

Yet the least
in the kingdom
of heaven
is greater than he

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

Third Sunday of Advent

*Our Saviour Lutheran Church
300 West Fowler Ave., West Lafayette
743-2931 www.osluth.org
Pastor Randy Schroeder*

*Purdue Lutheran Ministry
330 West Fowler Ave., West Lafayette
743-2398 www.plm.org*

December 11, 2022, 9:00 A.M.

All are welcome here
All people of faith, All people of doubt
All people of any origin, race, ability, sexual orientation or gender expression
All people who seek a compassionate community

All are welcome here
Welcome to worship, Welcome to pray
Welcome to learn, Welcome to give thanks
Welcome to serve God and neighbors

All are welcome here
All are redeemed by a gracious God



Please read this before worship begins.

This is an invitation and not an expectation. As a called and ordained pastor of the ELCA, my responsibilities are to share the Word and Sacraments, so they are available to you, the Body of Christ. If you wish to participate; you are welcomed and loved. If you believe Holy Communion should take place only in church or only in the live presence of a person ordained in Word and Sacrament, you are welcomed and loved even if you are not participating in online Communion. If you are visiting today, not knowing what to do, know through God you are welcomed and loved. This decision is personal and spiritual and only you can make it. I feel called to give you the option.

I cannot say what Communion is any better than Luther, so I'll let him say it. In the Small Catechism Luther writes the following, and more in The Sacrament of the Altar.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself.

What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?

This is shown by the words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." In the Sacrament, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

It is not the eating and drinking that do these things, but these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." These words are, along with the bodily eating and drinking, the main thing in the Sacrament. Anyone who believes these words has what they say: that is, the forgiveness of sins.

- As we travel this wilderness of COVID-19, it is right and proper for us to participate in the Eucharist as we are gathered as the church in person, as well as live streaming. Holy Communion takes place in the assembly of the Body of Christ.
- Online Communion is new territory for us as we navigate our new context. After reading Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, after much prayer and discernment, I believe this technology should be used in such manners to share God's grace, love, forgiveness and acceptance.
- As we assemble in person or live stream, when confessions are heard and forgiven, as the Word is proclaimed, it is proper for Communion to take place as we are then sent out as the Body of Christ for the world. I ask you to only commune as the live Word is spoken and not commune to the recording of this service.
- Please use bread and wine or a gluten free option and grape juice. Please prepare a plate and cup prior to service to have and share. If you have one and not the other, know that God is fully present in both elements and only one is necessary.
- God is the One working through the spoken Word in the mystery of communion. We don't fully know how, rather we know Jesus said, "Take, eat; this is My body," ... "Take this and drink of it, all of you. This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. Do this, as often as

you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” God is the source of love infused into us through the Spirit as we partake of the Eucharist. We don’t understand it fully; we fully believe Christ is there fulfilling His promises of forgiveness, life and salvation.

Remember: All Are Welcome – Hospitality fills God’s Table – Everywhere!

The Gathering

Prelude Music

People Look East, Timothy Shaw

Light Dawns on a Weary World, Anne Krentz, Roberta Rowland-Raybold

Stand

Gathering Words

P For God, change can be small,
evolutionary, atomic.
A crumbled resistance,
a slightly different direction,
a fresh idea in the middle of the night.
For God, change can rain down like a tempest,
a flood in every street
that sweeps into our lives
with energy that does not yield
or listen.

C **God is urgently waiting
to finally arrive.**

P God, we have been waiting for you, too.

C **Yet you often arrive before we notice:
in the place we did not expect,
in the word we did not hear.**

P Do not be afraid,
your angels always say,
right before you change a life.

C **You are here to change this place.
We are not afraid.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P When deep blue darkness
has unfolded its mysteries,
we can measure
our environment,
understand it,
move through it with confidence.

When we next return to deep darkness,
we will know more
and fear less.

This candle
 on our Advent wreath
 represents our growing familiarity
 with God's purposes,
 where the stories we have heard
 and the traditions we have inherited
 resolve into new meaning
 for a new day.

