

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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ADVENT 2023
(December 3-December 24, 2023)
9:30 a.m. Worship



A SACRED BIRTHING

The German theologian and mystic Meister Eckhardt [c.1260 - c.1328] provides the insight below as we journey into the season of Advent.

"We are celebrating the feast of the Eternal Birth which God the Father has borne and never ceases to birth within all eternity...But if this birth does not take place in me, what avails it? Everything lies in this: that it should take place in me."

WE GATHER

As we begin the Advent services we each ponder how the birthways of the sacred might manifest in us this year.

PRELUDE

see insert

WELCOME

During the Responsive Reading, we light another candle on the advent wreath and the candles that fill the room as we slowly move through the unfolding story of Jesus' birth. Each candle guides us closer and closer to the manger, closer and closer to the child born within us all.

Congregational parts are in **Bold**

The story begins with a miraculous conception...

of an idea, of a movement, of a baby...

It all starts in a silent and hidden place, it starts small, smaller than human sense can perceive!

yet we know something has begun, something begun again in us.

Within the womb, it's the slow growth, the slow development...

of an idea, of a movement, of a baby...

It all quickens the blood, sharpens the mind, wakes the soul!

we will never be the same, we can feel the changes within
what will become of all of this?

What will become of us who embrace this birth?

The journey feels long. It is the carrying...

of an idea, of a movement, of a baby...

sometimes a burden, sometimes joy, always full of anticipation!

we yearn for completion, we feel the strain that feels like it will never end.

no longer possible to hold this story within, we must unleash the wonder

Allow it a voice in our world

to discover its destiny, both then and now

Come, Emmanuel, Come, be born in us today.

Please stand as you are able

GATHERING SONG

see insert

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

The assembly is seated

WE HEAR THE WORD

FIRST READING

see insert

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

We joyfully anticipate the coming of the Savior by joining the angels in singing:

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -

- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. The first system is a refrain, with the lyrics 'Glo - ri - a'. The second system has the lyrics 'in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -'. The third system has the lyrics '- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.'. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands, often with arpeggiated figures.

GOSPEL

see insert

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

see insert

SERMON

WE RESPOND IN FAITH

Please stand as you are able

AN ADVENT CREED

As we each long to be the birthing place of one born long ago, we share in an advent creed.

**I believe in this holy child
in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.
I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town;
Whose spirit still brings its music to people all over the world,
I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room,
I trust in the one whom the rulers of the earth ignored
whose life was among common people,
who proclaimed that God forever births an invincible love within our world
Within my heart and soul
A child soon born in Bethlehem, for me and for the world.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

after each petition,

Stir up your power, O God;
Stir up your power and come.

THE PEACE

The peace of the coming and present Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Let us share the peace with each other.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

