

*“...Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the 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.”*

*~Matthew 11:3-5*

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – December 11, 2022**

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Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister

Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!  
Know that you are welcome here just as you are*

*If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own?  
If this is your first time visiting us, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to  
your bulletin.*

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are  
comfortable, please rise when there is an \* and join in the congregational responses,  
noted in **bold**.*

*All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for  
the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.  
During the time of Peace, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of  
peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed  
to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available  
in each pew.*

*At the time of Offering, you are invited to share a gift as you are comfortable. You may  
also place any prayer requests for the pastor in the offering plates.*

*If you need a restroom, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the  
building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of  
the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.*

*As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of the people.*

## **PRELUDE**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **GREETING**

Peace to you and welcome,  
from the God who was there before the beginning,  
the Savior who saved us before we recognized our trouble,  
and the Spirit who completes our half-hearted prayers.

## **\*LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

We join our voices together in song, waiting hopefully, expectantly for the fullness of Christ's presence in our lives and in our world. As we light the third candle, we recognize 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.

*The third candle is during the singing of the hymn.*

## **\*Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (ELW 240)**

*Verses 1, 2, and 3*



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.



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.

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow.  
You bring water to parched ground and life out of death.  
Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away.  
Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises.  
Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand.

**Amen.**

**\*KYRIE**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, 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 ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer 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.

## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### **\*CONFESSION**

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who alone does wondrous things.

**Blessed be God's name forever.**

**Amen.**

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.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of new beginnings,  
**we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.**

**We have strayed from your paths.**

**We prepare for war instead of peace.**

**We dishonor one another and your creation.**

**Purify us with your refining fire  
and set us again on your way of love,  
that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,  
and welcome your coming among us.**

**Amen.**

### **\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

People of God,

Before our first mistakes,

God perfected the plan for our salvation in Jesus Christ.

Receive now the gift we have in God the Holy Trinity,

the gift of grace and the total forgiveness of all sins. +

Be free to love and rejoice in the way of the Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*GATHERING SONG *Hark, the Glad Sound* (ELW 239)**



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior  
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's  
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing  
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -  
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -  
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures  
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.  
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.  
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**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.**

**Amen.**

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10**

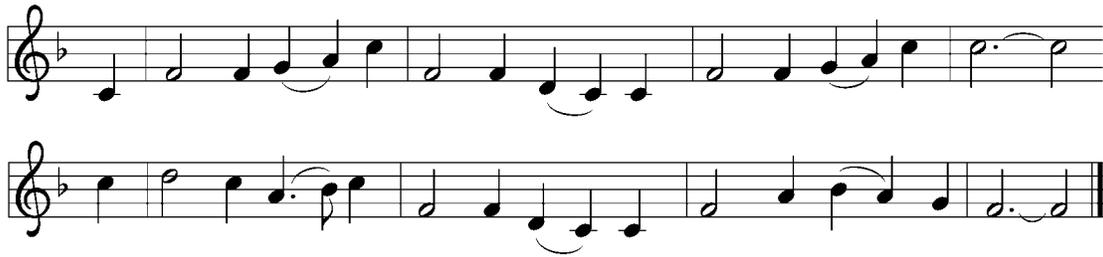
A reading from the book of Isaiah.

- <sup>1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup>it 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.
- <sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.
- <sup>4</sup>Say 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.”
- <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
- <sup>6</sup>then 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;
- <sup>7</sup>the 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.
- <sup>8</sup>A 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.
- <sup>9</sup>No 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.
- <sup>10</sup>And 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.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 146



**1. How happy those whose hope is in  
The God whom Jacob knew,  
Who made the heavens, earth, and sea,  
Whose promises are true.**

**2. To those oppressed, the Lord our God  
Gives justice constantly;  
God feeds the hungry, and all those  
In prison are set free.**

**3. The Lord lifts up all those bowed  
down  
And gives the blind new sight;  
The stranger, widow, orphan, all  
Are strengthened by God's might.**

**4. God brings the wicked to their doom;  
The Lord will reign always;  
From age to age, O Zion sing  
To God unending praise.**

## SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

A reading from the book of James.

