

Mid-Week Advent Service
December 7, 2022
Angels: The Ultimate Divine Messengers of Hope

An Angel of the Lord Brings a Message of Hope in the Midst of Fear of the Unknown

As We Gather - "An angel of the Lord appeared to [Joseph] in a dream" (Matthew 1:20a). Joseph was deeply troubled. Mary was pregnant. He considered quietly divorcing her. Then came the angel, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20b–21). Joseph would still face unknowns, just as we all face unknowns. Yet he faced those unknowns filled with hope, because he trusted the word of God that came to him from the angel. So during this Advent season, we join Joseph in facing all of our unknowns with hope, trusting the Word of God that has come to us from the apostles, that Jesus is our precious ransom, only hope for sinful mortals, who gave His life and was raised, and who is coming again to restore creation to its original beauty and goodness.

SERVICE OF LIGHT

Opening Sentences

P Jesus Christ is the light of the world,

C **the light no darkness can overcome.**

P By the Holy Spirit we cry out with the whole Church,

C **"Prepare the way of the Lord."**

P All who wait for Jesus to return pray,

C **Come, Lord Jesus, come.**

Hymn:**O Light Whose Splendor**

LSB 891

1 O Light whose splendor thrills and gladdens
 2 As twilight hovers near at sunset,
 3 In all life's brilliant time-less moments,
 With radiance brighter than the sun,
 And lamps are lit, and children nod,
 Let faithful voices sing Your praise,
 Pure gleam of God's unending glory,
 In evening hymns we lift our voices
 O Son of God, our Life-giver,
 O Jesus, blest Anointed One;
 To Father, Spirit, Son: one God.
 Whose glory lights endless days.

Text: Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1944 Tune: Clement C. Scholefield, 1839-1904 Text: © 1989 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000852 Tune: Public domain

Thanksgiving for Light

LSB, p. 245

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led Your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ; may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for You are merciful, and You love Your whole creation and we, Your creatures, glorify You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

PSALMODY**Psalm**

Psalm 141 (LSB, p. 245)

C Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
 the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

P O Lord, I call to You; come to me quickly;
hear my voice when I cry to You.

C **Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

P Set a watch before my mouth, O Lord,
and guard the door of my lips.
Let not my heart incline to any evil thing;
let me not be occupied in wickedness with evildoers.
But my eyes are turned to You, O God;
in You I take refuge.
Strip me not of my life.

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

Prayer

LSB, p. 247

P Let us pray.
Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before You, O Lord, and let Your
loving-kindness descend on us that, with purified minds, we may sing Your praises
with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host and may glorify You forever.

C **Amen.**

Psalm

Psalm 49:7–8

⁷Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,
⁸for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice,

Prayer

P Let us pray.

O Lord, Your angel spoke to Joseph in a dream, declaring that the child to be born to Mary shall be named Jesus, who will save the people from their sins. Just as the angel said, so it happened. Jesus paid with His own life the ransom for our sins. Dwell in our hearts, O Lord, and never leave us. Bring blessing and salvation that forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.

C Amen.

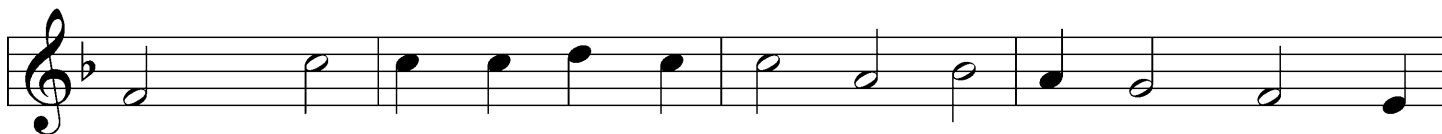
Hymn:

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

LSB 359



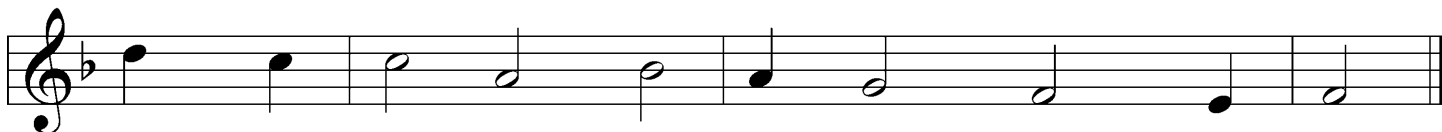
1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing From ten - der stem hath
2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, The rose I have in
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der With sweet - ness fills the
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, Who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing As proph - ets long have
mind; With Mar - y we be - hold it, The vir - gin moth - er
air, Dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor The dark - ness ev - 'ry -
woe; O Sav - ior, King of glo - ry, Who dost our weak - ness



sung, It came, a flow - 'ret bright, A - mid the
kind. To show God's love a - right, She bore to
where. True man, yet ver - y God, From sin and
know: Bring us at length we pray To the bright



cold of win - ter, When half - spent was the night.
us a Sav - ior, When half - spent was the night.
death He saves us And light - ens ev - 'ry load.
courts of heav - en, And to the end - less day.

Text (sts. 1–2): tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, alt.; (sts. 1–2, 4): German, 16th cent.; (st. 3): Friedrich L. C. Layriz, 1808–59; (st. 3): tr. Harriet R. K. Spaeth, 1845–1925; (st. 4): tr. John C. Mattes, 1876–1948 Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1599, Köln Text and tune: Public domain

READINGS

Reading

Isaiah 7:10–17

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father’s house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria.”

