



Being present

with

PEACE

2nd Sunday of Advent

December 10, 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 Peace

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 second 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 Peace is the Divine Gift we receive.

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

WA The gift of Christ's peace reminds us that we can have serenity even in
 the midst of non-peaceful situations.

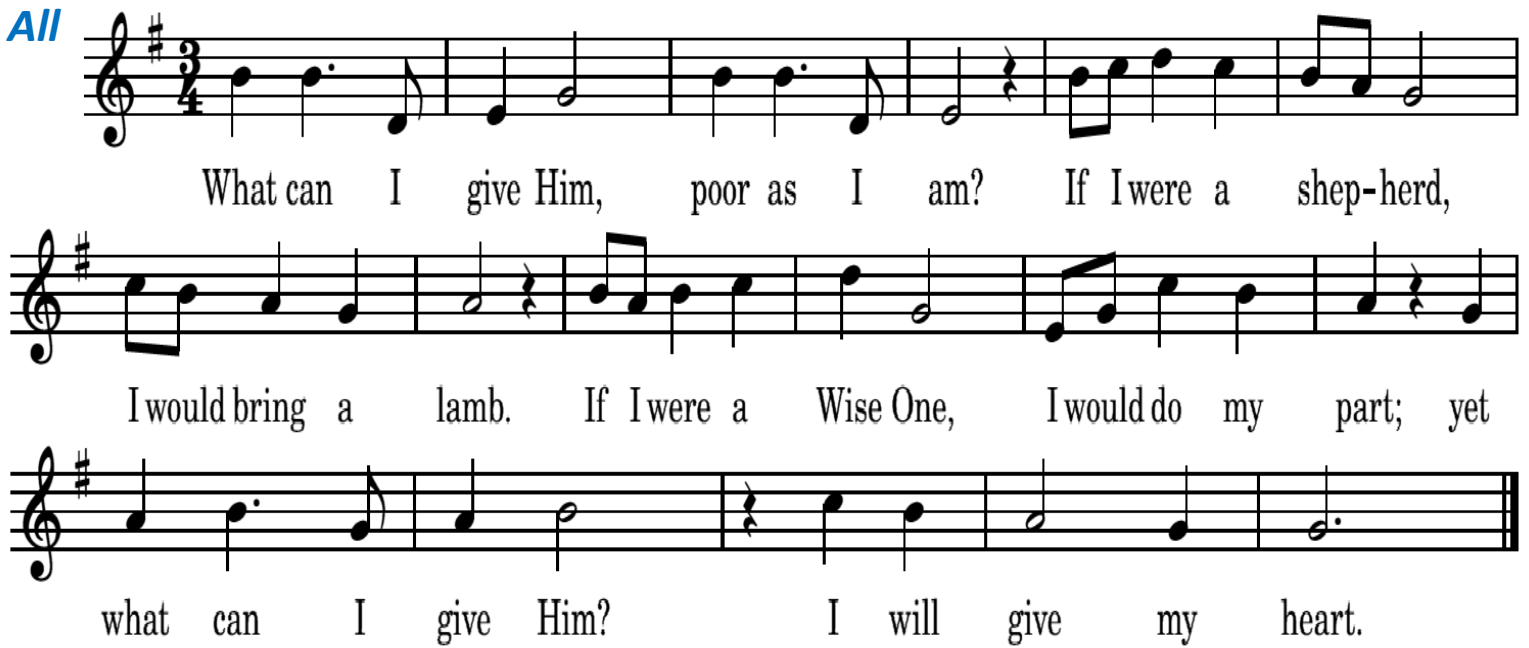
 Peace is not simply the absence of conflict.

 Peace is an ever-present gift that we can open at any time
 when we stop, breathe, and trust that we are never alone.

 And the gift of peace we can give is to be present for those who feel
 alone.

All **We light this Candle of Peace as a sign that we will be
 Present with Peace 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 Peaceful Presence.

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

A Responsive Reading from Isaiah, the 40th chapter

The prophet Isaiah lived in a time of exile perpetrated on the Hebrews by the Babylonians. This passage, Isaiah's disciples are writing after the exile has ended. We hear themes of comfort and peace and the possibility that the paths of our lives can be cleared for new life and that we are always held in the peaceful presence of our God.

“Console my people, give them comfort,” says your God.

**“Speak tenderly to Jerusalem’s heart,
 and tell it that its time of service is ended...”**

A voice cries out,

“Clear a path through the wilderness for YHWH!

Make a straight road through the desert for our God!”

**Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low;
let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges become a valley!**
Go up on a high mountain, you who bring good news to Zion!
Shout with a loud voice, you who bring good news to Jerusalem!
Shout without fear, and say to the towns of Judah “Here is your God!”
**Like a shepherd you feed your flock,
gathering the lambs and holding them close,
and leading mother ewes with gentleness.**

Isaiah 40: 1-11

A Reading from 2 Peter, the 3rd chapter

The new churches of the first century church were encouraged by the writer of the letters called First and Second Peter. These churches were living in a confusing time as they struggled with the belief that Jesus’ return was immanent... but was not yet coming to fruition. In our reading today, the writer invites them to wait with peaceful hearts, even in the midst of what feels like chaos.

“This point must not be overlooked, dear friends: in the eyes of the Most High, one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. God does not delay in keeping the promise, as some mean ‘delay.’ Rather, God shows you generous patience, desiring that no one perish but that all come to repentance... But what we await are new heavens and a new earth where, according to the promise, God’s justice will reside. So beloved, while waiting for this, make every effort to be found at peace and without stain or defilement in God’s sight. Consider our God’s patience as your opportunity for salvation.”

2 Peter 3: 8-15a

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

All **Thanks be to God!**

Do You Have Room?

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 1st chapter.

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

The Gospel reading for this second Sunday of Advent is the very beginning of the book of Mark, setting up the idea that this story of Jesus will be a transformative experience. Drawing on the prophet Isaiah, Mark tells his readers that God is making a way in the most difficult places, clearing open paths in the desert places. John the Baptist shows up in Advent, as he typically does, a sign that the time has come when the Messiah, born of the Spirit, will be present among us.

Here begins the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: as it was written in Isaiah the prophet: "I send my messenger before you to prepare your way, a herald's voice in the desert, crying, 'Make ready the way of our God. Clear a straight path.'" And so John the Baptizer appeared in the desert, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean

countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to John and were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. John was clothed in camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and he ate nothing but grasshoppers and wild honey. In the course of his preaching, John said, "One more powerful than I is to come after me. I am not fit to stoop and untie his sandal straps. I have baptized you in water, but the One to come will baptize you in the Holy Spirit."

Mark 1: 1-8

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.

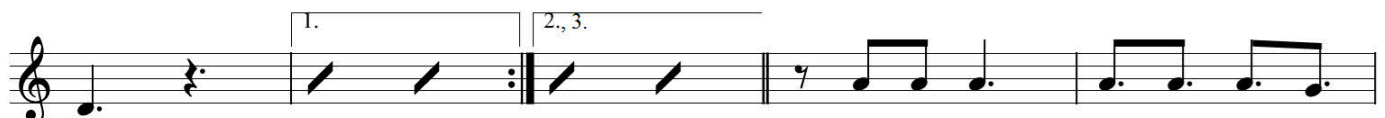
Even So Come
Words and Music by
Chris Tomlin, Jess Cates
and Jason Ingram



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.
soon.
soon.

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: E - ven so, ___ come, Lord Je - sus come. E - ven so, -



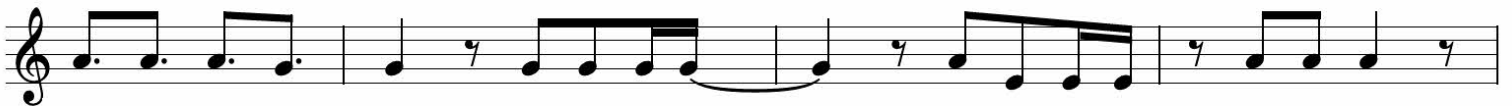
___ come, Lord Je - sus come.



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



wait; You're com - ing soon. 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: E - ven so, ___ come, Lord Je - sus



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



___ come, Lord Je - sus come.

Blessing of the Quilts - see insert

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



Right here__ and right now__ we o-pen our sen-
- 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 Peace of

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 Peace 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 peace,
- All** We cut ourselves off from being present with you.
We distance ourselves from the peace 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.**
- 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 peace 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 peace 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

Words and Music
 John Mason Neale
 Arranged by
 Thomas Helmore

O Come O Come Emmanuel

Translated by
 Veni Emmanuel

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2. O come, Thou Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by Thine
 3. O come, Thou Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things,
 4. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind all peo - ples in one

Is - - ra - el; That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un -
 ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night, and
 far and nigh; To us the path of knowl - edge show, and
 heart and mind; Bid en - vy, strife, and quar - rels cease; Fill

til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u -
 death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 cause us in her ways to go.
 the whole world with heav - en's peace.

el shall come to thee, O Is - - ra - el.

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

1 I heard the bells on Christ - mas Day their
 2 I thought how, as the day had come, the
 3 And in de - spair I bowed my head; "There
 4 Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God
 5 Till, ring - ing, sing - ing on its way, the

old fa - mil - iar car - ols play, and wild and sweet the
 bel - fries of all Chris - ten - dom had rolled a - long the un -
 is no peace on earth," I said, "for hate is strong and
 is not dead, nor doth God sleep; the wrong shall fail, the
 world re - volved from night to day, a voice, a chime, a

words re - peat of peace on earth, good - will to all.
 bro - ken song of peace on earth, good - will to all,
 mocks the song of peace on earth, good - will to all."
 right pre - vail, with peace on earth, good - will to all."
 chant sub - lime of peace on earth, good - will to all!

