

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)

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Rev. Tim Bernard, Pastor
Brian Larson, Cantor

Assisting Minister: Dave Faller Lector: Marilyn Langenbach
Communion Distribution: Evy Okerstrom, Nancy Spengler

Third Sunday of Advent December 11, 2022 at 9:30am

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.



GATHERING

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come (hymn 263)

J. S. Bach

Welcome and Announcements

This is the day that the Lord has made. **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!** (Psalm 118:24)

Lighting the Advent Wreath & Watch for Messiah

Hymn 240



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of new beginnings, **we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have not welcomed others in your name. We have strayed from your paths. We have waged wars instead of making peace. We dishonor one another and do not respect your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.**

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on + Christ, and your sins have been forgiven. Rejoice in the way of the Lord. **Amen.**

Stand

Gathering Hymn 726

Light Dawns on a Weary World



1 Light dawns on a wea - ry world when eyes be - gin to
 2 Love grows in a wea - ry world when hun - gry hearts find
 3 Hope blooms in a wea - ry world when crea - tures, once for -



see all peo - ple's dig - ni - ty. Light dawns on a
 bread and chil - dren's dreams are fed. Love grows in a
 lorn, find wil - der - ness re - born. Hope blooms in a



wea - ry world: the prom - ised day of jus - tice comes.
 wea - ry world: the prom - ised feast of plen - ty comes.
 wea - ry world: the prom - ised green of E - den comes.

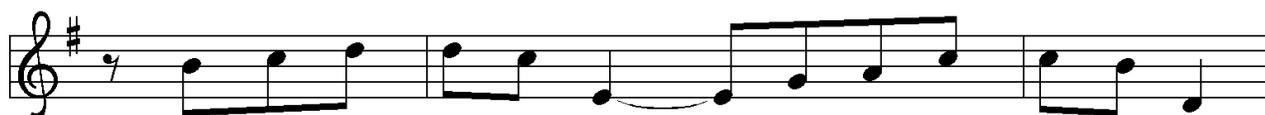
Refrain



The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;



the hills and moun - tains shall break forth with sing - ing!



We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,

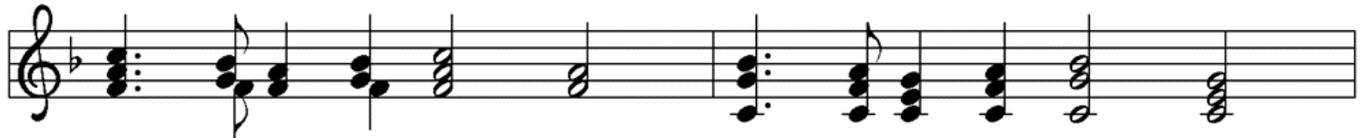


as all the world in won - der ech - oes sha - lom.

Apostolic Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Hymn 155 *Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.* Ukrainian Orthodox Kyrie



1, 3 Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
2 Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.



Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Chris - te e - le - i - son.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sit

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

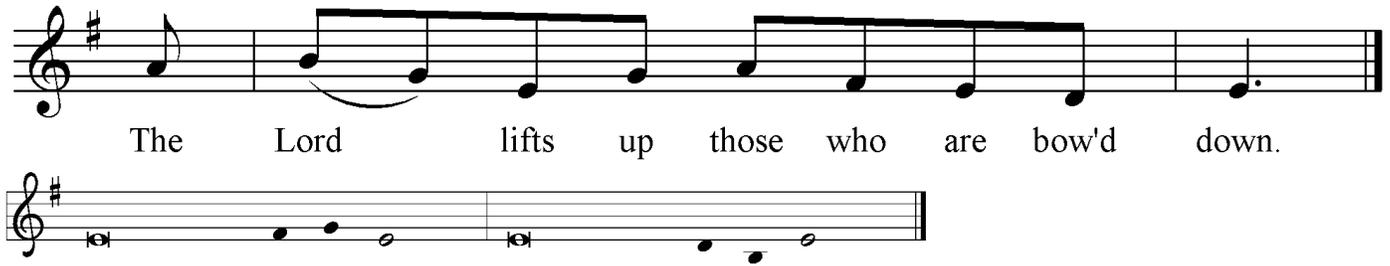
The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

A reading from Isaiah. 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 are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall 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 joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 146:5-10

Choir sings the refrain and all repeat it. Verses are sung cantor/**congregation**.



⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,
 whose hope is in the | LORD their God;
⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;**
who keeps promis- | es forever;
⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who hunger.
 The LORD sets the | captive free.
⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who | are bowed down;**
the LORD | loves the righteous.
⁹The LORD cares | for the stranger;
 the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of the wicked.
¹⁰**The LORD shall | reign forever,**
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah! Refrain

Second Reading: James 5:7-10

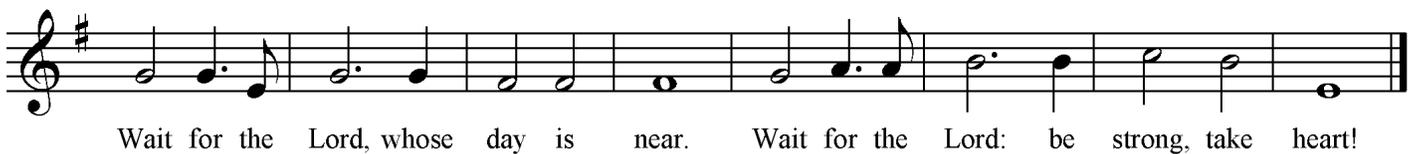
In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

A reading from James. ⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. **The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Gospel Acclamation: Wait for the Lord

Hymn 262



*I am sending my messen- | ger before you, * who will prepare your | way before you.*
 (Matt. 11:10)

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sit

Sermon

Stand

Hymn of the Day 266 (see next page)

All Earth is Hopeful

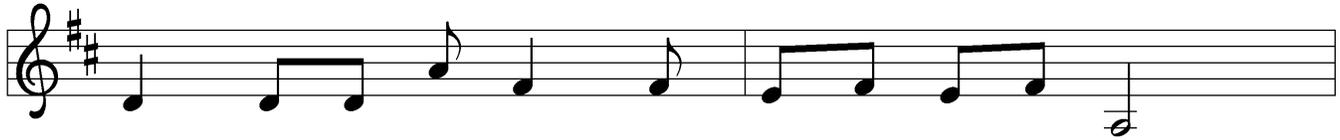
Apostles' Creed With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Stanza 1 in Spanish, then Stanzas 1-4 in English



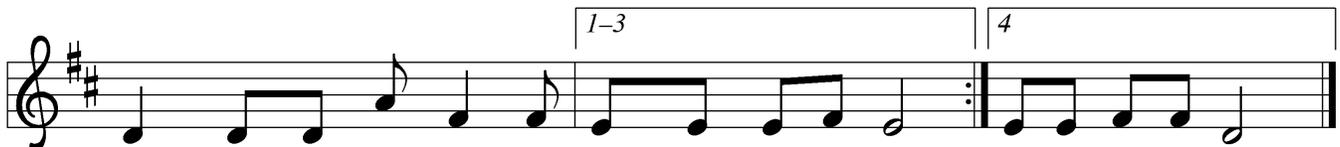
To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra, al Sal - va - dor
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
 3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Sit or kneel

Prayers of Intercession

A: As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, we rejoice in the gifts of your Spirit. As we journey down life's road together, equip the global church to magnify your love and peace in every land. We pray for the work of the Lutheran World Federation and ELCA Global Mission.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Abundant God, we rejoice in your creation. Revive lands we have squandered and depleted. Make gardens flourish in cities and neighborhoods. Cleanse polluted air and water so living things may breathe, drink, and praise you.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Righteous God, we rejoice in your justice. Help us to bring an end to racism and oppression. Deliver all who are unjustly imprisoned or persecuted. Reconcile nations and peoples in conflict, especially Ukraine. Help us pray for our enemies in our community, country, and world.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Healing God, we rejoice in your compassion. Comfort any in distress because of worry, illness, or loss, especially Kathy, Millie, Skip, Les, Barbara, Doris, Heather, Trudy, Kevin, John, Norman, Alice, Jim, Jeff, Norma, Nelson, Beth, Rick, and these people we now name aloud or in the sanctuary of our hearts... *(pause)*. Strengthen and protect health care workers, rescue teams, crisis counselors, and all who risk themselves to keep others safe.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Abiding God, we rejoice in your company. Give us calm and patient hearts as we gather with family and friends. Keep us mindful of those for whom this season is not happy. Console the grieving and surround them with loving support.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Faithful God, we rejoice with Mary, Mother of our Lord, and with all the saints, that your mercy endures for all generations. Look with favor on those who have died and lead us to joyfully sing of your everlasting promises.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P: God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. Gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children, no matter where they may be. In the name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Stand

Peace The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

Sit

Setting the Table + Presentation of Gifts

Choir

Be Strong in the Lord (Based on Isaiah 35:1-7)

J.H. Callander

All sing the Refrain

Be strong in the Lord! Your God has come to strength-en you for the
task of speak-ing the gos - pel to the world, a word with
pow - er to last in this world and the next.