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C **But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.**

Sermon

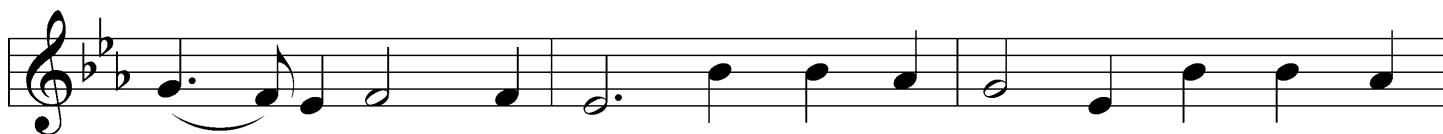
Hymn:

My Soul Rejoices

LSB 933



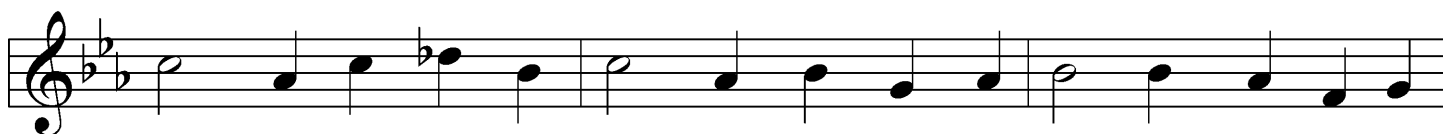
1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the
2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the



great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me
great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He




fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and
shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion




bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and
halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the



ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy
wealth - y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the



sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,
to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring



Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!
God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

Text: Stephen P. Starke, 1955

Tune: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, c. 1556–c. 1622

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PRAYER

Prayers

- P** As we wait for You, O Lord, we pray for peace among nations, peace across the factions in our nation, peace in our households, and peace that surpasses human understanding in our hearts. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Guide us, like Joseph, to listen to Your Word and to respond to it with faith and obedience, especially in the midst of the fear of the unknown. Humble us before You, that we may gratefully receive whatever You provide. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Fill Your whole Church with anticipation for that day when Christ will return and guide us to springs of living water and wipe away every tear from our eyes. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Thank You, Lord, for the blessings of this day now almost past. Forgive both what we have neglected to do and what we have done wrong. Hold our loved ones close to Your heart. Bless the work that we do as we use the talents and gifts You entrust to us. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**

- P** Heal the sick. Bless the dying. Uphold caregivers. Fill those who mourn with abundant hope through Christ's death and resurrection. Let all who suffer experience Your compassionate presence. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Accompany those who travel and those who work through the night to serve our community. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord for the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ. And let us rejoice in the fellowship of all the saints, entrusting ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** O God, as You called Joseph, so You call us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that Your hand is leading us and Your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- C** **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; 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.**

Benedicamus

- P** Let us bless the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

Benediction

- P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.
- C** **Amen.**

Closing Hymn:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

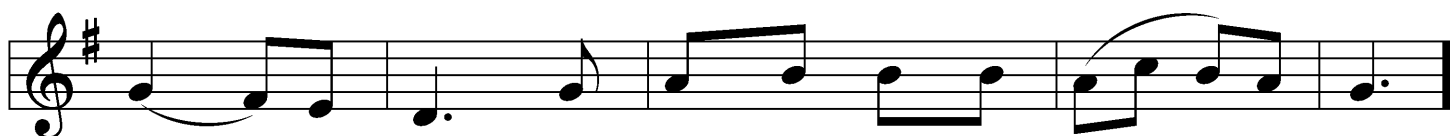
LSB 357 sts. 1, ref, 4-5



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from
5 O come, Thou Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen

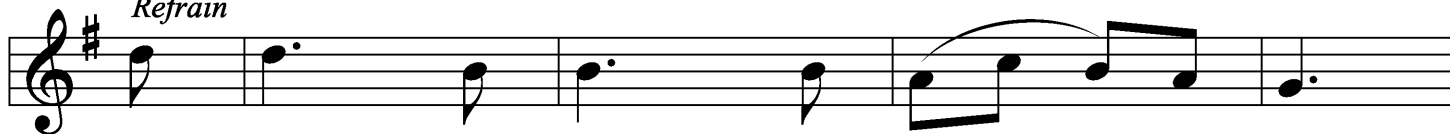


cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny That trust Thy might - y
wide our heav'n - ly home; Make safe the way that

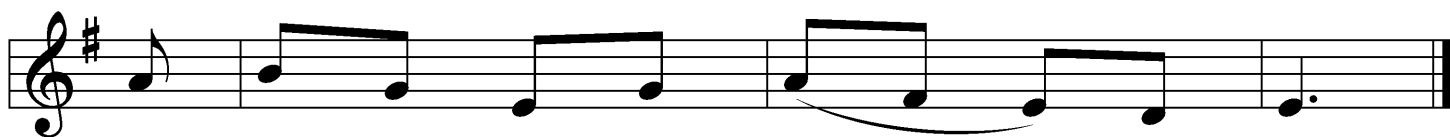


ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.
leads on high, And close the path to mis - er - y.

Refrain



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el



Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-66, alt. Tune: French, 15th cent. Text and tune: Public domain

Postlude:

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