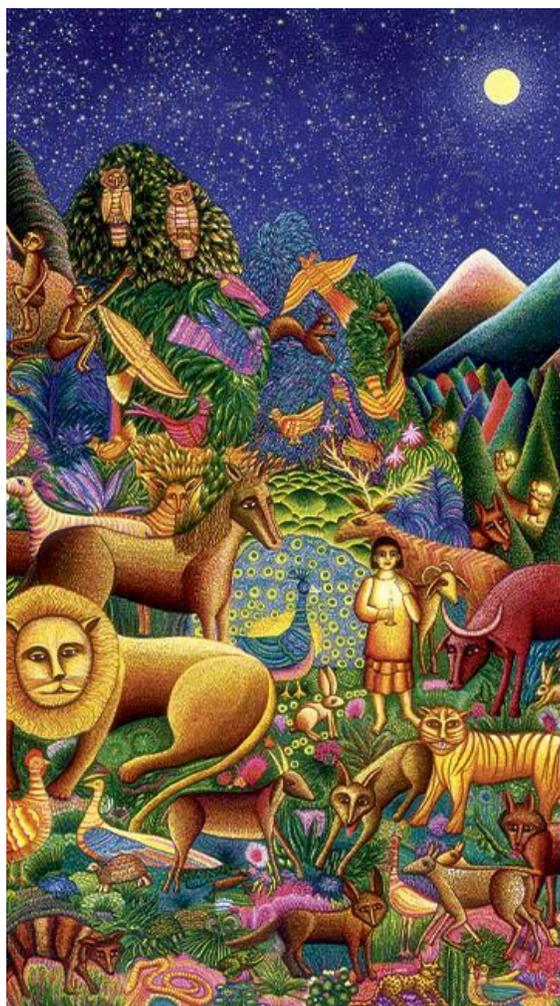


St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
SUNDAY December 7th, 2025



**A little
child
shall lead
them**

ISAIAH 11:6

WELCOME

To our Church Family

We're Glad You're Here.



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

We are so glad that you chose to worship with us today. If you are visiting with us for the first time, please visit our Welcome Center in the North Narthex. As our way of saying thank you, you will receive a St. Paul's Welcome Bag with a coffee cup and information about our church. You may also want to download our new St Paul's App and visit our website. Information on both is in the Welcome Bag.

For our young worshipers we have children's packets to play and color with during the service. These are on the white stand near the east entrance to our sanctuary.

You are Welcome at the table!

If you have been baptized and believe Christ is present in the Eucharist (Holy Communion), you are welcome to join us at the table. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers and return to your seats using the side aisles. If you do not wish to partake in the Sacrament but would like to receive a blessing, please just cross your hands over your chest when you come forward.

Grape juice and Gluten-free wafers are available on request. Grape Juice is in the colored glasses in the center of the communion tray. If you are not able to come forward and would like to receive communion, please inform an usher and the pastor will bring communion to you.

Flowers

Altar Flowers were given today by Jennifer & Craig Maurer in memory of Rev. & Mrs. F.D. Hax.

Throne Flowers were given by Becky & Jim Johnson in honor of Jen & Adam Johnson's anniversary and their anniversary.

Today's Worship Focus

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases, we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 11:1-10

From David's line, a ruler bringing justice and peace.

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace. (Ps. 72:7)

Romans 15:4-13

Live in harmony, welcoming one another.

Matthew 3:1-12

A voice cries: Prepare the way of the Lord.

Prelude: Joy To the World arr. Valerie Stepenson (1943-2023)
Handbell Choir

Second Week of Advent Prayer — Peace

Scripture

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." - [Luke 2:14](#)

Wreath Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You are the God who gives peace. This second week of [Advent](#) causes us to remember that because of Jesus we can experience a Christmas free from turmoil and chaos. Regardless of our circumstances or our situations, you offer us peace that passes understanding.

That first Christmas, when you sent your Son, you sent the one who is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Even the angels cried out, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." The angels knew your purpose. They know the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love that Christmas held. They recognized that the fullness of God was wrapped in the tiny flesh of an infant as you humbled yourself and dwelt among us. Emmanuel. God with us as the baby Jesus.

