



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

HOLY COMMUNION

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 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**

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

ELW 265

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

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

with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said,
 in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
 thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:

most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924
 Music: Basque carol; arr. C. Edgar Pettman, 1865–1943, and John Wickham
 Arr. © 1955, 1983 E.H. Freeman, Ltd, admin. Glenwood Music Corp.

GABRIEL'S MESSAGE
 10 10 12 10

** 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 wheel of time
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
open our eyes to see your presence
in the lowly ones of this earth.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may sing of your advent among us
in the Word made flesh.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

Light four 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

Micah 5:2-5a

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Luke 1:46b-55 – *Canticle of the Turning*

ELW 723



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .
3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a
4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.
liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the
This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the

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



weak-ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



Refrain
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat
 Music: STAR OF COUNTY DOWN, Irish traditional
 Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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Second Reading

Hebrews 10:5-7

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

** Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

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

**** Gospel**

Luke 1:39-45

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you O Lord.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

**** Gospel Acclamation**

Please see gospel acclamation on page 6.

Sermon

The Rev. Susan Loney

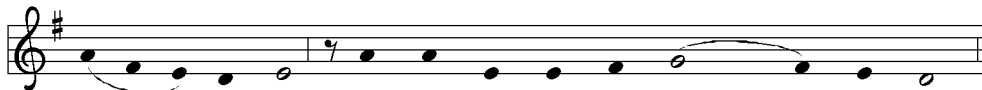
**** Hymn of the Day**

O Come, O Come, Emmmanuel verses 1, 3, 5, 7

ELW 257



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. **Re-joice! Re-joice!**
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

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

**** Offering Song**
He Came Down

ELW 253

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;

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;

Text: Cameroon traditional

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

Arr. © 1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent, 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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**** Offering Prayer**

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

**** Dialogue**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

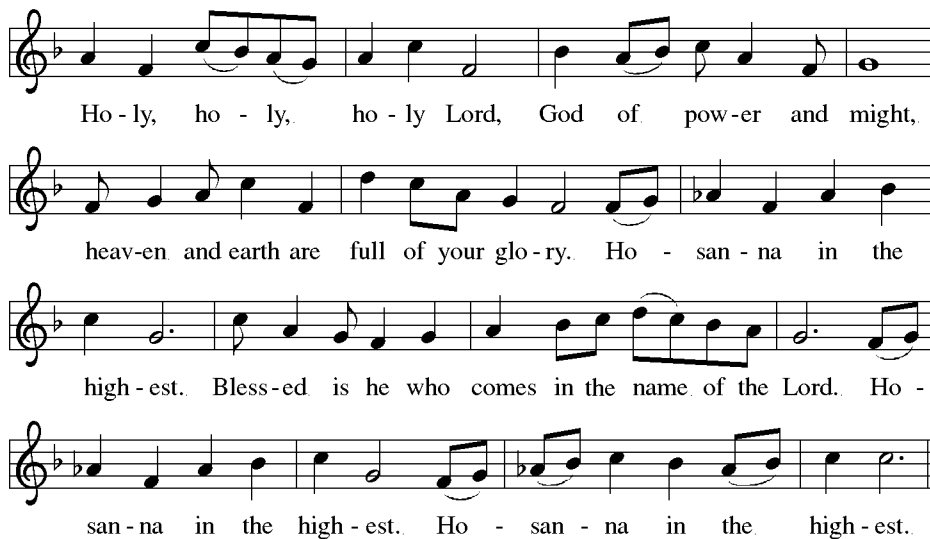
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

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

**** 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.

**** 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.

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

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.

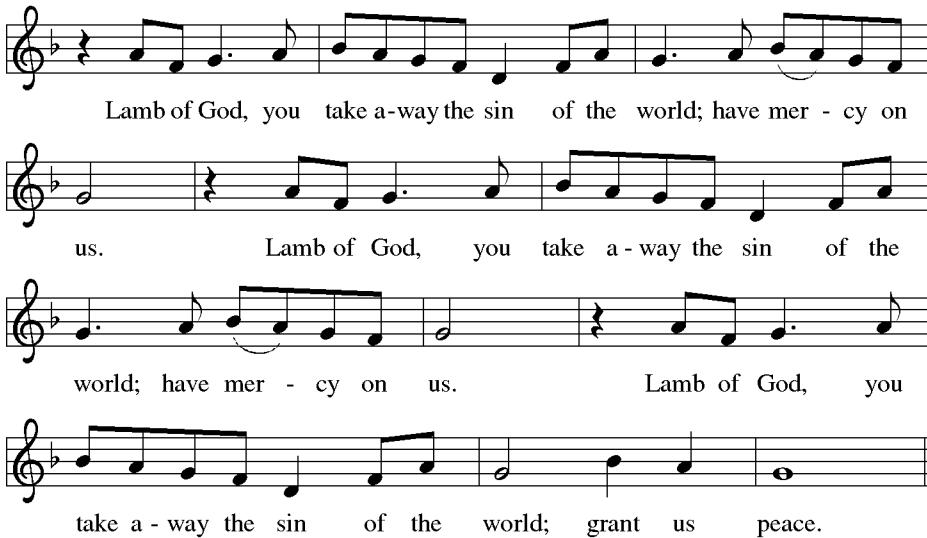
**** Lord's Prayer**

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

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

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.

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.

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



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:



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

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

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

** 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

Sending

We are sent into the world to serve.

** Blessing

** Sending Hymn

Soon and Very Soon

ELW 439

1 **Soon** and ver - y soon
2 No more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,
3 No more dy - in' there,
4 **Soon** and ver - y soon

soon and ver - y soon
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,
no more dy - in' there,
soon and ver - y soon

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

soon and ver - y soon
 no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King.
 no more dy - in' there,
 soon and ver - y soon

Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!

Text: Andraé Crouch, b. 1945
 Music: Andraé Crouch
 Text and music © 1976 Bud John Songs, Inc./Crouch Music, admin. EMI Christian Music Publishing

VERY SOON
 12 12 12 and refrain

** Dismissal

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

Postlude

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

Worship Leaders

Pastor:

The Rev. Susan Loney
pastor@ststeph.org

Music Director:

Claudio Espejo

Assisting Minister/Lector:

Ann Dransfield

Altar Guild:

Karleen Strayer

Usher:

Camera:

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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