In time we will stride
 confidently forward
 into each new day,
 unwavering in devotion,
 unswerving in direction.
 But not yet,
 not fully.

Hymn during the Lighting: *God of the Starlight and Moon*

1. God of the star - light and moon, mys - ter - y God of the
 2. Beau - ty be - yond what we know, shap - ing a world that we
 3. Out of the blue you ar - rive, weav - ing our lives with your

mid - night blue skies. Love draw - ing near, dream - ing new
 can - not quite see. Form of a child, reach - ing to
 con - stant sur - prise. Flick - er - ing flame, spark - ling with

fu - tures: fire of our hearts, a - rise.
 greet us: time in e - ter - ni - ty.
 prom - ise: God of the star - lit skies.

Confession and Forgiveness

P God is here,
 And God sees through every defense
 that fools the world.
 Since we cannot hide from God,
 there is nothing left to do
 but to be honest with each other
 and humble before God.
 So, in humility,
 we confess our sins.

C **God, we have acted helpless,
 even when you called us to action.
 We have resisted your truth,
 even when our lies were exhausting.
 We have behaved as though we were alone,
 even when you were beside us.
 God, we have believed we were dying,
 even when you helped us grow.**

P God knows
 we can never undo our sins.
 We cannot ignore painful history
 as though it does not affect us today.
 Yet before our first mistake,
 God perfected the plan for salvation,
 And that salvation comes to each of us today.
 Receive God's forgiveness.
 This forgiveness is total.
 No sign of your old life remains,
 And if God has moved beyond your sin,
 you have no reason to return to it again.

C **We are healed.**
No blemish remains.
Thanks be to God.

Greeting

P Peace to you
 and welcome,
 from the God who blossoms the arid ground,
 the Savior who rejuvenates the barren relationship,
 the Spirit who fills the empty cup.

C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

The Word

L A reading from the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
 like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly,
 and rejoice with joy and singing.
 The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
 the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
 They shall see the glory of the LORD,
 the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
 and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart,

“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”
⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
⁷the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
⁹No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L The word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 146:5-10

Refrain

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down.

Psalm Tone

⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob ¹for their help,

whose hope is in the ¹LORD their God;

⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that ¹is in them;**

who keeps promis- ¹es forever;

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to ¹those who hunger.

The LORD sets the ¹captive free.

⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who ¹are bowed down;**

the LORD ¹loves the righteous. R

⁹The LORD cares ¹for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way ¹of the wicked.

¹⁰**The LORD shall ¹reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. ¹Hallelujah! R**

L A reading from the book of James.

James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

P The Gospel of our Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Pastor Randy Schroeder

Stand

Hymn of the Day: ELW 266: *All Earth is Hopeful*



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
 3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

2 *Dice el profeta al pueblo de Israel:* 3 *Montes y valles habrá que preparar;*
"De madre virgen ya viene Emmanuel," *nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar.*
será "Dios con nosotros," hermano será, *Él está ya muy cerca, venidlo a encontrar,*
con él la esperanza al mundo volverá. *y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.*

4 *En una cueva Jesús apareció,*
pero en el mundo está presente hoy.
Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está;
y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946
 Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé

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Apostles' Creed

C 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

A As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

A Gracious God, we rejoice in the gifts of your Spirit. Equip the global church to magnify your love and peace in every land. We pray for the work of the Lutheran World Federation and ELCA Global Mission. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Abundant God, we rejoice in your creation. Revive lands we have squandered and depleted. Make gardens flourish in cities and neighborhoods. Cleanse polluted air and water so living things may breathe, drink, and praise you. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Righteous God, we rejoice in your justice. End racism and oppression. Deliver all who are unjustly imprisoned or persecuted. Reconcile nations and peoples in conflict. Help us pray for our enemies. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Healing God, we rejoice in your compassion. Comfort any in distress because of worry, illness, or loss especially family and friends of Elaine Baumgardt, Jason, Fil, Shirley & Eric, Rosalie, Jeff, Denise, Janet, Helmut, Carol, Richard & Karli, Victoria, Jennifer, Jeanette, Suzanne, Shelby, Eric M, David O, Gary, Kevin, Nancy, Ann, Mary, Sean, Mayor Dennis, Mary M, Jane, Omarion, John M, Robert M, Sue W, Tom, Jim W, Peter H, and Steve. Strengthen and protect health care workers, rescue teams, crisis counselors, and all who risk themselves to keep others safe. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Abiding God, we rejoice in your company. Give us calm and patient hearts as we gather with family and friends. Keep us mindful of those for whom this season is not happy. Console the grieving and surround them with loving support. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Faithful God, we rejoice with Mary, Mother of our Lord, and with all the saints, that your mercy endures for all generations. Look with favor on those who have died and lead us to joyfully sing of your everlasting promises. God, in your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.
C **Amen.**

