

4th Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



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Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

TABLE GRACE

Worship Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Worship Leader: Let us pray our Table Grace together.

Congregation: We fold our hands. We bow our head. We thank you, God, for daily bread. Amen.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

Verse 1

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly
live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how
hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of
Refrain
Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,
all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Congregation: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY and LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Pastor: Let us pray. We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

CANDLELIGHTING CAROL *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*



4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

FIRST READING

Romans 16:25-27

Introduction to the Lesson: *Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.*

Reader: 25 Let us give glory to God! He is able to make you stand firm in your faith, according to the Good News I preach about Jesus Christ and according to the revelation of the secret truth which was hidden for long ages in the past. 26 Now, however, that truth has been brought out into the open through the writings of the prophets; and by the command of the eternal God it is made known to all nations, so that all may believe and obey. 27 To the only God, who alone is all-wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever! Amen.

Reader: The word of the Lord. **Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

Introduction to the Gospel: *In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people from little known places. This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in this gospel.*

Pastor: The holy gospel according to Luke in the 1st chapter. **Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.**

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. 27 He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. 28 The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!" 29 Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. 30 The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. 31 You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, 33 and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!" 34 Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?" 35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. 36 Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. 37 For there is nothing that God cannot do." 38 "I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

After the reading...

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

TABLE TALK

HYMN OF THE DAY

Joy to the World

verses 1 and 2

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

PRAYER TIME

Worship Leader: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever. Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in caring for our world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power, or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill. We pray for those who suffer, especially for those on our prayer list, those suffering from war and terror such as the people of Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, and victims of mass shootings, those suffering from natural and manmade disasters including hurricanes, blizzards, floods, fires, and chemical spills, & and these people and circumstances we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **Congregation: Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Pastor: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

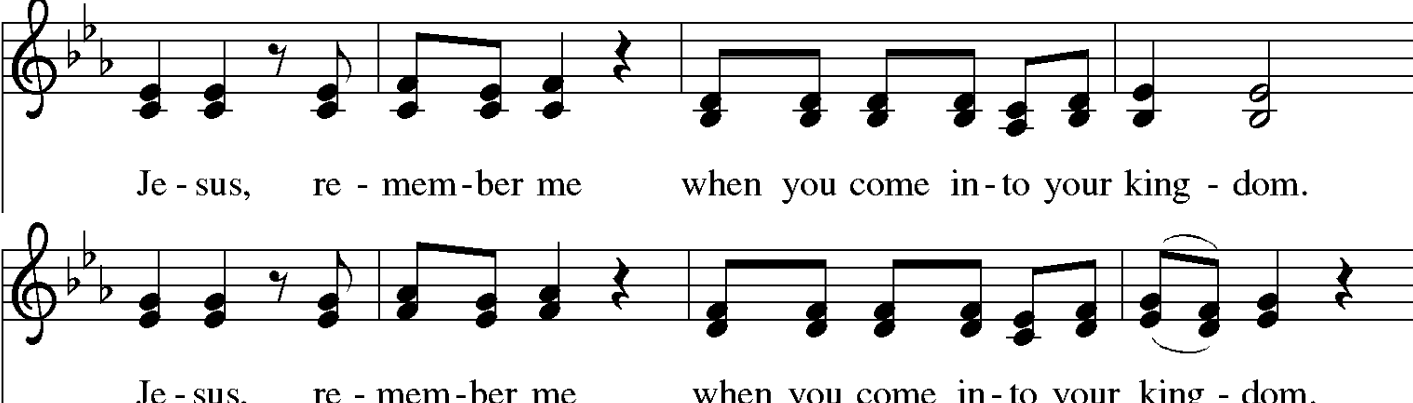
Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

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

Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name.

Pastor: 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.



Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

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.



Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

TABLE BLESSING (*AFTER COMMUNION IS SERVED*)

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Congregation: Amen.**

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Pastor: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another. Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, help those who go to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort

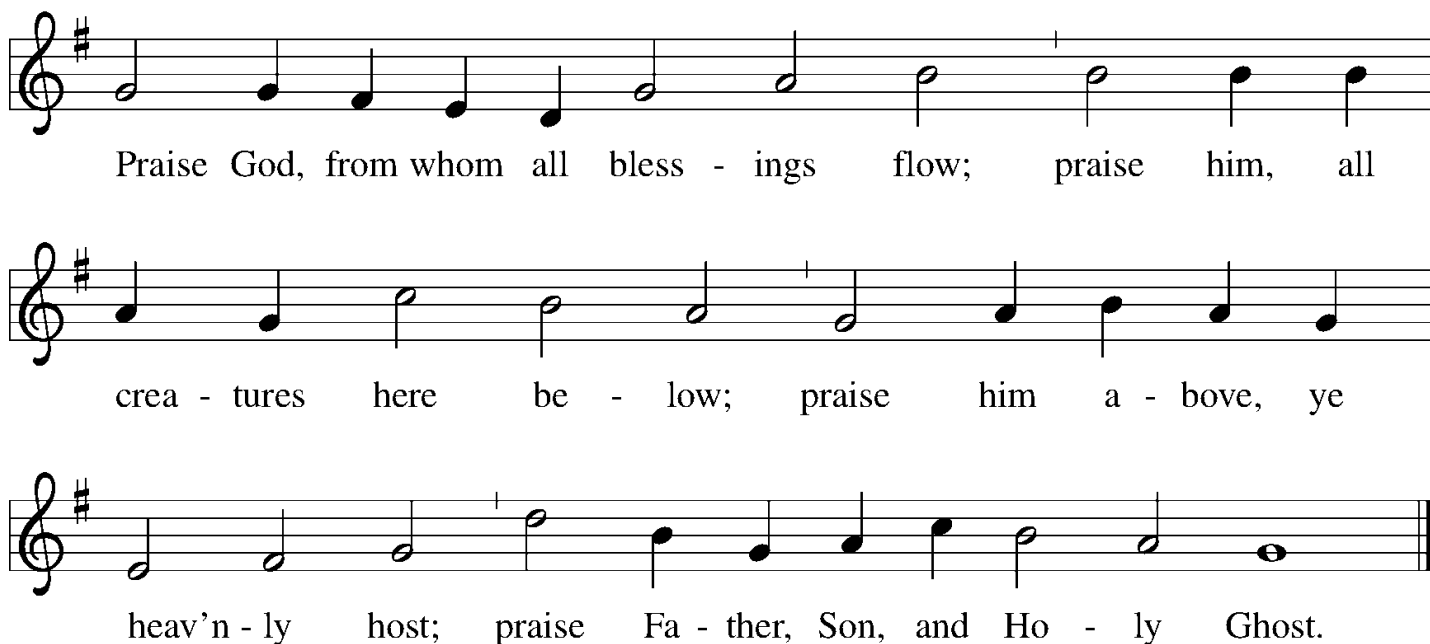
of your everlasting presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

BLESSING

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp). The melody is a simple, ascending and then descending line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Keep awake.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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