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 Eternal God,
 We give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have made the
 Gift of your Presence known to us.

**All Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to
 give ourselves as a gift of peace to others.**

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Stewardship of Life and Ministry Announcements

Benediction & Sending

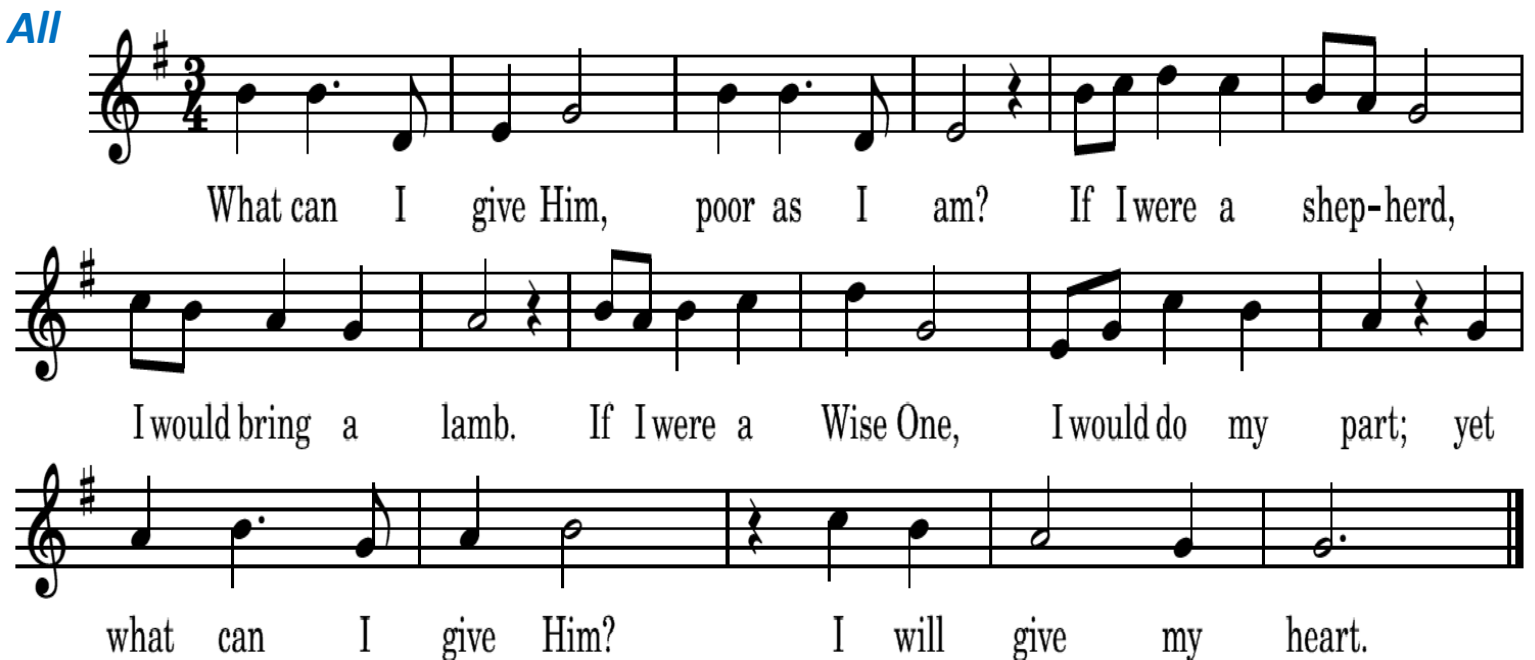
Please stand in body or spirit.

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.

In the name of the Holy Presence,
the Divine Gift,
and the ✝ Spirit of Peace
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.

“As we strip away the cluttered surface of our lives
and become more present in the moment,
we may be disturbed by what we can now see
in the open vista,
especially the suffering of “the least of these.”

We are no longer numb to the cries of those hurting.
We ache for the violence humans do to one another
and to the earth.

We see all people and all creation held
within God’s love and life.

Our comfortable lives are disrupted as we ask new,
hard questions.

But being more mindfully present
will also bring greater awareness
of God’s presence, peace, and clarity
in the midst of it all.”

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

Readings for next Sunday,
December 17th
3rd Sunday of Advent

First Reading:

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm:

Psalm 126

Second Reading:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Gospel:

Luke 1: 41-55

Front Cover:

Photo by worship Design Studio
Used by permission



Music licenses covered by these subscriptions

Used by Permission OneLicense.net A-705915

Used by Permission CCLI LiscenSing License # 1924512