Peace

P The peace of Christ be with you always.
C **And also with you.**

Sit

The Meal

This is an invitation and not an expectation. As a called and ordained pastor of the ELCA, my responsibilities are to share the Word and Sacraments, so they are available to you, the Body of Christ. If you wish to participate; you are welcomed and loved. If you believe Holy Communion should take place only in church or only in the live presence of a person ordained in Word and Sacrament, you are welcomed and loved even if you are not participating in online Communion. This decision is personal and spiritual and only you can make it. I feel called to give you the option.

- Please have your wine and bread ready for the Meal. It would be best to use grape juice or wine and a small portion of bread or gluten free option for the Eucharist.
- Please participate by lifting the bread and the wine as the pastor lifts the bread and wine.
- If everyone in the family is healthy please take the time to commune each other; presenting the bread first and saying, "the Body of Christ given for you" and then the wine/juice saying, "the Blood of Christ shed for you." If you're not feeling well, please commune yourself as you are able.
- The elements (bread and juice or wine) should be consumed in their entirety or returned to the earth as once they are consecrated they are the Body and Blood of Christ. Please do not throw Jesus in the trash or down the drain.

As we prepare to receive Holy Communion, please read the following:

For today's distribution of Holy Communion, after the Invitation to the Table, the presiding pastor will invite the worship assistants (lector, assisting minister, ushers) to commune behind the altar. The presiding pastor will then commune those worshipping via Zoom and those in the sanctuary who wish to commune in their pews. Then the presiding pastor will commune those who wish to come up to the altar while the Lamb of God is played. Thank you for your patience as we acknowledge the awkwardness of experiencing something different in worship. God is with us in this meal. God is also with us as we experiment with new worship practices.

Offering

Please feel free to send your regular tithes in the mail, drop it off to the church office or if you have not checked out our website and the "Your Offering Made Easy" tab, this could be your opportunity. (John Mills is available to answer any questions about the Vanco Online giving option if you wish to contact him. His email address is john_r_mills@icloud.com)



Offering Prayer

P Please pray with me.

**C God, we have labored and toiled
for our money
and our time
and our families
and our freedom.
We have cherished
what we thought was ours.**

P Yet in a moment,
we recognize
that every truly good thing
was a treasure
we had taken
from your open hand.

**C We give you these gifts
as a sign of your love and faithfulness.
Use them to grow
more hope in this world.**

Stand

The Great Thanksgiving

P Holy Jesus, be our guest.
For you are already here.
God is with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts in praise.

C We lift them to our God.

P Let us give thanks
to the God of our salvation.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

P Holy God,
once you made humankind
you could do nothing but love them.

Holy Spirit,
once you called the prophets,
you gave them words to afflict
and words to heal,
and they could do nothing but speak them.

Holy Jesus,
once you committed to take the human frame,
you walked the path to the end.
You did not rush through childhood.
You never used your power for yourself.
You faced your enemies on their terms.

You taught your friends until they learned.

