

sacred space

JOY



3rd Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2022



Ascension Lutheran Church
1105 N. Washington Blvd.
Ogden, UT 84404
801.782.2810

Welcome to Worship...

Welcome to all God's guests, including those who call themselves "members" of this church named Ascension Lutheran Church more than 50 years ago.

A special welcome to guests who are here for the first time or who call yourselves "visitors" among the people of this community. It is at God's invitation, through worship, the Holy Spirit calls each of us to come to a place of **community, communion** and **commitment**. Each of us brings a different lens to worship, and yet, in a worshiping community, these differences become celebrations of diversity.

**Children are always welcome in worship services;
however please know a nursery is provided for children under 4 years of age.**

Introduction

The shiny additions to our Advent setting remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All of Creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we will remember the invitation to shine with this holy light.

Sacred Space—JOY

Welcome to Worship

Solo

Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.
And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

WA We pray for Joy this day.

All We pray for Joy this day.

WA We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

All We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

WA We open to see each place

All We open to see each place

WA as a gift of holy presence.

All as a gift of holy presence.

WA This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

All This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

WA lighting the way to Joy.

All lighting the way to Joy.



U-pon this mo - ment, U-pon this peo - ple, U-pon this
 place the Ho-ly comes. And Sa-cred know-ing brings Sa-cred
 be - ing for Sa-cred do - ing of God's plan.

P Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Joy,
 we give you thanks for this physical and online space for gathering.

All As we take in the joy you offer,
 may we be a reflection of your light,
 expanding the sacred space of “right here”
 into the sacred place of “everywhere.” Amen

refracting the sacred

As light passes through a medium, it can be redirected in ways that make its brilliance more visible, as in a prism.

As we encounter the message today, we see the world and our own lives and loved ones in a different light, one that invites us to know more deeply the sacred nature of all things.

A Reading from Isaiah, the 35th chapter

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ²it 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.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say 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."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then 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;

⁷the 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.

⁸A 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.

⁹No 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.

¹⁰And 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.

Isaiah 35:1-10

L Word of God, Word of Life.

All Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit.

Em - man - u - el, His name is called God with us, re - vealed in us! His name is called Em - man - u - el.

Gospel Reading

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th chapter.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the 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. ⁶And

blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷As 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?

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

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

¹¹Truly 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.”

Matthew 11:2-11

P The Gospel of our Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

[You may be Seated](#)

Message

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Hymn of the Day

[Please stand in body or spirit.](#)

Sanctuary

Words and Music by
John W. Thompson
and Randy Scruggs

Lord, pre - pare me to be a sanc-tu - ar - y, — pure and ho - ly, tried and

true; — With thanks - giv - ing, I'll be a

liv - ing — sanc - tu - ar - y for — You.

Apostles' Creed

P Let us join together with the saints across the ages confessing our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**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.**

refilling the sacred

We are wells of the sacred. God's presence is poured into creation in a never-ending flow of love. We enter a time of prayer that invites us to be refilled in ways that can help us pour out our love throughout the week. All we must do in this moment is open our hearts to the Holy One.

Prayers of Intercession

L As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.



For you, O Lord, my soul in still - ness waits,



tru - ly my hope is in you.

(each prayer petition ends with)

L: God, in your mercy,

All: You hear our prayer.

Sharing the Joy of Christ

In our continued physical distancing out of love for the health of one another, we will share the peace of our risen Lord by "speaking" that peace through sign language.

P Christ become Joy with you.

All And also with you.

Offering

[You may be Seated](#)

While we still will not physically pass the offering plates we will continue to have the plates available at the entrance to receive your offerings and will lift them up in thanksgiving before the throne of grace.

(tune: What Child is This)

♪ ♪ **Praise God from whom all blessings flow** ♪ ♪
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God all heavens and the earth
reflecting the sacred story.

***This, this is Christ the One
who mirrors joy for all of us.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Word of time eternal.***

Offertory Prayer

P God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people.

All Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

Invitation to the Table

Christ invites all to his table, for he is the One who is reflected in all things and unites all things. There is a place for you. This Cosmic Banquet of Love is set for a hungry and hurting world. When we take in and take on Christ, we are the Body of Christ sent forth into the world to lay a banquet of love wherever we find ourselves.

Let us open ourselves so that our hearts might be filled completely.

Confession and Assurance

P Maker and Lover of all, forgive us when we are too preoccupied, self-involved, or worried to notice your presence in our lives...

when we are too rushed to allow moments of wonder and awe that lead to hope,

when we are too frightened to imagine those not like us loved equally by you,

when we gloss over the most ordinary details as a revelation of your joy, when we fail to stop and reside in peace with you in our depths.

