

## December 22, 2024: “Love” Extended Advent 7

### Welcome and Prelude: Improvisations on Service Music

#### Prayer of Confession

Today, as we confess our sins, we recognize how easily we overlook the gifts God gives. And we accept the sad truth that our limitations often create the conditions for sin. Let us pray.

**God, we want a faith that feels like more than words, but we lack your power to embody goodness. We hear your call to serve others yet feel too worn out to make the food. We hunger to taste justice but fear the burning spice of the meal. We want our place at your table but resist sitting beside a stranger. We have lost our appetites for mere thoughts and prayers, but we fail to match our intentions to our actions. Forgive us and restore us with the healing wholeness of your presence.**

My friends, God knows you are imperfect. But God did not invite you here today for what you have done or how you have behaved. God loves you. God always cared much more for you than for your shortcomings. God forgives you all your sins. Now repeat after me.

We accept God’s forgiveness. **We accept God’s forgiveness.**

We take our place in God’s purpose. **We take our place in God’s purpose. Amen.**

#### Gathering Song *People, Look East* (ELW 248)



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing  
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is  
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the  
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,  
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,  
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,  
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look  
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look  
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look  
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.  
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.  
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANÇON, French carol

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## Kyrie (ELW p. 203)

The words "kyrie eleison" are an ancient prayer meaning "Lord have mercy".

**Leader**

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son

**All**

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son

Chri - ste e - le - i - son, Chri - ste e - le - i - son

Ky - re - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

## Canticle of Praise (ELW p. 204)

Sing glo - ry to God, and peace on earth.

We sing glo - ry to God in the high - est.

We\_ wor - ship you, we\_ give\_ you thanks.

We\_ praise you for\_ your glo - ry Lord.

Sing glo - ry to God, and peace on earth.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est.

## Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. Jesus, you shape the world around us, even when you remain just out of sight. As we listen today, help us prepare our lives for you with loving anticipation. for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



## Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10

<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me;

<sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘See, I have come to do your will, O God’

(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

<sup>8</sup> When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

## Gospel Acclamation



## Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

The holy gospel according to Luke.

### Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name;

<sup>50</sup> indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly;

<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The gospel of the Lord.

### Praise to you, O Christ.

## Sermon

## Hymn of the Day *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (ELW 254)



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788  
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

### Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### Prayers of Intercession

*Each petition ends with "Lord, in your mercy," and the congregational response is "receive our prayer."*

### Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Anthem: "Star Carol" by John Rutter**

## Meal

### Offering Prayer

Together we pray.

Holy Spirit, please bless these small gifts we give. **You set the table with plenty of love.**

Prepare room in your home **for my neighbor and me.** Prepare a place in your vision **for my neighbor and me.**

Prepare a seat at your table **for my neighbor and me.**

Holy Spirit, you have blessed these gifts we give. **You set the table with plenty of love. Amen**

### Great Thanksgiving Dialogue

Leader Congregation



The Lord be with you. And also with you.

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

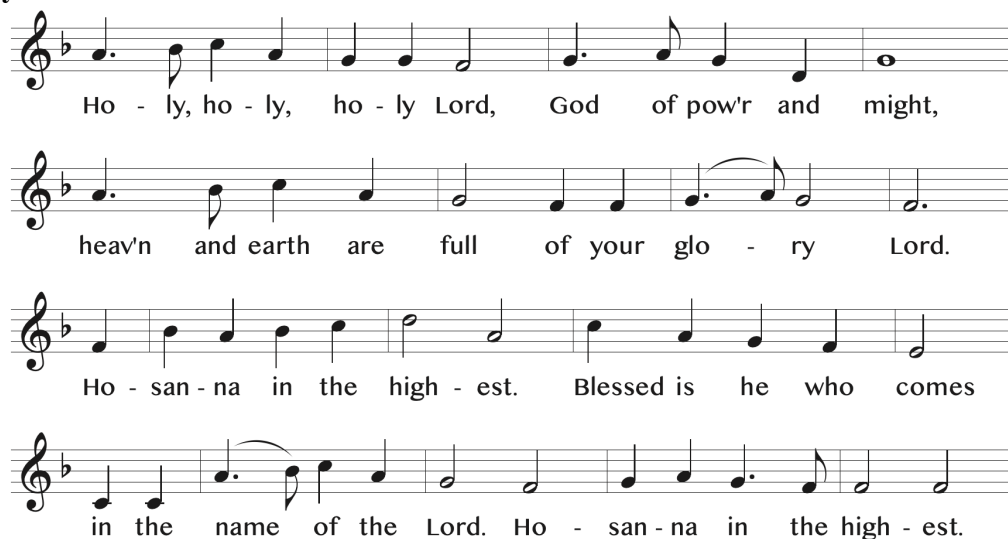
Let us give thanks to the Lord, to the Lord our God.

All

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

### Preface

#### Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry Lord.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

### Words of Institution

#### 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

### Communion Song



O Lamb of God you take a - way the sin of the world.

