



*Being present*

*with*

*H O P E*

*1st Sunday of Advent*

*December 3, 2023*



## 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 space is available for  
parents who need to tend to their little ones.**

#### Introduction

*Advent can be filled with worry about finding the perfect Christmas gifts. Deep down we want people in our lives to know they are special and that we love them. But sometimes we overlook the greatest gift of all... our very presence. Our spiritual ancestors were also worried — often about survival in the midst of political occupation. And the response of the scriptures is "the Holy Living One is with you." Like a shepherd who never leaves the flock, we are held close. This season, we are invited to be the gift of presence for our loved ones, for our communities, for those who need it most.*

# *Being Present with Hope*

## *Welcome to Worship*

*P* ...We can simply be a gift of presence; we can give our hearts.

*Cantors*     *What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise One, I would do my part;  
Yet what can I give Him: I will give my heart.*

## *Lighting of the Advent Wreath*

*WA* We unwrap a present on this first Sunday of Advent  
with great anticipation for the gift that God will reveal.

***All*** We open our hearts as we open the gift!

*WA* The promise of Hope is the Divine Gift we receive.

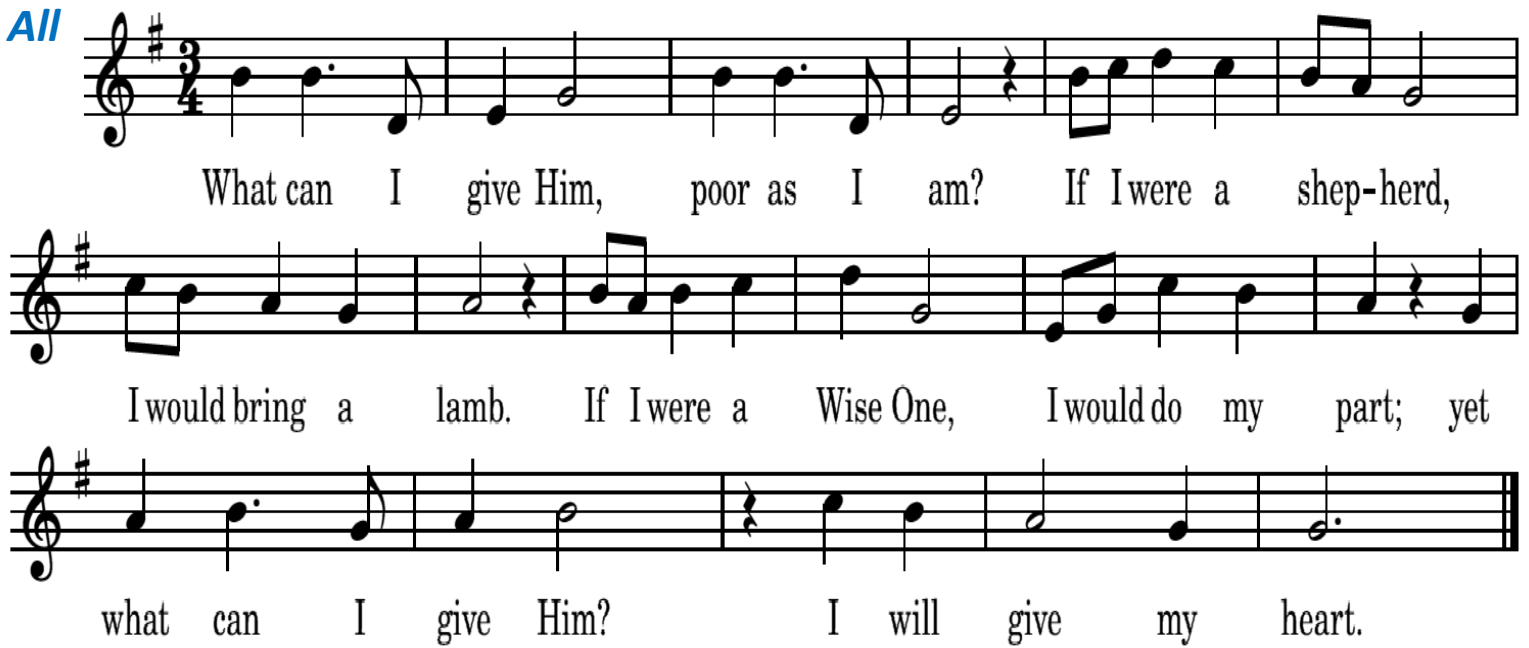
***All*** And what will we do with it?

