

Mid-Week Advent Service
December 14, 2022
Angels: The Ultimate Divine Messengers of Hope

The Angel Gabriel Brings a Message of Hope in the Midst of the Seemingly Impossible

As We Gather - "The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:26–27). The message brought by Gabriel to Mary seemed impossible. She, a lowly young virgin, had been chosen by the Lord to give birth to the Son of God! "How will this be?" Mary exclaimed. "Nothing will be impossible with God," responded the angel (Luke 1:34, 37). Mary's response has become the primary model for all who would come to believe in Jesus thereafter: "Let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). In the moments of our lives when it seems impossible that we could be forgiven and we are without hope, God comes to us with words of forgiveness in Jesus. "Let it be to me according to Your word." When we are struck with grief in the face of death and hope seems distant, God comes to us with words of eternal life in Jesus. "Let it be to me according to Your word." Advent brings hope into the midst of life's most impossible situations.

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**

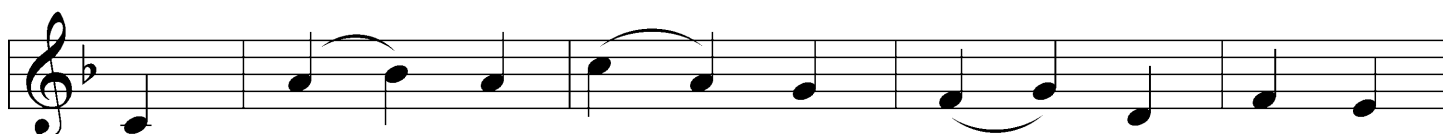
LSB 891



1 O Light whose splen - dor thrills and glad - dens
 2 As twi - light hov - ers near at sun - set,
 3 In all life's bril - liant time - less mo - ments,



With ra - diance bright - er than the sun,
 And lamps are lit, and chil - dren nod,
 Let faith - ful voic - es sing Your praise,



Pure gleam of God's un - end - ing glo - ry,
 In eve - ning hymns we lift our voic - es
 O Son of God, our Life - be - stow - er,



O Je - sus, blest A - noint - ed One;
 To Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son: one God.
 Whose glo - ry light - ens end - less 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 24:7–10

⁷Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

⁸Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!

⁹Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory!

Prayer

P Let us pray.

To You, O Lord, we lift up our heads to see the King of glory coming. Your angels declared His coming long ago in the age of the prophets. Your angel Gabriel, and a whole heavenly host, rejoiced and sang His glory at His birth. The two angels sitting in the empty tomb declared, "He is risen from the dead." The apostle John saw a vision with seven angels at Christ's coming again to wipe away every tear from our eyes. Lift up our heads and our hearts to see and rejoice: The King of glory comes!

C Amen.

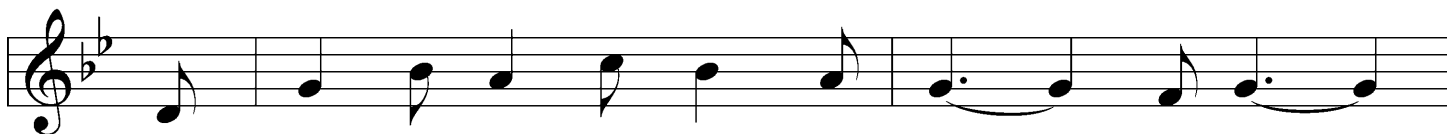
Hymn:

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

LSB 356



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



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

Reading

Isaiah 35

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Luke 1:26–38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a

son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

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 Text: © 1991 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000852 Tune: Public domain

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 Mary, to say “let it be to me as you have said,” even in the difficult circumstances of our lives. 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 Mary, 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.**

Hymn:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

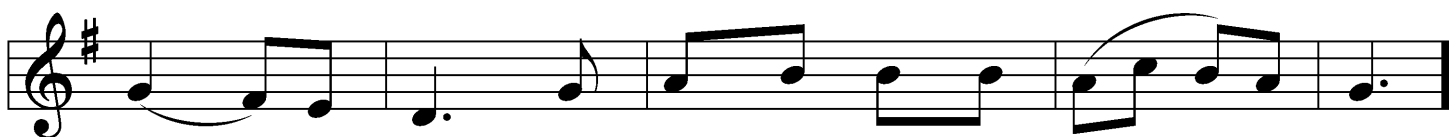
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1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
6 O come, Thou Day - spring from on high, And cheer us
7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind In one the

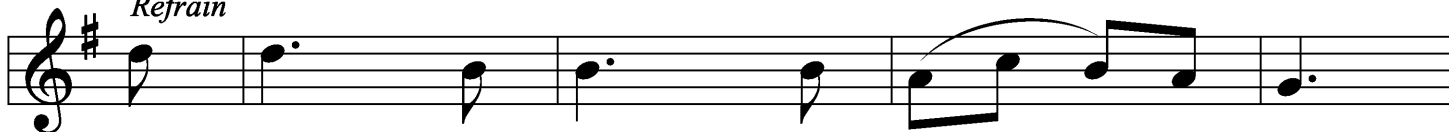


cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
by Thy draw - ing nigh; Dis - perse the gloom - y
hearts of all man - kind; Bid Thou our sad di -

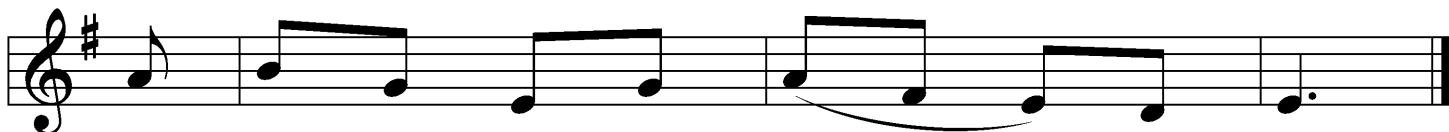


ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
clouds of night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
vi - sions cease, And be Thy - self our King of Peace.

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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