<sup>7</sup>Be 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. <sup>8</sup>You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup>Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup>As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

## \*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Repeat alleluia*

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

## \*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 11:2-11

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>2</sup>When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup>and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the 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. <sup>6</sup>And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

<sup>7</sup>As 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? <sup>8</sup>What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup>Truly 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

## CHILDREN’S SERMON

## SERMON

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY *As the Dark Awaits the Dawn* (ELW 261)**

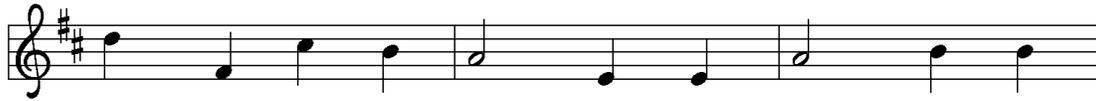
*(Blue prayer cards are collected during the song.)*



1 As the dark a - waits the dawn,  
 2 As the blue ex - pec - tant hour  
 3 As the moon re - flects the sun  
 4 Shine your fu - ture on this place,



so we a - wait your light. O Star of  
 be - fore the sil - v'ring skies, we long to  
 un - til the night's de - crease, may we your  
 en - light - en ev - 'ry guest, that through us



prom - ise, scat - ter night, lov - ing bright, lov - ing  
 see your day a - rise, whole and wise, whole and  
 heal - ing light re - lease, liv - ing peace, liv - ing  
 stream your ho - li - ness, bright and blest, bright and



bright, till shades of fear are gone.  
 wise, O lu - cent Morn - ing Star.  
 peace, un - to your ho - ly dawn.  
 blest; come dawn, O Sun of grace.

## **\*APOSTLES' CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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.**





## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

### OFFERING

#### OFFERTORY HYMN *Come Now, O Prince of Peace* (ELW 247)

*\*Rise on 4th verse*



*O - so - sŏ o - so - sŏ, pyong - hwa - ũi - im - gŭm*  
1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.  
2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.  
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.  
4 Come, Hope of u - ni - ty, make us one bod - y.



*u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sŏ.*  
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.  
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.  
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.  
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.

#### **\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Eternal God,  
you make the desert bloom  
and send springs of water to thirsty ground.  
Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money,  
and make us messengers of your mercy and love  
for all in need of your healing and justice.  
We ask this through Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## \*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

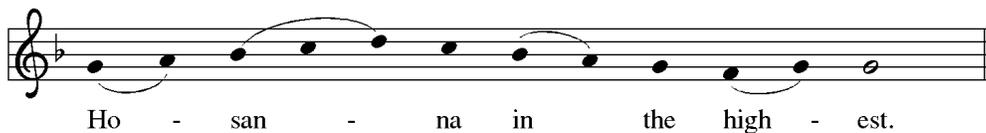
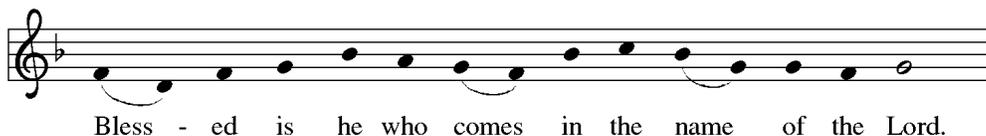
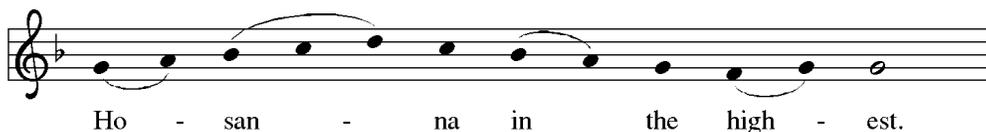
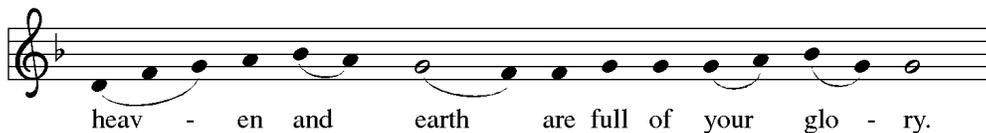
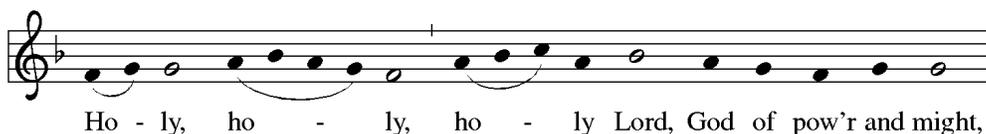
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,  
through whom you will also make all things new  
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.  
In great love you send to us Jesus, your Son,  
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,  
who preached good news to the poor,  
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