*WA* The gift of hope is an essential survival tool  
because it reminds us that the hard times do not have the last word.

*WA* Hope is not simply a wish.  
Hope calls us into action based on a belief that things can be different.  
We can work to bring about the better world that we hope for.

***All*** We light this Candle of Hope as a sign that we will be  
Present with Hope in the world.

**All**



What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shep-herd,  
 I would bring a lamb. If I were a Wise One, I would do my part; yet  
 what can I give Him? I will give my heart.

**P** Let us pray:  
**Holy Living Light of God, you are our Hopeful Presence.**

**All** Let this hope grow in our lives each day,  
 so we can be a Present of Hope to others.  
 Unwrap and open our hearts.  
 May it be so. Amen.

*A Responsive Reading from Psalm 80*

*Shepherd of Israel, hear us,  
 you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
 You who are enthroned on the cherubim, shine out!  
 Shine out before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh!  
 Awaken your power and come to save us!  
 O God, return to us — let your face smile on us,  
 and we will be saved!*

**Psalm 80: 1-2**

## A Reading from 1 Corinthians, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter

Another community at a later time — the early Christians — also lived in a time of oppression by the Roman occupiers. The letters that circulated among them gave them hope for the future.

I continually thank my God for you because of the gift bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, in whom you have been richly endowed with every gift of speech and knowledge. In the same way, the testimony about Christ has been so confirmed among you that you lack no spiritual gift, as you wait for the revelation of our Savior Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1: 4-7

*L* Word of God, Word of **Life**.

**All** Thanks be to God!

### Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit.

Em - man - u - el, \_\_\_\_\_ Em - man - u - el, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ His name is called \_\_\_\_\_ Em - man - u - el: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ God with us, \_\_\_\_\_ re - vealed in us! \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ His name is called \_\_\_\_\_ Em - man - u - el: \_\_\_\_\_

## Gospel Reading

*P* The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**All** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*In the midst of it, Jesus reminds his disciples to make sure they pay attention and don't get distracted by all the bad news. Stay awake, stay alert, he says. Watch for the signs of a new day.*

“But in those days, after that time of distress, ‘the sun will be darkened, the moon will lose its brightness, the stars will fall from the sky and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.’ Then they will see the Promised One coming in the clouds with great power and glory; then the angels will be sent to gather the chosen from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that the Promised One is near, right at the door. The truth is, before this generation has passed away, all these things will have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But as for that day or hour, nobody knows it — neither the angels of heaven, nor the Only Begotten — no one but Abba God. Be constantly on the watch! Stay awake! You do not know when the appointed time will come. It is like people traveling abroad. They leave their home and put the workers in charge, each with a certain task, and those who watch at the front gate are ordered to stay on the alert. So stay alert! You do not know when the owner of the house is coming, whether at dusk, at midnight, when the cock crows or at early dawn. Do not let the owner come suddenly and catch you asleep. What I say to you, I say to all: stay alert!”

*Mark 13: 24-37*

*P* The Gospel of our Lord.

