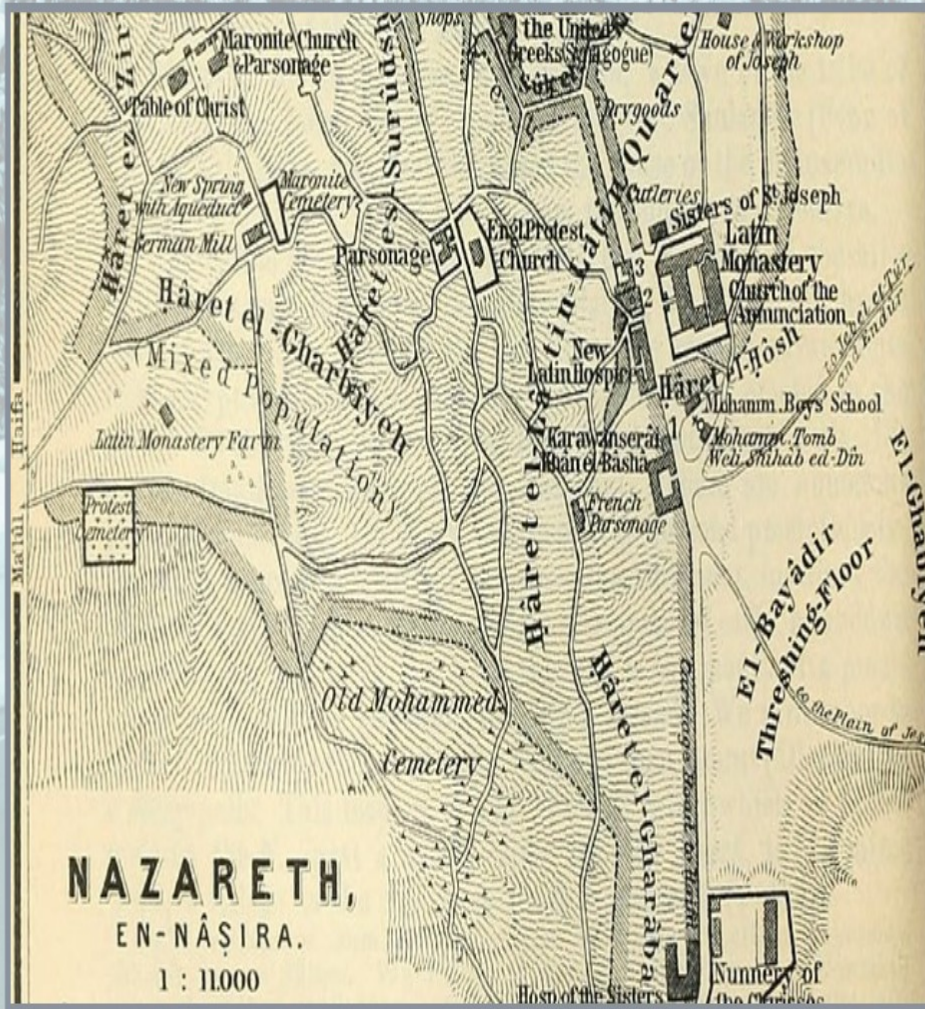


# On the Way to Bethlehem



*Joy joy JOY joy Joy*

*December 15, 2024  
3rd Sunday of Advent*



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 worshipping community, these differences become celebrations of diversity.

**Children are always welcome in worship services;  
however please know the cry room at the back of the sanctuary is available for  
parents who need to tend to their little ones.**

## Introduction

We are so often focused on the destination in our travels. "Where are you going?" is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the impetus for deciding to "go," it is often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments—frustrating or delightful. This Advent season, we will pay attention not just to the destination of Christmas, but also to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which a child was born who would change the world. And we will ponder our own milestones—the progress and the potholes "on the way."