Father, this second week of [Advent](#), keep us in perfect peace as our mind stays on the truth of your powerful love. Thank you for your mighty, sovereign hand. Help us to trust fully in you and rest in the peace that you offer. It's in the precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

GATHERING SONG Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus p. 19

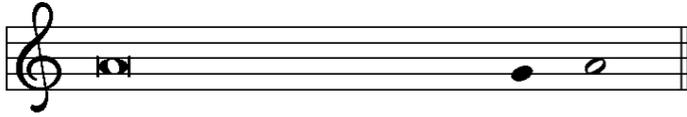
GREETING

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

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.

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



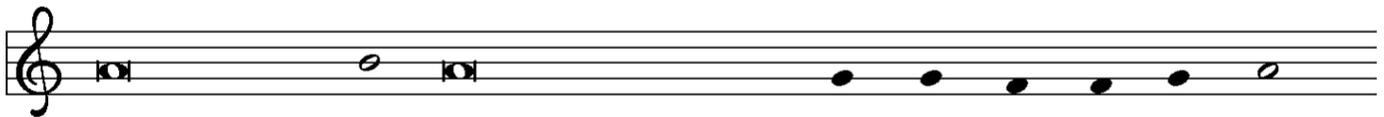
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

- ¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- ² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- ³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,
⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

- ⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
- ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

⁴ Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors ⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰ and again he says,

“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹ and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹² and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 3rd chapter
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,
² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’ ”

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root

of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Rev. Mark Kreemer

HYMN OF THE DAY On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry ELW 249

CREED

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

After each petition the following response is given:

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Offertory:

Coventry Carol
Handbell Choir

Cathy Mocklebust (b. 1958)



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles - sing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.



Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

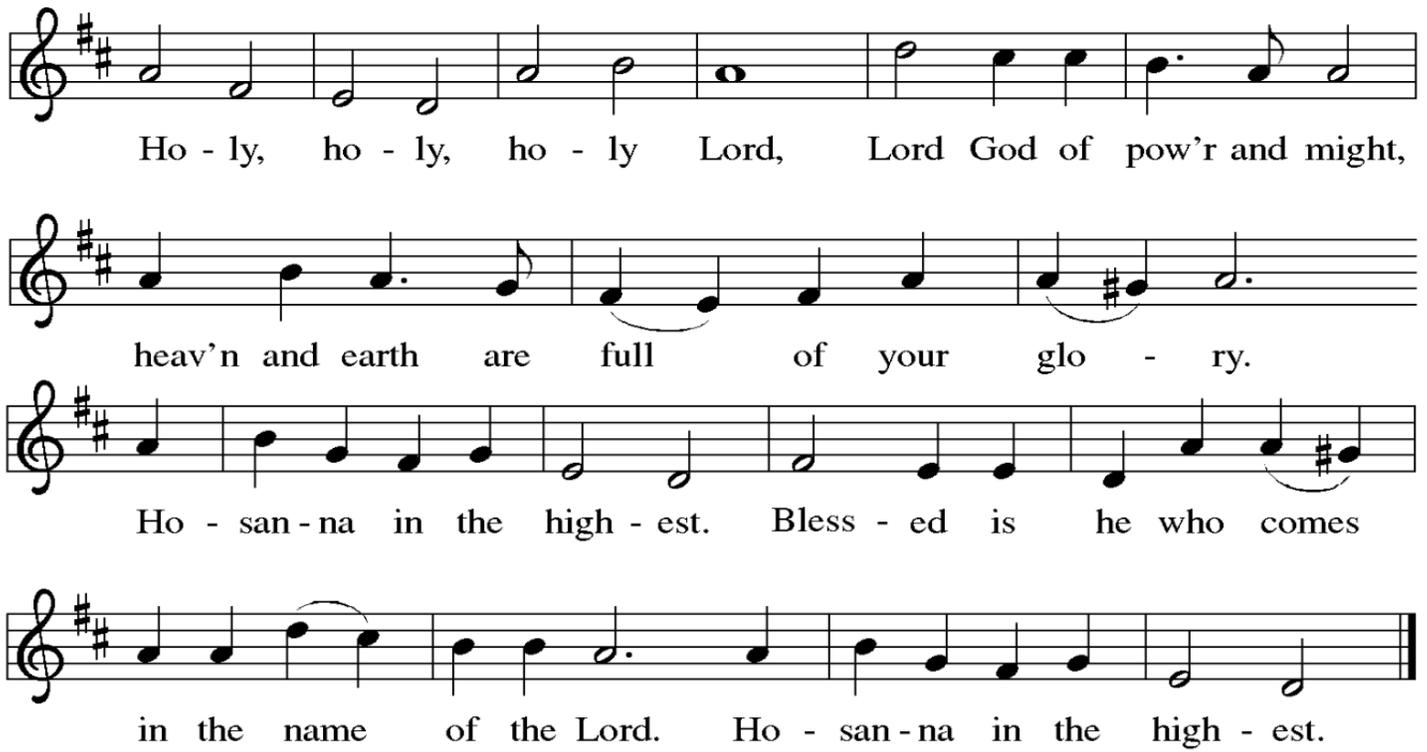


Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



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.... 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, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n 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.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

Invitation to Communion

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.



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, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

John Ferguson (1941-2025)

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

People, Look East

ELW 248

BLESSING

May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Hark, the Glad Sound!

Michael Burkhart (b. 1957)

In our prayers today we will remember

Steve Kress, Lenny Herd, Loren Veigel, Pastor Groenke, Eric Gerber, Cindy Lash, Judy Hall, Bonnie & Dave Dourm, Tom Fry, Carol Sargent, Kenneth & Jean Dexter, Anna Langenfeld, Arthur Barrett, Cindy Nash, Karen & Paul Daily, Susan Via, Richard Green.

Music Notes:

Coming in 2026! The St. Paul's Steelband!

Through a generous donation of five instruments, Eleanor Manes will be starting a steelband for the congregation and greater Massillon community. No musical background necessary, and any and all ages/skills are welcome. For more information, please contact Ellie: 330-400-8543



Mark your calendars for the **Community Candlelight Walk:**
December 7, 5-7 pm. Continuous music from our adult choir, bell choir,
and vocal and instrumental soloists.

Wednesday Advent Services 7:00 PM

Each Wednesday we will explore someone from the Lineage of Jesus.

December 3	Christ Lutheran	Rev. Mark Kreemer
December 10	St. Jacob Lutheran	Rev. Ash Welch
December 17	Holy Trinity Lutheran	Rev. Jeff Goggins

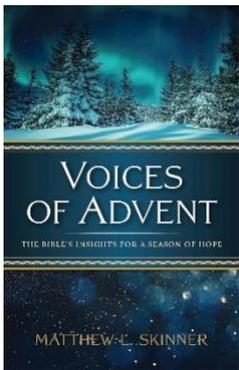
Adult Sunday School

The True Spirit of Christmas

“...The Holy Spirit will come upon you...” (Luke 1:35)

The Holy Spirit played an integral role in the birth of Jesus Christ. Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zechariah, and Simeon, among others, all knew the Spirit’s power and leading as each played a part in the coming of the Christ child. As a result, the Spirit fruit of love, joy, and peace was evident in their lives, as it can be for us.

We gather at 11:30 on Sunday morning in the Parish Hall, top floor. An elevator is available for easy access. Note - the class will not meet on Sunday, December 28.



Thursday Morning Bible Study

Beginning December 11th

Voices of Advent

By Matthew Skinner

In *Voices of Advent*, Matthew L. Skinner leads readers through biblical texts and explores how they shape our lives and Christmas celebrations. We listen as Jesus promises to return to us in the future, to John the Baptist as he prepares the way for the Messiah, to the faithful people and poets who anticipate the magnificence of Jesus’s birth, and to the angels and visionaries who praise God when Christmas dawns. Listen carefully to the Bible’s various perspectives that shape our preparations for Christmas; you’ll hear hope in all of them. *Voices of Advent* helps readers experience Advent not only as the start of the Christian Church Year, but also as the powerful overture that sets the tone for the incredible story of Jesus

Join the Fellowship Committee in these events!