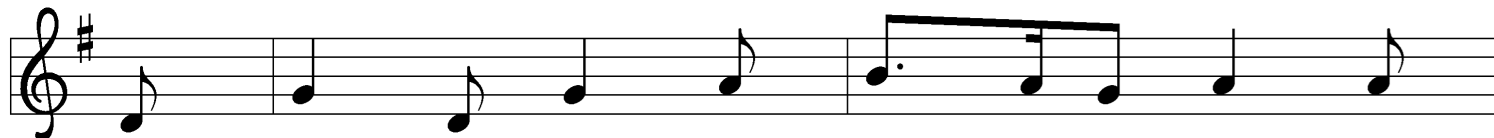
**All** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

[You may be Seated](#)

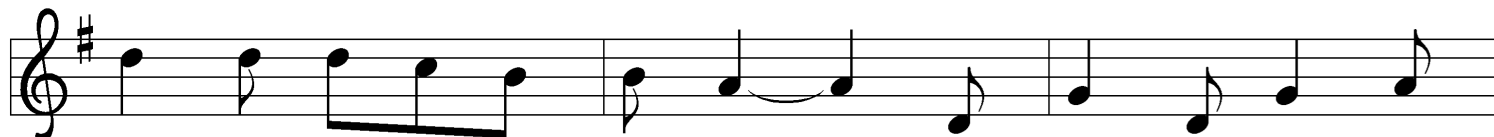
Hymn of the Day

Please stand in body or spirit.

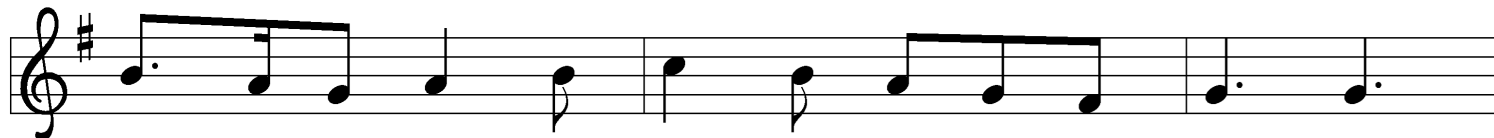
Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



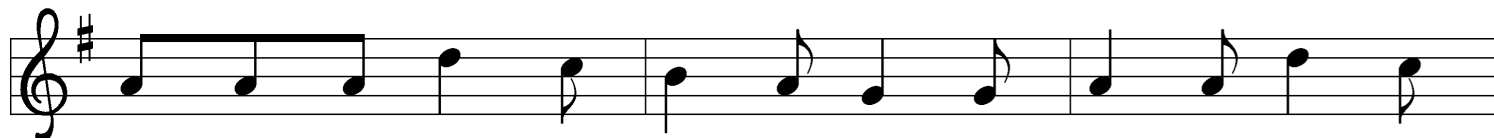
A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for  
Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for  
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



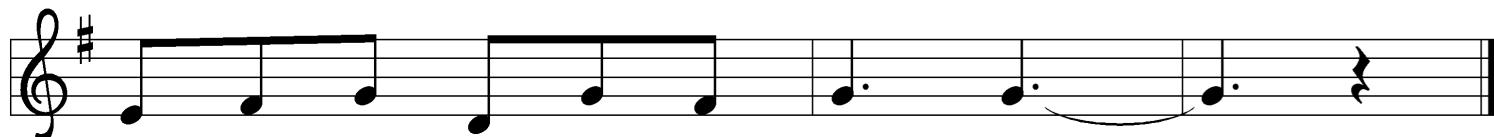
soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.  
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -  
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and  
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

## *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.**

## *Prayers of Intercession*

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





- ses to see and per - ceive the gifts we've been giv -  
 - en, to know and be - lieve that what we must do is  
 o - pen our hearts to let all gifts flow through.