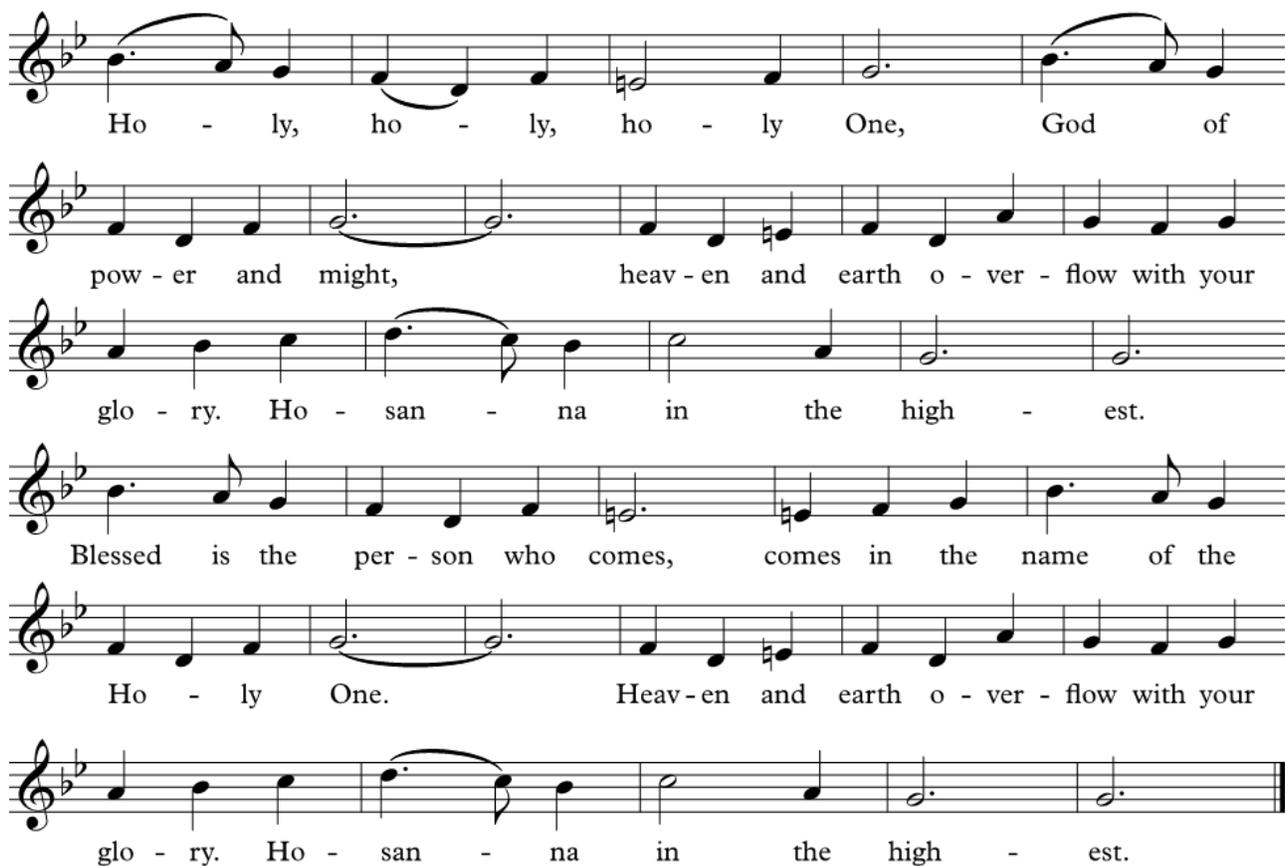
You allowed yourself to die
the same way you were born:
as a fragile person,
in a filthy place,
where bare flesh and blood
were spilled to give life.

C This is rarely a kind world,
but you love it anyway.

P This was rarely an innocent world,
C **but you saved it anyway.**

P We are rarely peaceful people,
C **but you have swaddled us in peace.**

P We will always hunger for healing.
C **Nurse us with grace.**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly One, God of
pow - er and might, heav - en and earth o - ver - flow with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is the per - son who comes, comes in the name of the
Ho - ly One. Heav - en and earth o - ver - flow with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Memory of That Night Around the Table

P While Pilate rested in his palace,
and the city of Jerusalem slept,
while the priests set their plot in motion,
the disciples sat down at the table.
The bread was on the table;
the wine was in the glass.

