



Traditional Service
The First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2023

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE Choral Prelude on "Vom himmel hoch"

Sigfried Karg-Elert

WELCOME

*ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

Linda Filipovits, Laura Huffard,
Joanne Kelhart, Judy Smullen

*ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING RESPONSE

#9

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Verse 1)

VENI

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN

#1

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

STUTTGART

1 Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.

2 Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

*Please stand if you are able.

3 Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we are weary. For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray: forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard; remind us that you commanded Sabbath rest for us. For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray: forgive us for contenting ourselves with distraction or withdrawal; remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you speak to us. For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray: forgive us for our impatience or our despair. Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist. For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope, Forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth, and that your good news knows no bounds, but breaks into the world all around us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

WE LISTEN

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:5-23

Linda Filipovits

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Rev. J.C. Austin

"A Life Worth Livin'"

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

*SERMON HYMN

#15

Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers

LLANGLOFFAN

1 Rejoice! Rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing
And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising
And soon He will draw nigh;
Up, watch with expectation,
At the midnight comes the cry.

2 See that your lamps are burning,
Replenish them with oil;
Look now for your salvation,
The end of sin and toil.
The marriage feast is waiting,
The gates wide open stand;
Arise, O heirs of glory,
The Bridegroom is at hand!

3 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, Thou Sun so longed for,
Above this shadowed sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption,
And ever be with Thee!

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (from "A Brief Statement of Faith")**

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL FOR OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory "Choose Something Like a Star" from Frostiana (1959)

Randall Thompson

Chancel Choir

O Star (the fairest one in sight) we grant your loftiness the right
To some obscurity of cloud it will not do to say of night
Since dark is what brings out your light some mystery becomes the proud
But to be wholly taciturn in your reserve is not allowed
Say something to us we can learn by heart and when alone repeat
Say something! And it says "I burn." But say with what degree of heat
Talk Fahrenheit, talk Centigrade use language we can comprehend
Tell us what elements you blend it gives us strangely little aid
But does tell something in the end and steadfast as Keats' Eremite
Not even stooping from its sphere it asks a little of us here
It asks of us a certain height

So when at times the mob is swayed to carry praise or blame too far
We may choose something like a star to stay our minds on and be staid

*Doxology

#592

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

WE CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give thanks and praise.

Leader: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise...

... As our Savior Christ has taught us, so we pray:

The Lord's Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Communion Music "Pastorale" from Messiah

George F. Handel

*SENDING HYMN

#8

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates,
Behold, the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near;
The Savior of the world is here!

2 Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

3 Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to Thee: here, Lord, abide.
Let me Thy inner presence feel;
Thy grace and love in me reveal.

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE Postlude on "Forrest Green"

setting Flor Peeters

Flowers are from Ruth Willis, in honor of her loved ones.