# Nazareth: A Place of Simplicity

**G** We move north to the tiny village of Nazareth. Although not so tiny anymore, in those days, Nazareth was a place where “everyone knows your name” since it could only support a limited amount of people from one small well of water. Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel with news that she would bear a son!

**P** Mary’s joy was not limited by the improbability that such a thing could happen in Nazareth. In this simple, tight-knit community of limited resources—a place where survival required interdependence with your neighbors—Jesus would be raised and grow into the teacher he became. This week, we wonder: what joy can we glean from the simplest of moments, the simplest of gifts, allowing ourselves to savor this season, pregnant with possibilities?

***♪ ♪ O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! ♪ ♪  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.***

We're on our way. We're on our way.

4 Dream of the day when joy holds sway. With all the earth, in

7 all our hearts. We're on our way. This is the day.

G The journey continues, and this candle will help light our way.

**All We are on our way to more joy.**

G Life can be so complicated and filled with distractions.

**All We are a people who simply want Good News.**

G We need a marker on the journey to tell us to stop and notice the wonder of the moments along the way.

**All God's light goes before us, we are not alone.**

The musical score is written on three staves in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together. This is followed by a half note G4. The second staff continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The third staff begins with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The fourth staff continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The fifth staff begins with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The sixth staff continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The seventh staff begins with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The eighth staff continues with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together, followed by a half note G4. The lyrics are: We're on our way. We're on our way. Dream of the day when joy holds sway. With all the earth, in all our hearts. We're on our way. This is the day.

## Confession and Forgiveness

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

P Holy and Living God, we pray for the refocusing of our lives on what really matters.

**All Too often, we allow the complexity of modern life to take over, and we fail to sense your presence in our everyday lives. Call us to a simplified joy.**

**Call us to simply pause in the midst of our scheduled mania**

**and breathe in the possibility that you are asking for our attention.**

**We pray this in the name of your Son,**

**Jesus, the Christ, the Joy of Our Lives. Amen.**

*P* Let this be a marker of assurance that we are moving in a faithful direction:  
God is with us every step of our way toward the Joy of Bethlehem.  
Jesus is being born into our lives even now. ✝  
The Spirit is transforming us in this place.

**All Amen.**

[You may be Seated](#)

## Prayer for This Day

*P* God of Advent, of darkness, of waiting,

**All we wait ...**

**for the hungry to be fed,  
for freedom for all,**

**for the weapons of war to be abolished,**

**for everyone to have clean water and sanitation,**

**for an end to suspicion between Christian, Muslim, and Jew,**

**for peace in our world ..**

**God of Advent, of darkness, of waiting,**

**we wait ...**

**for your Kingdom to come. Amen**

## A Reading from Isaiah, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter

*Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.*

<sup>1</sup>A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

<sup>2</sup>The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear;

<sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

<sup>5</sup>Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

<sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

<sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

*Isaiah 11:1-9*

**WA** The word of the Lord.

**All** **Thanks be to God.**

## A Reading from Romans, the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter

*God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.*

Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope." May 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.

**WA** The word of the Lord.

**All** **Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit.

♫ ♫ *Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel* ♫ ♫  
*God with us revealed in us. His name is called Emmanuel*

## Gospel Reading

*P* The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.

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

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

*Luke 1: 26-38*

*P* The Gospel of our Lord.

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

*You may be Seated*

# Children's Sermon & Bell Ringers

Anders Denniston  
Colin Otto  
Norah Otto

Noah Gray  
Ellie Otto  
Callie Simpson

Lit - tle don - key, lit - tle don - key, on the dust - y road,  
got to keep on plod-ding on - wards, with your pre - cious load.  
Ring out those bells to - night, Beth - le - hem, Beth - le - hem.  
Fol - low that star to - night, Beth - le - hem, Beth - le - hem.  
Don't give up now, lit - tle don - key, Beth - le - hem's in sight.

Sermon

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Hymn of the Day

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

the Magnificat

The Annunciation  
Luke 1:26-38

**Cantors:**

An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth,  
to a woman whose name was Mary.