This was the night
for which Jesus was born.

Even if you know
this is part of God's plan,
you might still grieve.

To say goodbye
to your closest friends,
who do not know you will die.

To end the chapter of friendship
with the one you love,
before they turn away.
Even good days
bring sadness and loss.

And it was a good day,
that final day,
filled with certainty and hope,

when Jesus lingered at the table
and took that bread and cup.

Words of Institution

P That night,
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.

At a meal like this,
we savor the food while it lasts;
we cling to love
before we step out of reach.

And we pray
that God will give us each day
the blessing we share in this place.

So, we pray as Jesus taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

C **Our Father in heaven,**
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
 now and forever. Amen.

P Holy Spirit,
just as you made a stable
into a nursery fit for the sovereign of heaven,
you make this table
a holy cradle for salvation.
You fashion this bread and wine
into the presence of Christ's love.
And you make us
your people,
who can never separate from you again.
God, your heart split with the pain of the world,
so you left yourself in heaven
to be born a child
like one of us.
Now bless this bread,
which is broken,
so we might
draw together as one.

Invitation to the Table

P People of God,
come to the table
and encounter the God
who waits to love you.

Sit

Hymn: ACS 998: *In Silence We Wait*

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn: "In si - lence we wait, in dark - ness you". The second staff contains the melody for the second line: "come to us; bring us your light." The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Text: Susan Masters, b. 1957
Music: IN SILENCE WE WAIT, Susan Masters

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Blessing

- P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood strengthen, keep and unite us,
now and forever
- C **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

- A The meal has ended.
Now let the remembering begin.
- Remember you have met God in this place.
- Remember that no person who meets God
Can ever be the same.
- We pray:

- C **You have called us.
We have listened.
You invited us.
We took our place at the table.**

**You have sat with us
so we might follow you.
Now there is nowhere else we can go,
because you alone have the words of life.**

The Sending

An Invitation

Stand

Sending Hymn: ELW 311: *Hail to the Lord's Anointed*



- 1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, great Da - vid's great - er Son!
- 2 You come with res - cue speed - y to those who suf - fer wrong,
- 3 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;
- 4 Kings shall fall down be - fore you, and gold and in - cense bring;



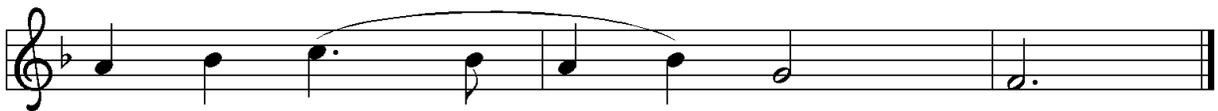
Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!
to help the poor and need - y, and bid the weak be strong;
love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.
all na - tions shall a - dore you, your praise all peo - ple sing.



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive
 to give them songs for sigh - ing, their dark - ness turn to
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald,
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows as -



free, to take a - way trans - gres - sion and
 light, whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, are
 go; and righ - teous - ness in foun - tains from
 cend; your king - dom still in - creas - ing, a



rule in eq - ui - ty.
 pre - cious in your sight.
 hill to val - ley flow.
 king - dom with out end.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.

Music: FREUT EUCH, IHR LIEBEN, Leonhart Schröter, 1540–1602 All rights reserved. Used with permission. under OneLicense.net, License # A-702953

- P God, we do not know the end
 to which you call us.
- C **God, let us be your servants,
 wherever this road goes.**
- P God, you could have judged us,
 but you chose us.
- C **You have made us worthy
 so we might speak your words.**
- P You alone guide us
 down the path that leads to life.
- C **Every other path
 is no longer a path for me.**

Dismissal

- A Go in peace. Serve the lowly.
 C **Thanks be to God.**

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Worship Assistants Today: Julie Huetteman, Sara Behnke (Musicians), Dick Rahdert (Assisting Minister), Dee Hershberger (Lector), Kathy Heise (Cantor), Robert Hershberger (Usher), Mike Williams (A/V & Livestream Specialist) Jesse Grogan (Assistant to Mike Williams)