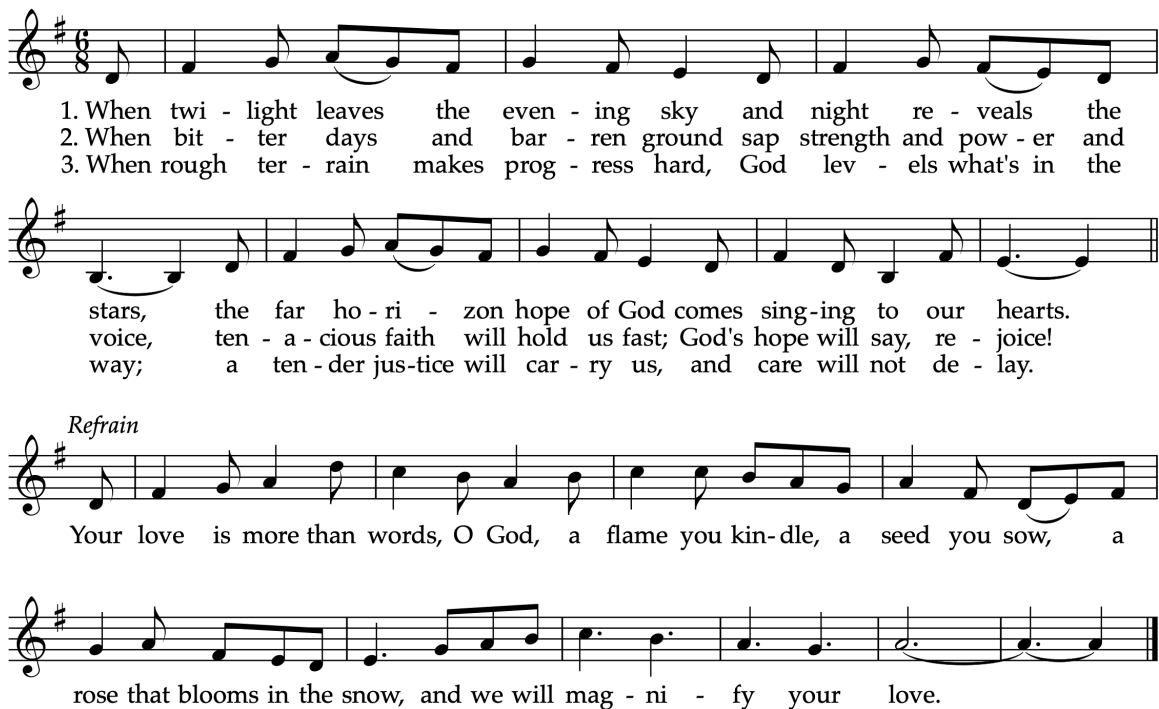
O Lamb of God you take a - way the sin of the world.

O Lamb of God you take a-way the sin\_ of the world.

Have mer cy on us O Lord. Grant us peace. Grant us peace O Lord.

### Communion Hymn: *More Than Words*

*“More Than Words” was written to accompany worship throughout the Advent season. This original hymn explores the thematic interplay of each of the seven Advent words (care, faith, justice, hope, peace, joy, and love) as gifts from God. As God’s love is magnified for us, we magnify it like Mary, too. It will be our communion hymn for the remainder of the season.*



1. When twi - light leaves the even - ing sky and night re - veals the  
2. When bit - ter days and bar - ren ground sap strength and pow - er and  
3. When rough ter - rain makes prog - ress hard, God lev - els what's in the

stars, the far ho - ri - zon hope of God comes sing - ing to our hearts.  
voice, ten - a - cious faith will hold us fast; God's hope will say, re - joice!  
way; a ten - der jus - tice will car - ry us, and care will not de - lay.

*Refrain*

Your love is more than words, O God, a flame you kin - dle, a seed you sow, a  
rose that blooms in the snow, and we will mag - ni - fy your love.

## Prayer after Communion

God, what you have planned for us unfolds slowly.

**Your love is often unrecognizable, unappreciated, gentle and unnoticed.**

But at this table we have noticed what others do not see.

**We have tasted your unspoken goodness. And now send us out to magnify your love. Amen.**

## Blessing

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light,

God, our hope for the journey, ✝ bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

## Sending Song *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper* (ACS 901)



1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.  
2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.  
3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:  
Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.  
come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!  
Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.  
In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.  
Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.  
Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953  
Music: SUO GÂN, Welsh melody  
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## Dismissal

People of God, you have heard of the advent of God's goodness.

You carry the blessing of God, God, the First Whisper, Jesus, the Living Promise, Spirit, the Speaker of Hearts.

Now go into this world expecting God's justice and nurturing God's peace.

**God, we will magnify your love.**

## Organ Postlude: Improvisation on Prepare The Royal Highway

*To allow those who wish to use the postlude as a time of reflection at the close of worship, we ask that the congregation exit the sanctuary in a way that allows that. We invite you to visit over refreshments in the centrum.*