

December 8, 2024: “Peace” Extended Advent 5

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 *Comfort, Comfort Now My People* (ELW 256)



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.

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. Inspire us to to prepare the way for your Son, and then teach us to walk in it. God, we feel threatened by painful truths, but you build the path to peace through the wilderness. Speak boldly to us today so we can construct true peace upon the foundation of your care.. **Amen.**

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like washers' soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

Psalm: Luke 1:68-79



- ⁶⁸ Blessed are you, Lord, the | God of Israel,
you have come to your people and | set them free.
- ⁶⁹ **You have raised up for us a | mighty Savior,
born of the house of your | servant David. R**
- ⁷⁰ Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us | from our enemies,
⁷¹ from the hands of | all who hate us,
- ⁷² **to show mercy | to our forebears,
and to remember your | holy covenant.**
- ⁷³ This was the oath you swore to our | father Abraham:
⁷⁴ to set us free from the hands of our | enemies,
**free to worship you | without fear,
⁷⁵ holy and righteous before you, all the days | of our life. R**
- ⁷⁶ And you, child, shall be called the prophet of | the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare the way,
⁷⁷ **to give God's people knowledge | of salvation
by the forgiveness | of their sins.**
- ⁷⁸ In the tender compassion | of our God
the dawn from on high shall | break upon us,
⁷⁹ **to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shad- | ow of death,
and to guide our feet into the | way of peace. R**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Each of our Advent candles represents God's generous goodness, the advent of Jesus, God's greatest gift, the Spirit's fluttering flicker of joy. As we light each candle, we recognize the gifts God has given us this week.

Together, we pray: (*Each prayer is said as that candle is lit.*)

God, you shield us like tender flames; **your care enables us to burn brighter.**

God, we pool our faith like candlelight; **through you we reveal hidden goodness.**

God, your justice upends this broken world. **Use your mercy to transform everything that harms.**

God, we reach for unreasonable hope; **and you prepare an unexpected future.**

God, we breathe in your peaceful refuge, **for you have made a place where we can safely rest.**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

³ I thank my God for every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy ⁵ for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who

began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the tender affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what really matters, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹ having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Pre - pare our hearts, our minds, our souls
To hear your word, to know your truth, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth,

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

It's tough
stuff, this making
a peaceful way,
especially when you are
not the one in charge.
It takes a tough and
prickly character, like
John the Baptist.

Emily Trubey-Weller
More Than Words: Preachers' Notes
Second Sunday of Advent

Hymn of the Day *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* (ELW 249)



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

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 “Merciful God,” and the congregational response is “receive our prayer.”

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Anthem:

Meal

Offering Prayer

Together we pray.

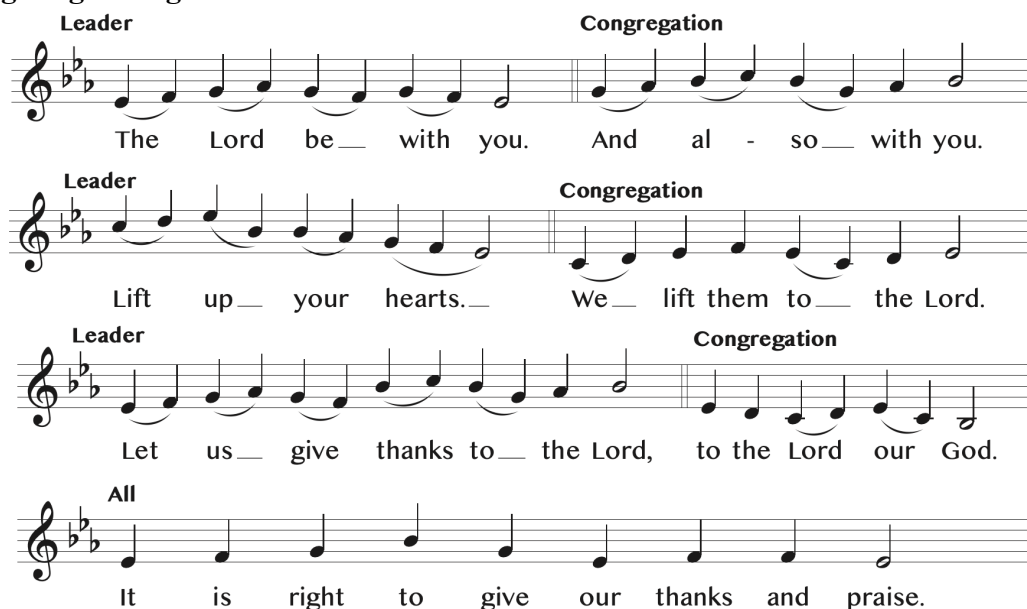
Holy Spirit, please bless these small gifts we give. **You set the table with plenty of love.**

