**CHILDRENS SERMON**

**SERMON**



HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 246 *“Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding”*



1 Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! “Christ is near,” we  
2 Wak - ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond - age  
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don  
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is  
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



hear it say. “Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,  
let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling,  
down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of sor - row,  
wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mer - cy  
and the Son with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it



all you chil - dren of the day!”  
shines up - on the morn - ing skies.  
one and all, to be for - giv'n;  
and with words of love draw near.  
while un - end - ing a - ges run!

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

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

With one voice, in unity with the church catholic, let us confess our faith in 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.**

## **THE PRAYERS – *Assisting Minister***

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Today we pray especially for Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalamazoo and their pastors, Reverend Ken Johnson, Reverend Jacob Lehman, and Vicar Megan Floyd. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season (*especially*). Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. We pray today especially for those on St. Peter's Prayer List (*refer to the list in the bulletin*) and for those for whom we pray aloud now or in the silence of our hearts. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

**Amen**

## PEACE

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

## OFFERING

*The offering gathered at the beginning of the service for the mission of the church including the care of those in need is presented to the altar. The Assisting Minister receives the offering, turns to bow and lift up the offering plate before the altar. Then places the offering on the table behind the altar.*

## OFFERTORY RESPONSE ELW PG 184 "Let the Vineyards"



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 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.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980  
Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927  
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## OFFERING PRAYER – *Assisting Minister*

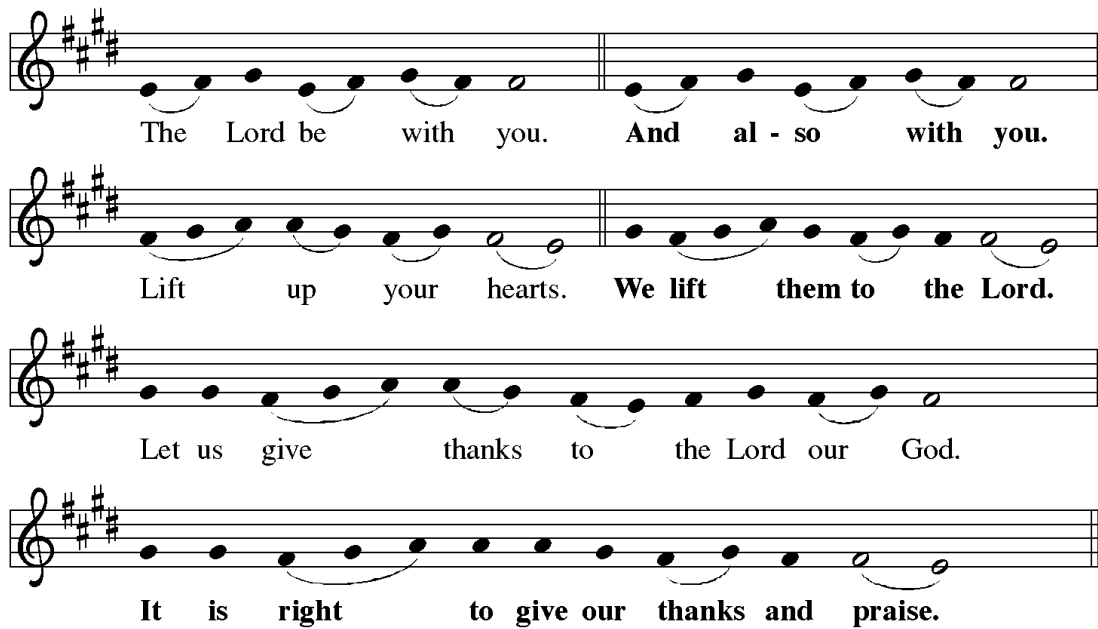
Let us pray.

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.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

### DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

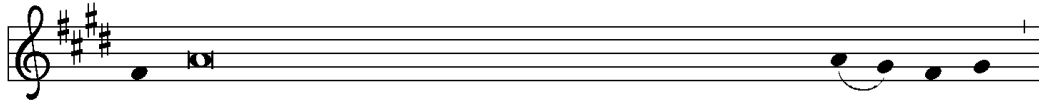
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

# PREFACE



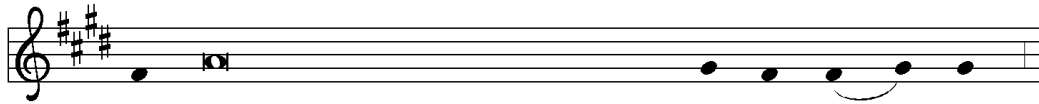
It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,



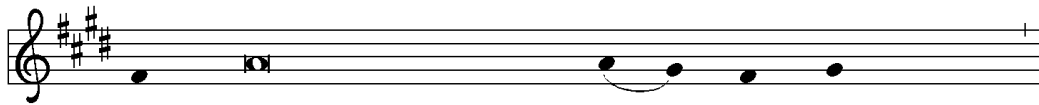
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,



al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.



You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,



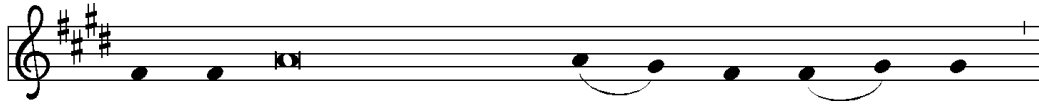
through whom you will also make all things new



in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.



And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,



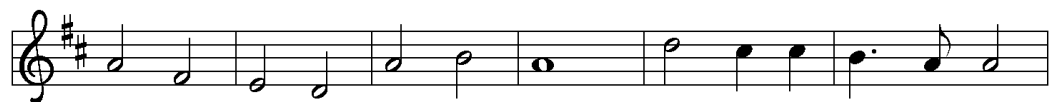
with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,



we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

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# HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



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.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,  
our Salvation and our Hope,  
we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.  
When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,  
you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.  
At this end of the ages  
your Son Jesus came to bring us your love  
and to heal all the suffering world.  
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.  
Remembering, therefore,  
his life, death, and resurrection,  
we await his coming again  
in righteousness and peace.  
Send your Spirit on us  
and on this bread and wine we share:  
strengthen our faith,  
increase our hope,  
and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.  
Through him all glory and honor is yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church,  
both now and forever. **Amen**



## LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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 invites you to this table. Come and share the good news of Immanuel, *God with us* in this meal where all are welcome.

*The assembly may be seated.*

## COMMUNION SONG "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 ELW 256 *“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”*



1 “Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!” So says our God.  
2 For the her-ald’s voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row’s load.  
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God’s ho - ly reign.



To God’s peo - ple now pro-claim that God’s par - don waits for them!  
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.  
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.  
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God’s word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.  
Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre psaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

**Congregation will remain seated.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION --Assisting Minister**

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.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## SENDING

### BLESSING

The God of peace bless you,  
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,  
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### SENDING HYMN ELW 249 “On Jordon’s Banks 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.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite  
Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

### DISMISSAL

The *presiding minister* sends the assembly into mission.

Go in peace. Keep awake.

**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE “Variations on “Hark, the Glad Sound” Cherwien/Man

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