

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the Lord of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."
Congregational Responses in Bold Print

All Creation Sings, 2020
Holy Communion, Setting 12

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* WHITWORTH

LIGHTING OF THE 2nd ADVENT CANDLE *Jesus, the Light of the World* RANEY

Choir sings: End our darkness, end our night. Jesus, the light of the world.
Bring to earth God's heavenly light, Jesus the light of the world.

Litany: *Advent is a time to watch.*

We watch, with hope, for the dawning light.

Advent is a time to watch for hope in our despair.

We watch, with hope, for the dawning light.

is a time to watch for grace and forgiveness.

We watch, with hope, for the dawning light.

Advent is a time to watch for peace in the midst of conflict.

We watch, with hope, for the dawning light.

Advent is a time to watch for the end of darkness.

We watch for Jesus, the Light of the World.

Candle Lighting: This morning we light two candles. The **first candle** reminds us that Advent is a time of waiting. The **second candle** reminds us that Advent is also a time of watching. We watch with expectant eyes, trusting that God is active, present, and constantly at work. As we light the second candle, we ask for faith to watch for God's presence, and open eyes to see all that God is doing.

Prayer: *God in heaven, as we learn to watch for signs of your presence, open our eyes that we might see the ways you are at work around us, within us, and through us. Amen.*

Choir Sings: Jesus, the light of the world.

Congregation sings:

ELDERKIN
GEORGE D. ELDERKIN

(Sing twice)

The musical score is written on four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "We'll walk in the light, beau-ti - ful light, come, where the dew-drops of mer-cy shine bright, O, shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je - sus, the light of the world." The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence at the end of the fourth staff.

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Choir concludes: O, Jesus, the light of the world. Light of the world.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who looks upon us in compassion, forgives our sin, and heals our lives. Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Have mercy, O God, against you, you alone, we have sinned. In your compassion, cleanse us from our sin and take away our guilt. Create in us a new heart and give us a steadfast spirit. Do not cast us away, but fill us with your Holy Spirit and restore your joy within us. Amen.

*As tender as parent to child, so deep is God's compassion for you. As high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God's love for you. As far as east is from west, so far God removes your sin from you, renewing your life through Jesus Christ. Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love. **Blessed be God forever.***

GATHERING SONG #264 *Prepare the Royal Highway* BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

GREETING

*From the one who is and who was and who is to come, grace, mercy and peace be with you all. **And also with you.***

KYRIE

The image shows three staves of musical notation for a Kyrie. Each staff is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff has the lyrics "Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy." The second staff has the lyrics "Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy." The third staff has the lyrics "Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy." The music consists of a simple melody with some rests and a final cadence on the third staff.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING: Malachi 3: 1-4

God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means "my messenger") will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God's people, as silver and gold are refined.

¹See, 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. ²But 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 fullers' soap; ³he 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. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

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

BRASS CHOIR: *Carillon on Forest Green*

SECOND READING: Philippians 1: 3-11

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

³I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 3rd chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL Luke 3: 1-6

John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, 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, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as 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.
⁵Every 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;
⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON *Pastor Christian Dittmar*

HYMN OF THE DAY #249 *On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry* PUER NOBIS

APOSTLES’ CREED

With voices united, 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.

THE PRAYERS

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God’s presence. (A brief silence.)

... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

MEAL

INTRODUCTION TO THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING: DIALOGUE

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.....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to 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

Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

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, grant us peace.

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

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Most High God, you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait. Amen.

SENDING HYMN #254 *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* HYFRYDOL

BLESSING

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

POSTLUDE

worship ends * service begins