The angel said to her, "Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you.

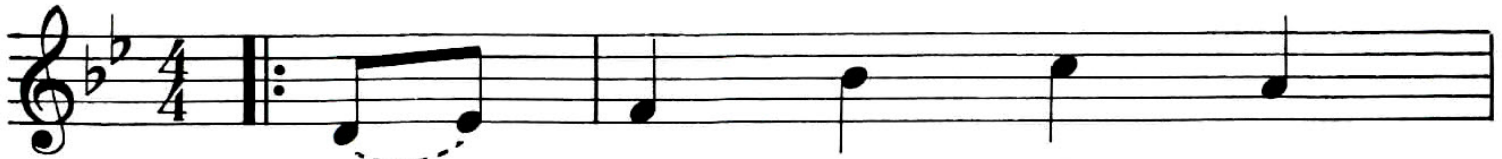
You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus,  
the Chosen One of God Most High."

And Mary said, "I am the servant of my God, I live to do His will.



# The Magnificat

Luke 1:46-55



1.3. My — soul pro - claims your  
2. You have cast the might - y



great-ness, O God, and my spir - it re - joic - es in  
down from their thrones, and up lift - ed the hum - ble of



you,  
heart, You have looked with love on your  
You have filled the hun - gry with



ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.  
won-drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.



Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One,  
Great and might - y are you, O Faith - ful One,



strong is your kind - ness ev - er - more.  
strong is your jus - tice strong your love,



How you fa - vor the weak — and low - ly one,  
 As you prom - ised to Sar - ah — and A - bra - ham,  
 hum - bling the proud of heart.  
 kind - ness for - ev - er - more.

## 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 The People

*You may be Seated*

WA As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us,  
let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.



Lead me, guide me, a - long the way;  
for if you lead me, I can - not stray.  
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

*(each prayer petition ends with)*

WA: God of Joy

**All:** *You hear our prayer.*

## Passing of the Joy

P Jesus Christ become Joy with you.

**All** And also with you.

## Offertory

*Tune: Away in a Manger*

♪ ♪ Praise God for these gifts that we offer today ♪ ♪  
and bless them for good in the world, this we pray.  
Praise Jesus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay,  
the Spirit, our Keeper, our Guide on the Way.

## Offertory Prayer

*P* Let us pray,  
God of our waiting and watching,

**All we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives  
to the service of all your people.**

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

## The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

*P* The God of Hope be with you

**All And also with you.**

*P* Lift up your hearts.

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

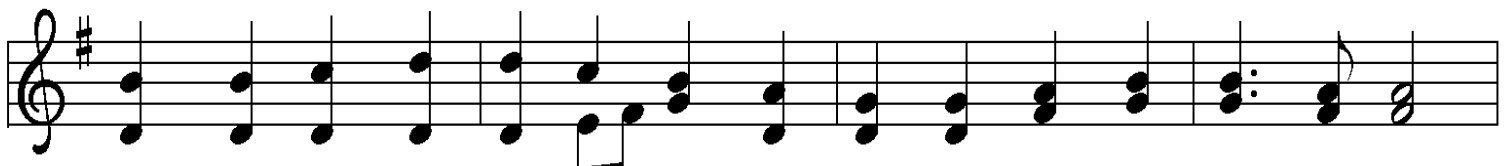
*P* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

*P* It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.  
Especially on this road to Bethlehem, we remember  
that like the first breath of all things born,  
you formed each of us in your image  
and breathed into us the breath of life.

May we always be certain that in every journey, you guide and protect us  
every step of the way just as you did with our spiritual ancestors.

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



1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.

**WA Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ...  
...the time had come when you would save your people.**

*P* Just as Bethlehem offered a warm place to lay his infant head,  
As an adult he offered healing, wholeness, and hospitality to all.  
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection,  
You gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery  
to sin and death, and made a new covenant  
with us by water and the Spirit.

