

Prelude
Welcome & Announcements

Gathering Litany
L: Lift up your hearts, people of God,
C: **for the Lord has looked favorably upon us and is sending us his beloved son.**
L: God is raising up for us a mighty Savior in the house of his servant David.
C: **God is showing the mercy promised to our ancestors.**
L: God has remembered his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our ancestors
Abraham and Sarah, that we might serve him without fear.
C: **We go before the Lord, following John the Baptist, to prepare the way of the Lord.**
L: So, together let us worship God,
C: **and listen to the voice crying out in the wilderness.**

Gathering Carol “Prepare the Royal Highway” **#264**

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.** God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God’s covenant is eternal, and God’s blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Advent Carol “People, Look East” **#248**

Second Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

Advent Carol “O Little Town of Bethlehem” **#279**

Third Reading: Luke 1:5-17

Advent Carol “All Earth Is Hopeful” **#266**

Fourth Reading: Luke 1:18-25

Advent Carol “Blessed Be the God of Israel” **#250**

Fifth Reading: Luke 1:26-38

Advent Carol “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came” **#265**

Sixth Reading: Luke 1:39-55

Advent Carol “My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness” **#251**

Seventh Reading: Luke 1:57-67, 76-80

Advent Carol “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” **#249**

Advent Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all. We believe in Jesus the Christ—God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—who emerges as the herald of hope, God's laughter in the face of despair. Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives, and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ, and empowers us to confront and transform all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful. We believe in the coming reign of God. Announced by the Baptist, it has drawn near to us in Jesus, and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven, when all who have passed through the world's deep sorrow will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness, and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire. For the coming of that day on this day, we work and pray: Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

Sharing of the Peace
Offering “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” **Pastor Bryant (organ) & Barb (harp)**
Offering Prayer

L: Most High God,
C: **for you nothing is impossible. Through a young woman in a small town you gave birth to your realm of endless glory. By your Holy Spirit, fill us with new life and hope and overshadow us with your power and grace so that we, like Mary, might be your servants, bearing witness to the promise of your Word; through Jesus Christ, who is coming to reign. Amen.**

Prayers of the People Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord’s Prayer Our Father in heaven... **page 154**