(each prayer petition ends with)

**L:** Merciful God,

**All: Receive our prayer.**

## Sharing the Hope 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 Hope 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.*

## 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.

## *Confession and Assurance*

*P* God of hope,

**All** We cut ourselves off from being present with you.

**We distance ourselves from the hope that is ours as your heirs  
in the family of God.**

**It seems too wonderful a gift!**

**Yet, the Shepherd comes to find us, leading us gently back into safety,  
back into care, back into relationship.**

**In this moment, we stop and take a deep breath.**

**We feel our bodies relax into being right here, right now.**

**We release our regrets into your hands of mercy.**

*P* People of God, know this... there are gifts with your name on them -  
gifts called Grace,

called Forgiveness,

called "Assurance."

They are yours whenever you accept and open them.

They are already and always there for you.

You do not have to be good enough to get them.

They are yours already because that is the nature of our loving God,  
God-with-us, Emmanuel.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**All** Glory to God, Amen

# *The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution*

*To the tune of What Child is This?*

**P**                    *♪ ♪ The Lord be with you. ♪ ♪*

**All**                    *And with you too.  
We lift our hearts to God.*

**P**                    *Let us give thanks.*

**All**                    *Its right to do  
We open our hearts to let gifts flow through.*

**P**                    It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Almighty God, Gift-Giver of all that exists.

                         You formed us in your image  
                         and breathed into us the breath of life.  
When we turned away, and our love failed,  
                         your love remained steadfast.

                         You delivered us from captivity,  
made covenant to be our sovereign God,  
                         and spoke to us through your prophets.

                         And so,  
                         with your people on earth  
                         and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**All**                    *♪ ♪ Praise God, Praise God of pow'r and might, ♪ ♪  
Praise God whose presence shines through our night.  
Praise God of glory, hosannas sing,  
reflecting the sacred story.*

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

and made with us a new covenant.

When the Lord Jesus ascended,

he promised the gift of his presence with us always,

in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

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.

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.

**All**

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

**P** By your Spirit make us one with Christ,  
one with each other,  
and one in ministry to all the world,  
until Christ comes again  
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

### *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;**  
**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** In this meal, righteousness and hope meet together.  
Come, take your place at the table.

Note: the communion cups on the periphery of the tray contain red wine while the cups in the center contain white grape juice.

*Gluten Free wafers available –ask the communion attendant*

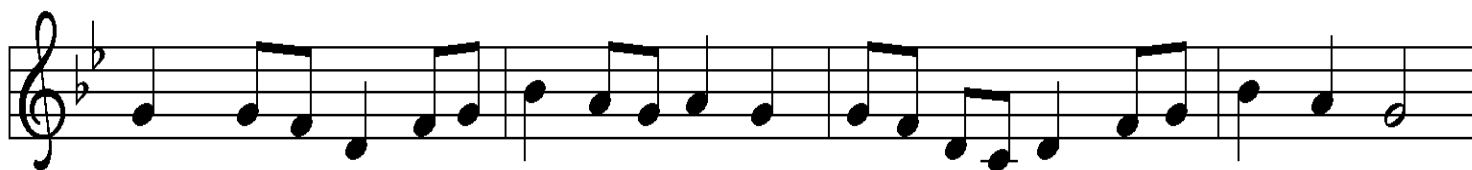
shed for you and  
for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin



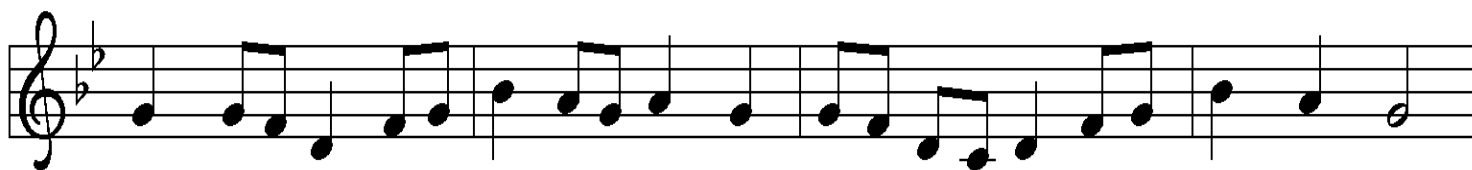
## All are Welcome!