**♪ ♪ Always giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest, ♪ ♪  
Well-spring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Loving Father, Christ our brother, let Your light upon us shine;  
Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.**

*P* On the night in which he gave himself up for us,  
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,  
gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in 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 which is shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

***All* Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

*P* Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here and wherever we are on our journeys of life.

Pour out your Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the sustenance of Christ’s presence on the way.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world. Through your Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

***All* Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Please stand in body or spirit.

*P* God in Community, Holy and One,  
we lift our prayers to you, saying ...

*All* **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* Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.  
Come!

**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

## I Wonder as I Wander



1 I won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky, how  
2 When Mar - y birthed . . . Je - sus, all in a cow's stall, came  
3 If Je - sus had . . . want - ed for an - y wee thing, a  
4 I won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky, how

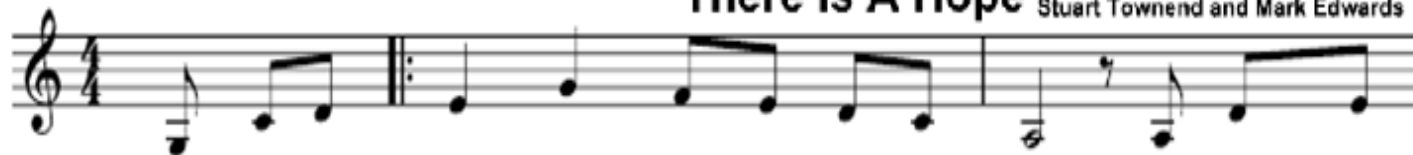


Je - sus the Sav - ior did come for to die for poor ord'-n'ry peo - ple like  
wise men and farm - ers and shep - herds and all, and high from the heav - ens a  
star in the sky or a bird on the wing, or all of God's an - gels in  
Je - sus the Sav - ior did come for to die for poor ord'-n'ry peo - ple like



you and like I. I won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky.  
star's light did fall; the prom - ise of the a - ges it then did re - call.  
heav'n for to sing, he sure - ly could have had it, 'cause he was the king.  
you and like I. I won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky.

## There Is A Hope Words and Music by Stuart Townend and Mark Edwards



1 There is a hope that burns with - in my heart, that gives me  
(2. There is a) hope that lifts my wea - ry head; A con - so -  
(3. There is a) hope that stands the test of time, that lifts my



strength for ev - 'ry pass - ing day; A glimpse of glo - ry now re - vealed in  
la - tion, strong a - gainst de - spair— that when the world has plunged me in its  
eyes be - yond the beck - 'ning grave to see the match - less beau - ty of a





mea - ger part, yet drives all doubt a - way. I stand in Christ, with  
 deep - est pit, I find the Sav - ior there. Through pres - ent suf - frings,  
 day di - vine, when I be - hold His face. When suf - frings cease, and



sins for - giv'n and Christ in me, the hope of heav'n. My  
 fu - ture's fear, He whis - pers cour - age in my ear; For  
 sor - rows die, and ev - 'ry long - ing sat - is - fied; Then



high - est call - ing, and my deep - est joy, to make His will my  
 I am safe in ev - er - last - ing arms, and they will lead me  
 joy un - speak - a - ble will flood my soul, for I am tru - ly



home. 2 There is a home.  
 3 There is a home.

## Post Communion Blessing and Prayer

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

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

**All** Amen

*P* Holy God,

**All** we have received from your table more than we could ever ask.  
 As you have nourished us in this meal,  
 now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.  
 In your name we pray. Amen

[You may be Seated](#)

