



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

HOLY COMMUNION

Third Sunday of Advent
December 15, 2024

You are welcome here! As a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the ELCA, we believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, shared unconditionally and without regard to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic or family status, age, physical or mental abilities, outward appearance, or religious affiliation. We seek racial equality and justice. In this way, we live into the truth written in Ephesians (2:14)—that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Prelude

Welcome

Joys & Concerns

**** Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
alive in the world,
reviving creation,
arriving soon.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,
we confess that we have sinned.
We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.
We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have turned away from our neighbors.
We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,
we confess that we have sinned.
We plead: come to us.
Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth:
it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,
in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
receive the grace and forgiveness of God
through ☩ Christ Jesus,
whose day draws near.
Amen.

** Gathering Hymn

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

ELW 242



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - 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 -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
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
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen

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** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** Lighting the Advent Wreath

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
strengthen our hearts
as we await the Lord's coming in glory.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may serve our neighbors in need.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

Light three candles as we sing the advent hymn.

** Advent Hymn

We Are Waiting for Jesus

ACS 905



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957
Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen
Text and music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

**** Prayer of the Day**

Assisting Minister leads the prayer of the day and the assembly responds: Amen.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalmody

Isaiah 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust and will not be afraid,
for the Lord is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.”

³ **With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.**

⁴ And you will say on that day:

“Give thanks to the Lord;
call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations;
proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ **Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.**

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

Second Reading

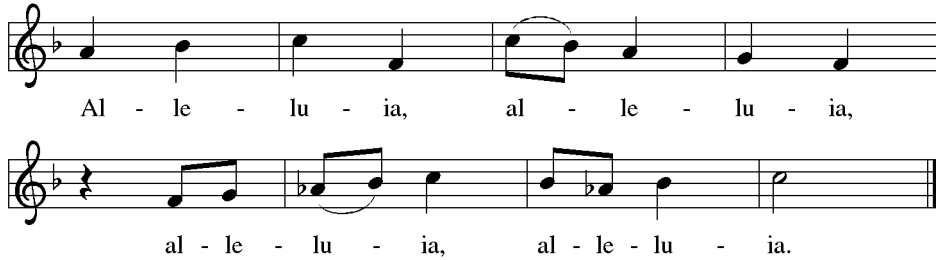
Philippians 4:4-7

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

**** Gospel Acclamation**



**** Gospel**

Luke 3:1-3,7-18

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.
The Gospel of the Lord.

Glory to you O Lord.
Praise to you O Christ.

**** Gospel Acclamation**

Please see gospel acclamation above.

Sermon

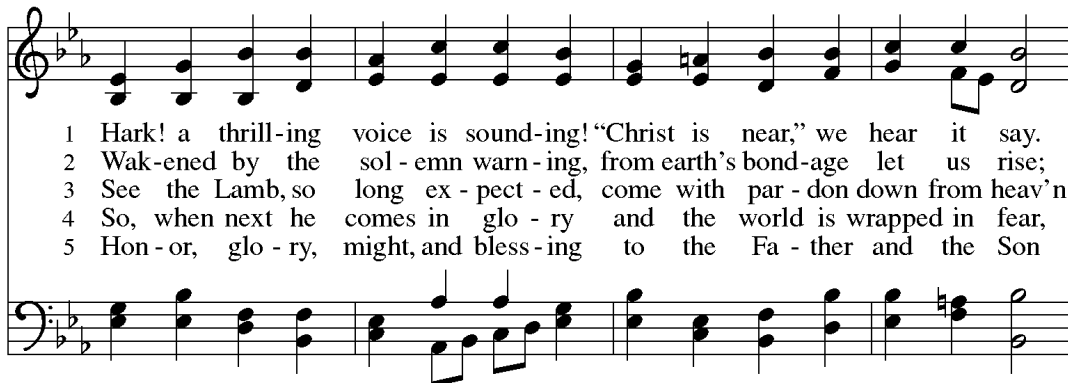
The Rev. Susan Loney

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

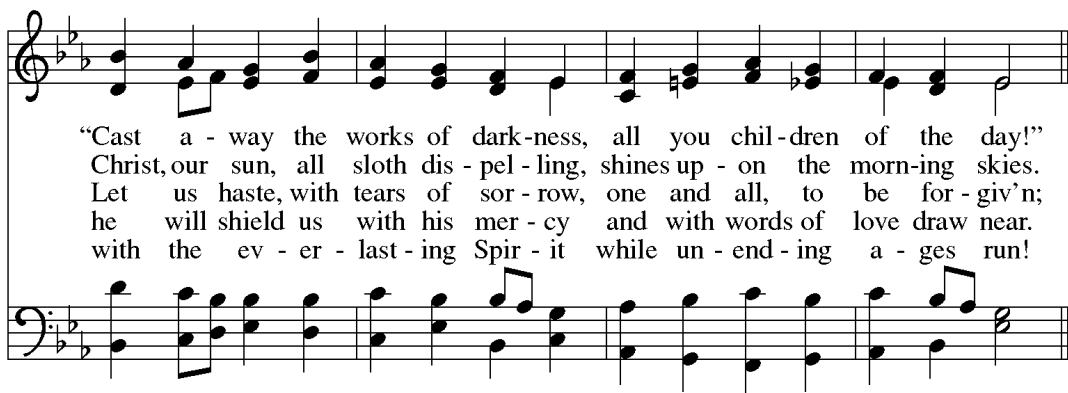
** Hymn of the Day

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding

ELW 246



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.
2 Wak-ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don down from heav'n.
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son



"Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all, to be for - giv'n;
he will shield us with his mer - cy and with words of love draw near.
with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

** Prayers of the People

Each portion of the prayer ends with:

Response: Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Meal

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Offering

Each week we give thanks to God for what God has given us: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. A financial gift to St Stephen's supports the work of the congregation in our community.

** Offering Song

He Came Down

ELW 253

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 7/8 time signature. It contains a melody with eighth and quarter notes, including a triplet of eighth notes. The bass staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 7/8 time signature. It contains a bass line with eighth and quarter notes, including a triplet of eighth notes.

- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

The second system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff continues the melody from the first system, ending with a quarter note. The bass staff continues the bass line from the first system, ending with a quarter note. Both staves include triplet markings over eighth notes.

The third system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff continues the melody, ending with a quarter note. The bass staff continues the bass line, ending with a quarter note. Both staves include triplet markings over eighth notes.

he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

The fourth system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff continues the melody, ending with a quarter note. The bass staff continues the bass line, ending with a quarter note. Both staves include triplet markings over eighth notes.

Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

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** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

** Offering Prayer

Assisting Minister leads the offering prayer and the assembly responds: Amen.

** Dialogue

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

And also with you.

We lift them to the Lord.

**It is right to give our thanks and
praise.**

** Preface

** Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,



heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the



high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

**** Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy one, the beginning and the end,...let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Amen.

With this bread and cup

we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever.

Amen.

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** 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.

Invitation to Communion

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you



take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

Communion

Holy Communion is a free gift of God's grace and love. Everyone is welcome to share in this meal. Come forward, take an empty cup from the table, then kneel or stand along the Communion rail. If you require GF wafers, please tell the minister. Our chalices contain red wine and amber-colored juice. As you return to your seat, place your used cup in the receptacle at the end of the first row of pews. If you wish to receive words of blessing, simply tell the minister.

Communion Hymn

We Come Now to Your Table

ACS 970



We come now to your ta - ble, Lord, you are the Liv - ing Bread.



We come now to your ta - ble, Lord, let ev - 'ry soul be fed.



You are the Liv - ing Bread, let ev - 'ry soul be fed:

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

and now may ev - 'ry soul be fed with Liv - ing Bread.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature.

Text: Caribbean Conference of Churches Jamaica workshop
 Music: LIVING BREAD, St. Vincent traditional, adapt.; arr. Patrick Prescod, 1932–2013
 Text and music © Caribbean Conference of Churches

Communion Blessing

** Post Communion Prayer

Together, let us pray.

Generous God,

we thank you for the gift of life,
 for the bread of salvation.

We thank you for coming among us,
 for leading us into peace.

We thank you for showering us with mercy,
 for sending us into the world.

Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
 as we feed the hungry in your name.

Amen.

Announcements

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

Sending

We are sent into the world to serve.

** Blessing

** Sending Hymn

There's a Voice in the Wilderness

ELW 255



1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a
2 O Je - ru - sa - lem, her - ald good tid - ings, as -
3 But the word of our Sav - ior is faith - ful, the



call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a
cend to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late
arm of our God is strong, who stands in the midst of the



high - way, a high - way for our God!
peo - ple the com - ing of their king.
na - tions and soon will right the wrong.



The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the
Like flow'rs of the field we per - ish, like
Lord, feed your flock like a shep - herd, the



loft - y hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed
grass our works de - cay; the pow'r and the pomp of
lambs so gent - ly hold; in pas - tures of peace now

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.



plac - es where God, our God, may go!
na - tions shall pass like a dream a - way.
lead them, and bring them to your fold.

Text: James Lewis Milligan, 1876-1961, alt.
Music: ASCENSION, Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1904-1988
Music © Estate of Eldred Bancroft. B. Burrows, Executor.

**** Dismissal**

Go in peace,
To Love, To Invite, To Serve.
Prepare the way!
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

*Flowers are given by Bob & Sue Linderman
in loving memory of Sue's mother, Janet Rowell.*

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Participants in Today's Service

Pastor:

The Rev. Susan Loney
pastor@ststeph.org

Music Director:

Claudio Espejo

Assisting Minister/Lector:

William Sperati

Altar Guild:

Karleen Strayer

Camera:

Kevin Loney

Usher:

John Gordon

Ministers:

The people of St. Stephen's

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Text the word "welcome" to 855-965-5200 to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

May God go with you today and every day.

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