### Communion Songs

### Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

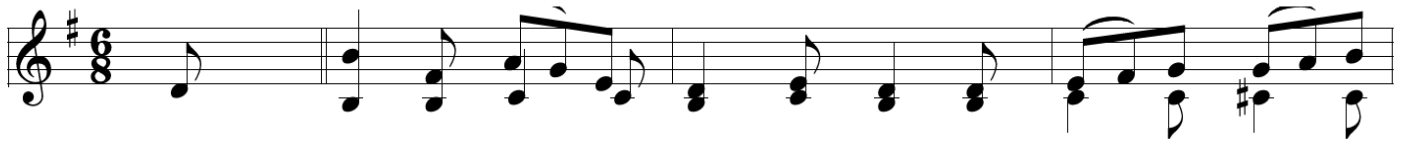


dear de - sire of ev-'ry na - tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer-it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

# It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

Words by  
Edmund Hamilton Sears

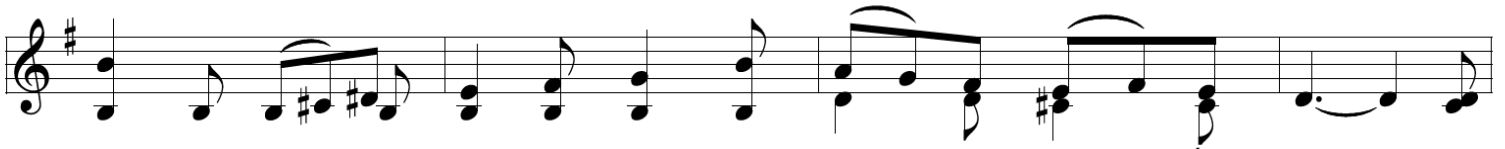
Music by  
Richard Storrs Willis



1. It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of  
2. Still thro' the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un -  
3. And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing  
4. For lo, the days are hast'n - ing on, by proph - et bards fore -  
5. Yet with the woes of sin and strife, the world has suf - fered



old. From an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace  
furl'd, and still their heav - en - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world; A -  
low. Who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow. Look  
told, when with the ev - er cir - cling years comes round the age of gold; When  
long; Be - neath the an - gel strain have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong; And



on the earth, good - will to men, from heaven's all - gra - cious King": The  
bove its sad and low - ly plains, they bend on hov - er - ing wing: And  
now! For glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing: O  
peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling, and  
man, at war with man hears not the love song which they bring; O



world in sol - emn still - ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.  
ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.  
the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.  
hush the noise, ye men of strife and hear the an - gels sing.

## *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* Generous God,  
in bread and cup you have revealed your glory  
for all people to see together.

***All* Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim  
your good news of liberation and release,  
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.  
Amen.**