Game Night – Sunday, January 18

Join us in the lounge at 5:00 pm to play games. We will play bingo with prizes or you can bring a favorite board game or card game. Also bring an appetizer to share. This will be a fun chance to mix with our church family! Come and have fun!!

Angel Tree Gift Tags

Angel Tree gift tags will be available in the Portico on November 16th. The tags will have suggested gift ideas for children and families in need this Christmas Season. Please return your unwrapped gift to the church today, **December 7th**.

You may also drop them at the Salvation Army.

Parents will then get to pick a gift for their loved one and wrap it themselves.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS COLLECTING NONPERISHABLES

Welfare and Social Committee will collect nonperishable food and miscellaneous items for our Community Meal families for Christmas. These items will be distributed at our Community Meal on Friday, December 12.

If you have questions, please contact Barb Palmer at 330-244-1602

October 19	Tea and coffee
October 26	Peanut butter and jelly
November 2	Canned soups and pork n beans
November 9	Cereal and mixes (cake, brownies, muffins)
November 16	Canned fruits and vegetables
November 23	Spaghetti sauce, pasta, instant potatoes
November 30	Paper products (paper towels, toilet paper)
December 7	Bar soap, toothpaste, toothbrush

Thank you for your generosity! Barb Palmer

Community Social Media Pages

Facebook & Instagram, Search “*Massillon Lutheran Churches*”

Facebook

“*St Paul’s Lutheran Church in Massillon*”
or “*Cathedral Concerts at St Paul’s*”

Assisted Hearing Devices Available

Four assisted listening devices are available at the sound system table in the back of the sanctuary at the beginning of worship. Please see Jim Johnson or John Stanko if you need assistance with these devices.



You can also use your smartphone to access the system. Go to your app store and download the **WaveCAST** app. Then connect to the sanctuary Wi-Fi: **Network:** sound media **Password:** Sound127

Capital Campaign Report

With joy and gratitude, we celebrate the completion of our new entrance and bathrooms—made possible by your faithful generosity. What a gift it is to see these improvements already serving our community!

Yet our work of caring for God’s house is not finished. Three pressing needs lie ahead: a \$125,000 replacement of the Parish Hall heating and cooling system, repairs to the Parish Hall window wells, and fixing a boiler leak in the Education Building. Through your continued giving, we can preserve this sacred space as a place of safety, welcome, and comfort for all who come through our doors. Together, we are ensuring that our church remains a living witness to God’s grace for generations to come.

Download the St. Paul’s Phone APP

Go to your Google or Apple app store on your smart phone and download the “My Church” by Pushpay. It is a free download.

Open the app and search for St Paul’s by typing STPLC APP.

Then click on the St Paul’s logo—that’s it.



Thank you to those serving today:

Presiding Minister	Rev. Mark Kreemer
Director of Music	Dr. Abigail Haake
Assisting Minister	Karl Kalk
Lector	Sydney Johnson
Greeters	Pastor Lynn and La Shell Williamson
Communion Assistants	Dennis Morgan & Kathryn Myers
Sacristan	Kathryn Myers
Ushers	Jeff Akey, Gary Collard, Richard Evert, Dan Farrar
Soundboard	Jim Johnson
Video/Live-Stream	John Stanko

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GATHERING SONG Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus Pg 19

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HYMN OF THE DAY On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry ELW 249
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SENDING SONG People, Look East ELW 248

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Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

CMI Hymns, Singles

1. Come, thou long__ ex - spect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy
 2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child, and
 peo - ple free! From our fears__ and sins re - lease__ us,
 yet__ a King: Born to reign__ in us for - ev - er,
 Let us find our rest__ in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion,
 Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own__ e - ter - nal Spir - it
 Hope of all__ the earth__ Thou art; Dear__ de - sire__ of
 Rule in all__ our hearts a - lone; By__ Thine all - suf -
 ev__ 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev' - ry long - ing heart.
 fi - cient mer - it Raise us to__ Thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, (1707-1788).

Tune: HYFRYDOL, Music by Rowland H. Prichard, (1811-1887); Arranged by Dave and Lauren Moore.

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On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
way for God with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite

Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

People, Look East



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANÇON, French carol

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