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 al - so with you.

Leader Congregation

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

Leader Congregation

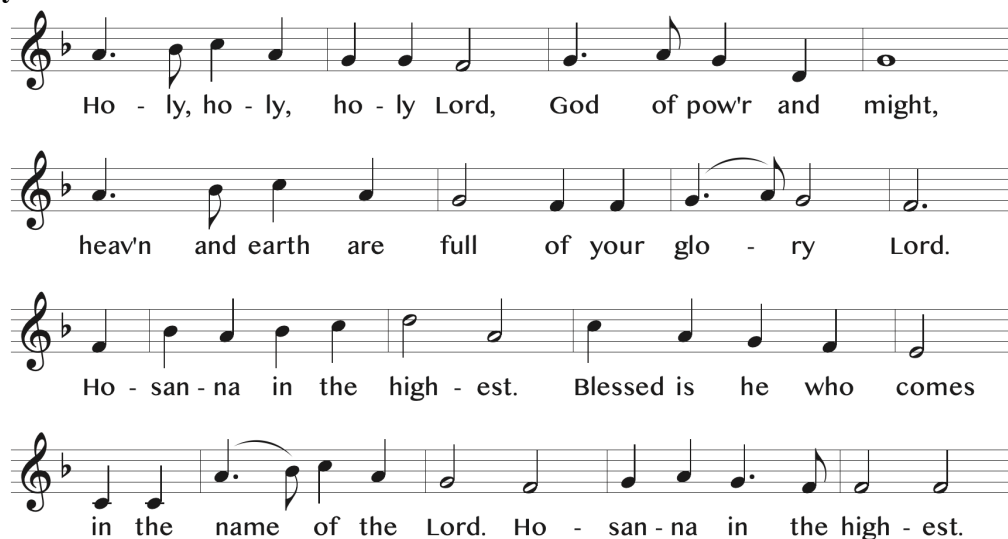
Let us give thanks to the Lord, to the Lord our God.

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

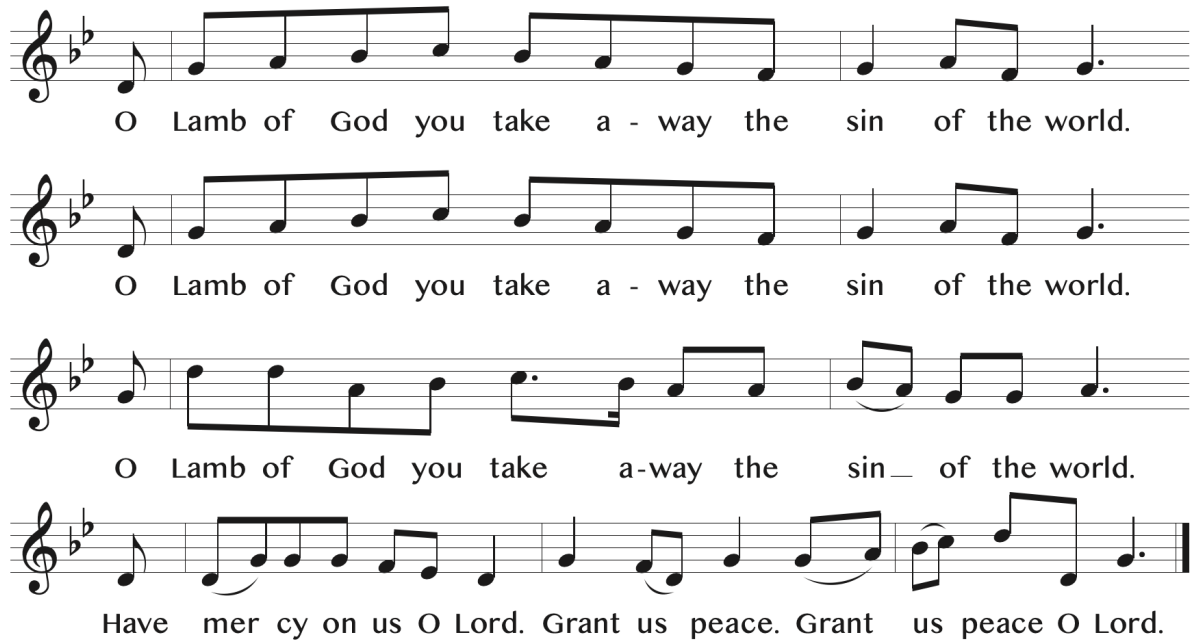
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