All **Open us, O God,
 free us to reflect the sacred.
 Touch us with your presence,
 we pray in your Holy Name:
 Christ, Anointed One. Amen.**

P Hear this good news:
 God is with us in our distress and in our faltering.
 God is always and already closing the gaps we create.
 Jesus calls us to this table with unfailing and gracious hospitality.
 You are forgiven and freed. You are not alone.

All **We are forgiven and freed. We are not alone.
 Glory to God! Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

P The Holy One be with you

All **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts

All **We lift them up to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

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

P Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
 Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor,
 to proclaim release to the captives
 and recovering of sight to the blind,
 to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
 and to announce that the time had come
 when you would save your people.
 He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

A reflection of this purpose, and anointed as his disciples,
 Christ's birth is our awakening,
 Christ's suffering is all suffering,
 Christ's death and resurrection is the pattern of all things.

P We are his Body in the world—
 the Body of Christ—renewed by water and the spirit.
 He has been, is, and always will be with us,
 One in Three, Three in One, in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.



All: On the night You were be - trayed You took the bread;__ Af - ter



giv - ing thanks,__ You broke it and said, "This is My __



bod - y, bro - ken for__ you, and as you



eat__ it, re - mem - ber Me; This is My__



bod - y bro - ken for__ you, and as you



eat__ it, re - mem - ber Me." On the



night You were__ be - trayed__ You held the cup;__ Af - ter



giv - ing thanks,__ You lift - ed it up. "This is My __

blood, poured out for__ you, and as you drink__ it, re - mem - ber
 Me; This is My__ blood, poured out for__ you, and as you
 drink____ it, re - mem - ber__ Me." So, we
 thank You for__ the wine____ and for the bread;__ For we
 see the life__ You gave__ and the blood You_ shed. And we re -
 mem - ber Your won - drous__ love, You gave Your
 bod - y, You shed Your blood; And we re - mem - ber Your won - drous
 love, You gave Your bod - y, You shed Your blood.

The Lord's Prayer

P Let us approach the throne of grace as we pray as Jesus taught us:

All 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;

All 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.**

The Invitation

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

Communion Songs

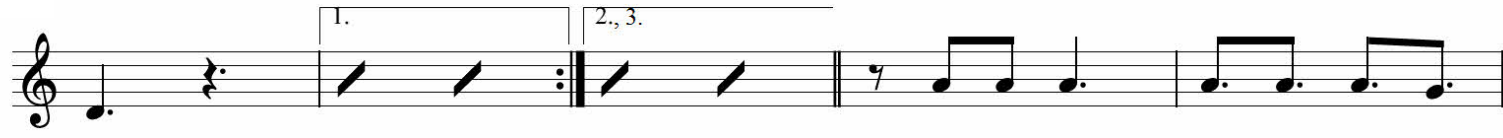
Even So Come Words and Music by
 Chris Tomlin, Jess Cates
 and Jason Ingram



1. All of cre - a - tion, all of the earth
 2. Call back the sin - ner, wake up the saint,
 3. There will be jus - tice, all will be new.



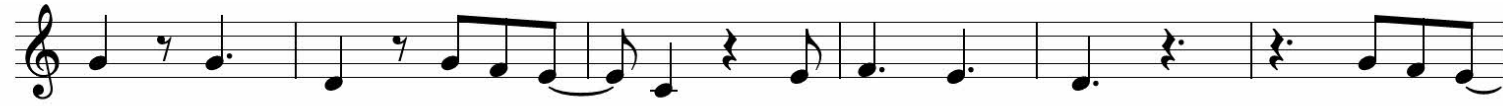
make straight a high - way, a path for the Lord; _ Je - sus is com - ing
 let ev - 'ry na - tion shout of Your fame; _ Je - sus is com - ing
 Your name for - ev - er, faith - ful and true; Je - sus is com - ing



soon. Like a bride wait - ing for her
 soon.
 soon.



groom, we'll be a Church _ read - y for You. Ev - 'ry heart long - ing for our



_ King, we sing: E - ven so, _ come, Lord Je - sus come. E - ven so, _

D.S. al Coda



— come, Lord Je - sus come.