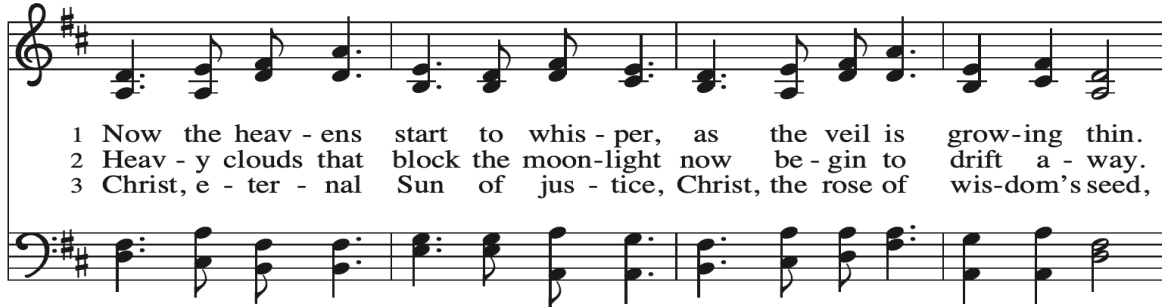
ANTHEM

see insert

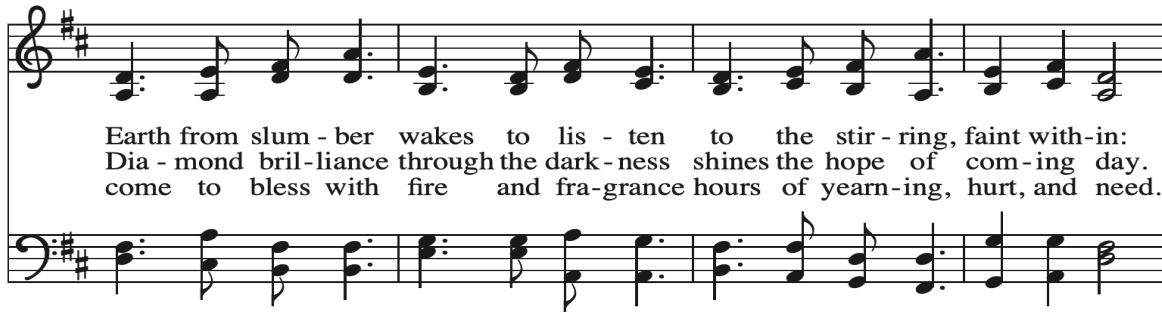
WE SHARE THE MEAL

PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION

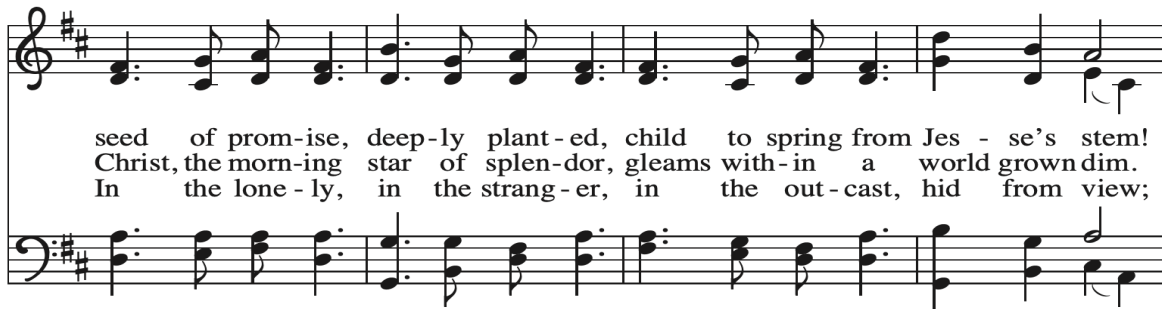
Now the Heavens Start to Whisper



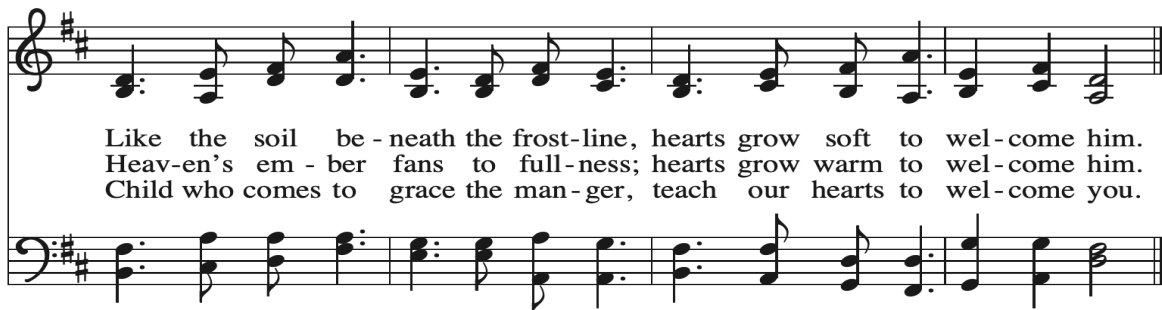
1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:
Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.
come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.
In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953
Music: SUO GÂN, Welsh melody; arr. hymnal version
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Arr. © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

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THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those,
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WE ARE SENT OUT TO SERVE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able

SENDING SONG

see insert

SENDING WORDS

Go from this place bearing Christ within you. May the Wonder you bear
be shown in gentle humility.

May the Peace you bear
be seen in healed relationships.

May the Messiah you bear
be heard in gracious and empowering words.

May the Light you bear
illuminate loving actions in our world.

Go in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

see insert

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WHO WE ARE

We are a community grounded in the life and teachings of Jesus.

- We embrace an open approach to every spiritual journey.
- We ask questions together and value every voice.
- We strive for justice through service to the world.

We seek to be transformed by the path we walk together.

WE ARE A RECONCILING IN CHRIST CONGREGATION

We are a community embraced by the mystery of God's love for all creation.

We look for the Christ shining in every race, every child and family shape, every sexual orientation and gender identity, every physical and mental ability, every economic status, and every faith perspective. Within this dynamic community, we foster meaningful connections and experiences as we live into faith and face the issues of our time.

Together, we strive to live with loving hearts, open minds, and hands extended to all.

"... for all of you are one in Christ." – Gal. 3:2