# Stewardship of Life & Ministry Announcements

## Benediction

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

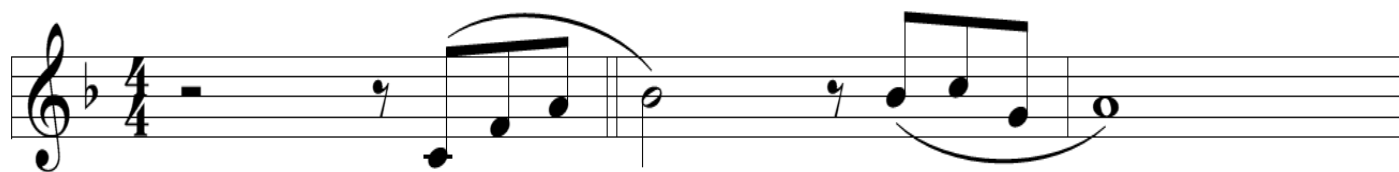
*P* And now as you go forth from this place,  
know that all the places you encounter in the world  
will contain signs and markers of God's work among us.

So keep your senses alert, your perception wide,  
and your heart open to new discoveries along the way.

*All* Amen.

## Sending Song

*♪ ♪ O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray, ♪ ♪  
cast out our fear, and draw us near; be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.*



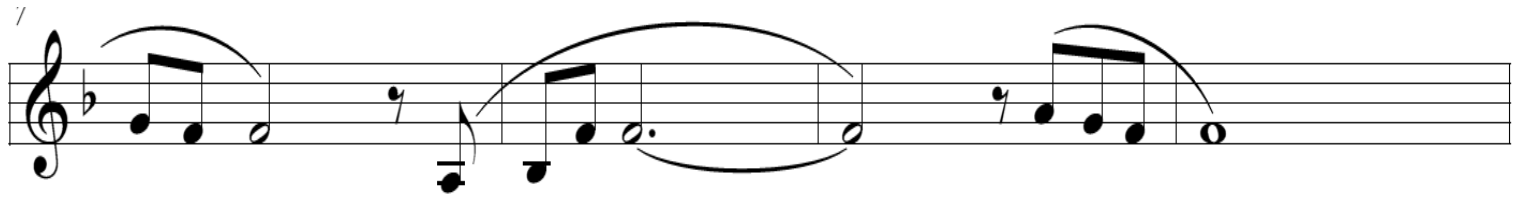
We're on our way.

We're on our way.



Dream of the day when joy holds sway.

With all the earth, in



## Dismissal

**WA** Go out with Peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel!

**All** Thanks be to God!

HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION:  
WHAT IF MARY HADN'T  
BELIEVED GABRIEL'S  
MESSAGE?



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG



LUKE 1:26-38

© WETZSTEIN<sup>3</sup> 17.12.20

Reading for next Sunday,  
December 22<sup>nd</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**Reading:**

Romans 13: 8-11

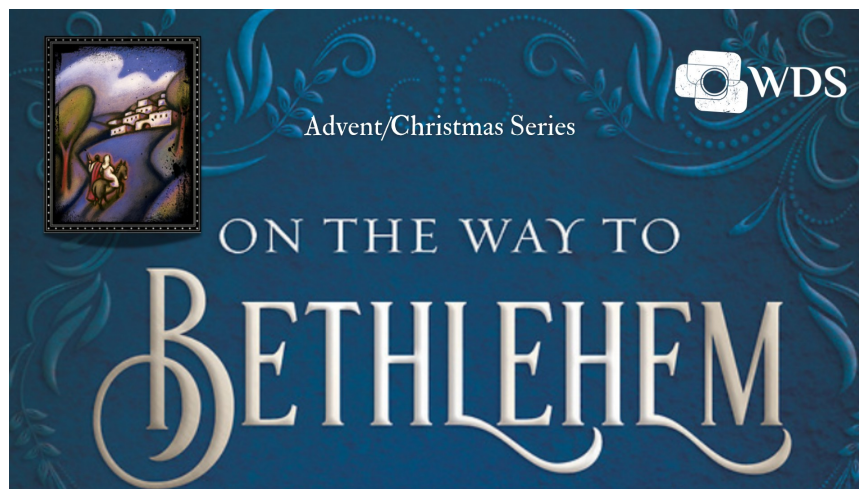
**Gospel:**

Luke 2: 1-14

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