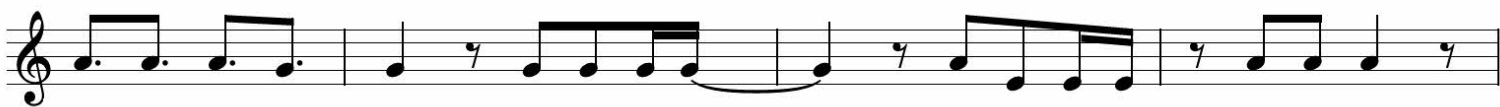
⊕ Coda



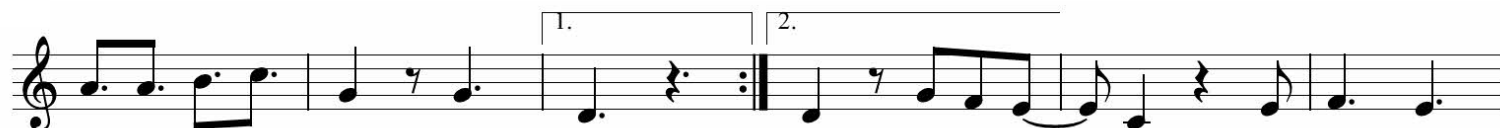
So we wait, we wait for You. God, we



wait; You're com - ing soon. So we Like a bride



wait - ing for her groom, we'll be a Church — read - y for You. Ev - 'ry heart



long - ing for our King, we sing: sing: E - ven so, — come, Lord Je - sus



come. E - ven so, — come, Lord Je - sus come. E - ven so, —



— come, Lord Je - sus come.

There's A Quiet Understanding

Words and Music by
Tedd Smith



1. There's a qui - et un - der - stand - ing when we're gath - ered
2. And we know when we're to - geth - er, shar - ing love and



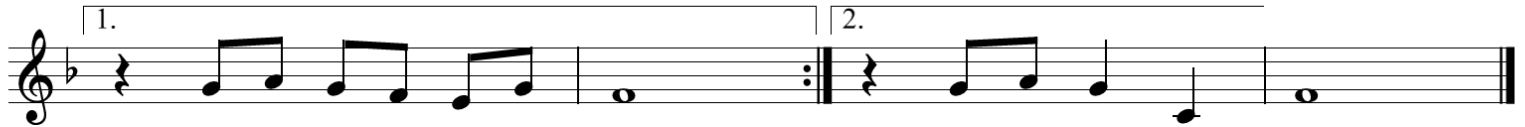
in the Spir - it; It's a prom - ise that He gives — us, when we gath - er in His
un - der - stand - ing, that our broth - ers and our sis - ters feel the one-ness that He



name. There's a love we feel in Je - sus, there's a man - na
brings. Thank You, thank You, thank You, Je - sus, for the way You



that He feeds _ us; It's a prom - ise that He gives _ us,
love and feed _ us, for the man - y ways You lead _ us,



when we gath - er in His name. thank You, thank You, Lord.

Post Communion Blessing *and* Prayer

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

All Amen

P Most High God,
you have come among us at this table.

**All 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.**

*Stewardship of Life and Ministry
Announcements*

Anointed to Sacred Space

All things were “Christified”—anointed at their creation.

This week, you are invited to an anointing of your senses to seek a depth of vision that notices the precious details around us.

[If you attended worship here on-site with us last week, you should have been given a small vial of oil at the door. For those of you worshipping with us at home, please take a moment to grab a little olive oil from the kitchen or some lotion from your bathroom cabinet.]

As you rise in the morning, try a ritual of touching your eyes and ears, nose, lips, and hands for a brief moment (with lotion, cream, or chapstick... or without) to ready them to a deeper looking, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching.

Imagine that this ritual touch imbues your senses with a kind of superpower beyond their usual powers of observation. Imagine that your “noticer” is turned onto a high frequency and that you will experience common and usual spaces at home and work and out in your daily life in a way that brings more joy than you have felt before about those places.

And then one time this week, if possible, share a visit with someone to a place that is special, that is magical to you—perhaps it is a street with houses covered in Christmas lights, or a place in nature that calms and soothes you, or a cozy place by a fire with a cup of tea or coffee.

Soak in the sacred that is reflected all around you.

Benediction

Please stand in body or spirit.

P When you see lights twinkle,
when you catch a reflection in a mirror,
when you notice the sunlight dancing on a surface
or a nightlight glowing in the darkness,
let these be signs that the Christ Light is revealed
again and again in and through this world.

Know that your brilliant presence
is pouring more love into a weary world.
God loved us by becoming us.

This means you are already
reflecting the sacred.

In the name of the Creator, Christ, ✝ and Spirit of Love.

All Amen

Sending Song

Go Out With Joy

Words and Music by
Joe Huerta and Leila Huerta

Go out with joy and be led forth in peace, ___ the moun-

- tains and the hills _ shall break forth sing - ing. sing - ing. And

all the trees of the field ___ shall clap their hands, the Lord Je - ho - vah shall be

praised. And all the trees of the field
 shall clap their hands, the Word of the Lord shall be for - ev - er.

Dismissal

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

All Thanks be to God.

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Readings for next Sunday,
 December 18th
 4th Sunday of Advent

First Reading:

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalm:

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Second Reading:

Romans 1:1-7

Gospel:

Matthew 1:18-25

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