*The blind will see and the deaf will hear, the lame will rise up and walk.
Come praise the Lord of eternal life. Rejoice in the glory of God. Refrain*

*The desert sands will bear new life, clear springs will water the sod.
Come praise the Lord of eternal life. Rejoice in the glory of God. Refrain*

*With glad-ness lift your voice and sing, the ransomed have been re-deemed.
Come praise the Lord of eternal life. Rejoice in the glory of God. Refrain*

Stand

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving (*sung*)

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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho-ly, ho-ly, Lord most ho-ly, God of pow'r and God of
 might: heav'n and earth re-veal your glo-ry. Hail, ho-san-na,
 Lord of light! Bless-ed be the com-ing Sav-ior.
 Hail, ho-san-na, Lord of light!

Eucharistic Prayer

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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.**

Lord's Prayer Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

Sit

Invitation to Communion

This is the Lord's Supper. It is by the Lord's invitation that all are invited to the meal where our Lord meets us in the bread and the wine - the means of grace.

Gluten-free wafers are available. Please ask your server.

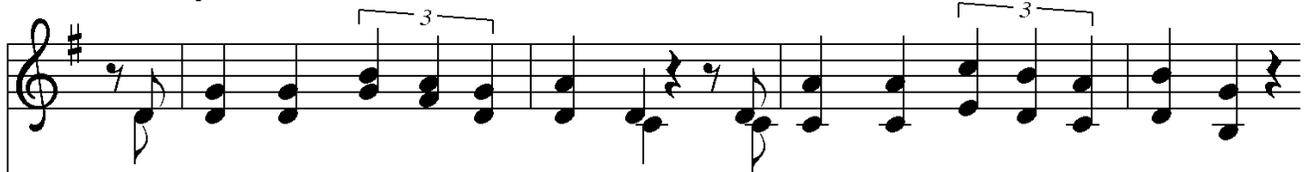
Advent Response

Using tune PICARDY

**King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood
Lord of lords in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful his own self for heav'nly food.**

Communion Hymn 253

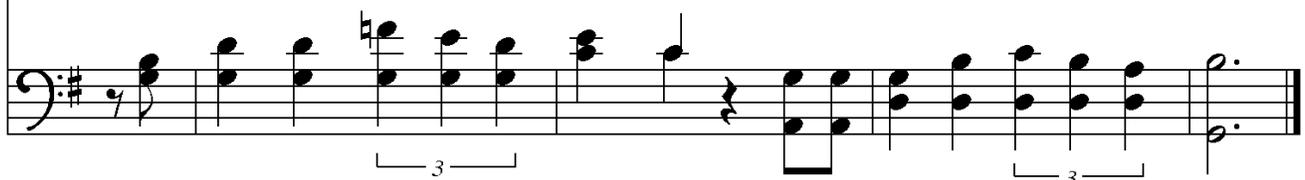
He Came Down



- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 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

Stand

Table Blessing and Communion Prayer

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.
Amen.

A: Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

SENDING

Blessing The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn 264 (see next page)

Prepare the Royal Highway

Dismissal Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

Voluntary

Savior of the Nations, Come

J.S. Bach

The comic strip *Agnus Day* is a lectionary-based comic strip. Each week, Rick (the one with the dark nose) and Ted discuss one of the assigned readings from the Common Lectionary. Their conversation drives at a point and sometimes sparks a laugh. *Agnus Day* is the creation of Pastor James Wetzstein, a Lutheran pastor who serves as a campus pastor at Valparaiso University. *Agnus Day* appears with the permission of www.agnusday.org.



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing; your own e - ter - nal king!
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain

Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Managing Expectations

Last week John the Baptist was full of religious fervor, certain in his convictions, and bold in his proclamation about the role of the coming Messiah: “Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Matthew 3:10).

But there was no fire. There was no chopping down of anything or anyone. Jesus had arrived and his ministry had begun, but he did *not* come bearing the ax or winnowing fork that John had predicted. Instead, he began healing the sick, casting out demons, and spending a lot of time with the very people many thought were part of the problem. John asks on behalf of his community, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” (Matt. 11:3).

John’s hope (and ours) is not in vain. But this Messiah’s redemption will not come in the way we expect. This Messiah is not a victor in a battle scene or a political coup. Instead, this Messiah is one who shows that greatness and strength are actually found in gentleness and service. It isn’t through fire that God saves the world; it is through God’s own sacrificial love. And the road to this love is not a victory parade, but the one that leads us humbly to a cleansing bath and a laden table.

To those who trust in wealth and power to set things right, what we do each Sunday must sound silly: gathering around old stories, singing and praying, sharing a little meal. How could any of this change *anything*? But for us wilderness wanderers, it is water in the desert. It is the very presence of God in our midst. Thanks be to God!

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