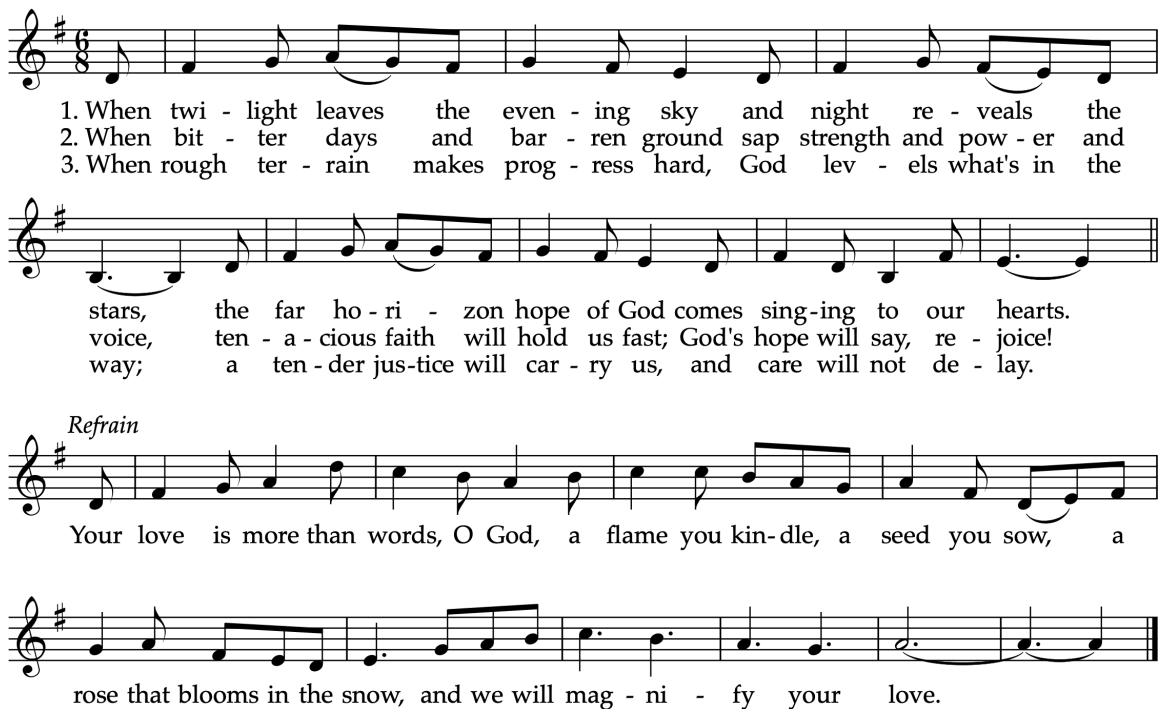
O Lamb of God you take a - way the sin of the world.

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 - joi - ce!
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 *Prepare the Royal Highway* (ELW 264)



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 VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.

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:

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.