## *Stewardship of Life and Ministry Announcements*

### *Benediction & Sending*

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

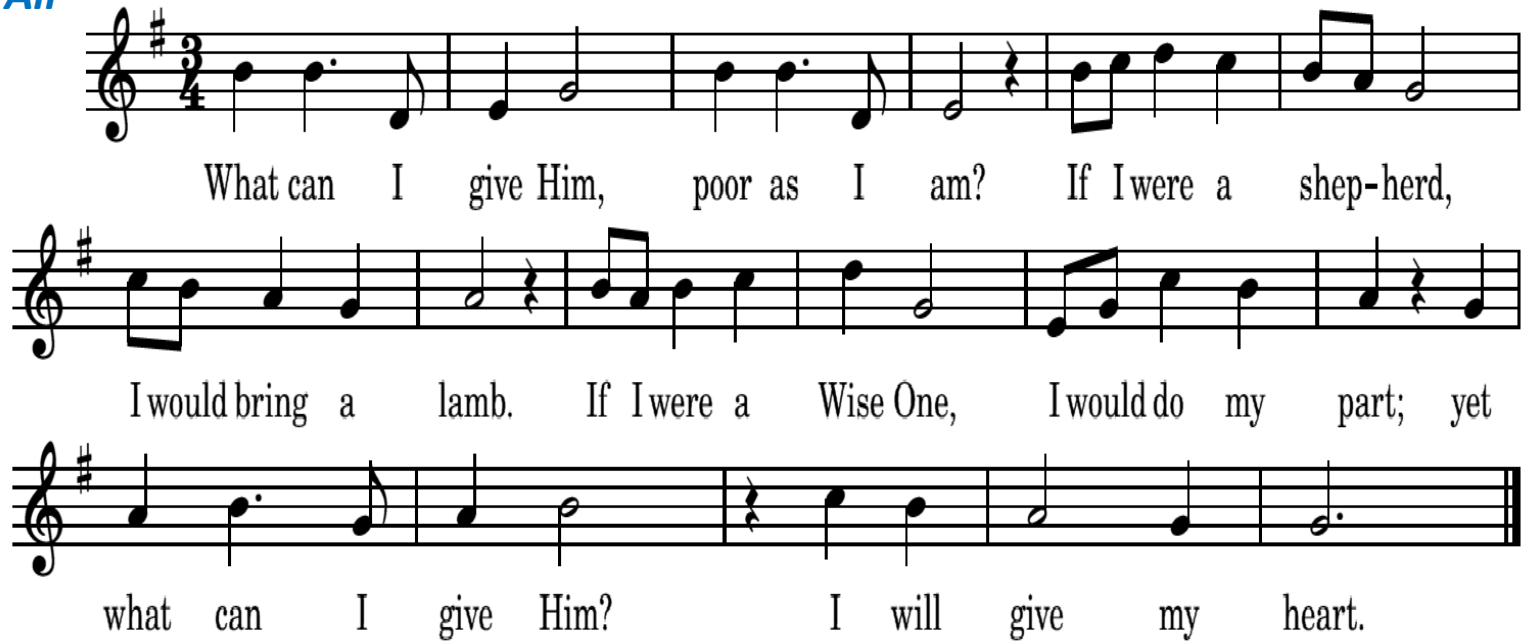
*P* So now go and be truly present  
so you may be a gift of presence for others.  
That's all that is expected —  
that the gift that is YOU  
is the best gift you can give.



*P* In the name of the Holy Presence,  
the Divine Gift,  
and the ✝ Spirit of Hope  
that is just waiting for us to unwrap abundant life.

**All Amen**

*All*



What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shep-herd,  
I would bring a lamb. If I were a Wise One, I would do my part; yet  
what can I give Him? I will give my heart.

*Dismissal*

*P* Go in peace. Keep Awake!

**All Thanks be to God.**

**“The good news of Jesus Christ is that  
God is with us,  
no matter what,  
no matter where,  
no matter when.  
There is no place you can go where God is not,  
no time of the day when God is off the clock.  
This is the teaching of the Incarnation,  
God with us, Emmanuel.”**

*[adapted from Amy Oden, Right Here, Right Now]*

STARS FALLING FROM  
HEAVEN! READINGS  
LIKE THIS REALLY  
**FREAK ME OUT!**

SURE.

IT'S THE UNRAVELING OF EVERY  
THING THAT WE THINK IS  
SECURE AND STABLE. ONLY THE  
LOVE OF GOD FOR YOU IS  
ETERNAL.

I WOULD PREFER IT  
IF GOD'S LOVE **DIDN'T**  
**FREAK ME OUT!**



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

MARK 13:24-27

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Readings for next Sunday,  
December 10th  
2nd Sunday of Advent

**First Reading:** Isaiah 40:1-11  
**Psalm:** Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
**Second Reading:** 2 Peter 3:8-15a  
**Gospel:** Mark 1:1-8

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