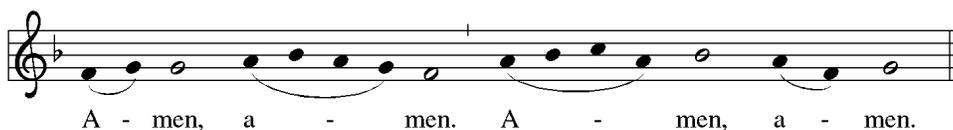
We give you thanks for his coming into the world  
to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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 salutary command,  
his life-giving death, resurrection and ascension,  
and the promise of his coming again,  
we give thanks to you, O Lord God,  
not as we ought but as we are able.  
For you allowed yourself to die  
the same way you were born:  
as a fragile person.  
We ask you to bless in the meal we are about to receive,  
that through your gifts of bread and wine,  
we may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,  
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,  
may be formed to live as your holy people  
in love and service to you and your people.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.



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

**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**

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, encounter the God who waits to love you.

*Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Those who do not receive the bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.*

*Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.*

**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. A - men.

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

### COMMUNION HYMN *He Comes to Us as One Unknown* (ELW 737)



1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un - seen, un -  
2 He comes when souls in si - lence lie and thoughts of day de -  
3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o - cean's fume and  
4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and  
5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be - lieved, o - beyed, a -



heard; as though with - in a heart of stone, or shriv - eled seed in  
part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a fall - ing star a -  
foam; yet small and still up - on the breeze, a wind that stirs the  
birth; to bear with - in our mor - tal frame a life, a death, a  
dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as yet un - seen, but



dark - ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred.  
cross the sky of night with - in the heart, of night with - in the heart.  
tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home.  
sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth.  
not un - known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

### \*BLESSING OF COMMUNION OUTREACH

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist us in this ministry on which we are sent forth. Bless those who carry your heavenly food to those unable to be with us this day. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this sacrament, that through the body and blood of your Son we all may know the comfort of your abiding presence.

**Amen.**

### \*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy,  
bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.

As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,  
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.

Guide us toward your promised future,  
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### \*BLESSING

God the eternal Word,  
who dwells with us in Jesus,  
and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,  
✠ bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### \*SENDING SONG *My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness* (ELW 251)



1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav - ior's praise!  
2 To all who live in ho - ly fear your mer-cy ev - er flows.  
3 To Is - ra - el, your ser - vant blest, your help is ev - er sure;



You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.  
With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem-ing hearts ex - pose.  
the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.



Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless-ing shall pro - claim—  
The ruth-less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;  
Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.  
the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.  
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

### \*DISMISSAL

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Go in peace. Christ is near.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE

**Assisting in worship today:**

**Assisting Minister: Denise Hager**

**Acolyte: Ava Nicklewicz**

**Ushers:**

**Offering: Nathan Kramer and Anna Kramer**

**Attendance last week: 49 + 5 zoom**

*Notes for the day's texts:*

In this season of Advent, we stand in the discomfoting quiet of waiting for the salvation of the Lord while simultaneously seeing that very salvation breaking into the world around us. Like John the Baptist we ask Jesus “are you here, or should we still wait?” The answer to this question is “yes.” Yes, Jesus is here among us in his body and blood at the eucharist. But we wait for the day when he returns. Yes, Jesus is here among us bringing peace and reconciliation. But we wait for the day when he will make *all* things new. The new life promised by the coming of a savior is both realized and still to come. We who live in the Christian faith do so as people searching the world around us for signs of God’s kingdom. Gathering as Christ’s body on earth, we have a sort of dual-citizenship in the now and the not-yet as we both proclaim that Christ is among us and also fervently pray “even so, come Lord Jesus.” As believers, our hope does not rest in the efforts of our piety or in the comfort of the hereafter. Rather, our hope is in the promises of a gracious, faithful God; promises fulfilled before our eyes and those not yet seen. We long for the day in which, like Isaiah’s vision of what will be, the blind see and the lame leap like deer. Yet we tell what we see and hear around us: that the dead are raised, and the poor receive good news. The day is here and yet still we wait. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

**Today’s Music**

*Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah.* Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954, Music: Yiddish folk tune. Augsburg Fortress.

*Hark, the Glad Sound.* Text: Phillip Doddridge, 1702-1751, Music: Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820. Public Domain.

*As the Dark Awaits the Dawn.* Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, 1953-2021, Music: Carl F. Schalk, 1929-2021. Augsburg Fortress.

*Come Now, O Prince of Peace.* Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope, Music: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947. Geonyong Lee.

*He Comes to Us as One Unknown.* Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926, Music: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848-1918. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP) / Public Domain.

*My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness.* Text: With One Voice, 1995, based on the Magnificat, Music: English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872- 1958. Augsburg Fortress / Public Domain.

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