

Morning Worship
Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship

Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory! (Psalm 24:7-10).

Adoration

Opening Hymn

Once in Royal David's City (TH225)

*Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.*

*He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall:
with the poor, and mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.*

*And through all his wondrous childhood he would honor and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.*

*And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above,
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.*

*Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.*

Invocation

The 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

debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Confession

Call to Confession

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob (Psalm 24:3-6).

Corporate Confession of Sin

Almighty and all-holy Father, we confess ourselves unworthy of your unspeakable Gift. We have not loved you as we ought; nor have we always been loving to one another, kindhearted, forgiving one another, even as you, for Christ's sake, have forgiven us. We have lived in selfishness and worldly pride; and the good gifts you have bestowed on us we have not used to relieve the burdens of others. Pardon and blot out our offenses, through the incarnate life and willing sacrifice of your holy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Silent Confession of Sin

Assurance

Assurance of Pardon

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-7).

Thanksgiving

Offertory

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

Offertory Prayer

Petition and Intercession

Pastoral Prayer

Silent Prayer for the Salvation of Others

Instruction

Hymn of Preparation

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (TH216)

*Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ, the babe, is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all. Christ the babe is Lord of all!*

*Flocks were sleeping: shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you. Christ the babe was born for you.*

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:14

Leader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

New Testament Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Leader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

Sermon

Luke 1:26-56

Communion

Hymn of Preparation

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (TH193)

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in his hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.*

*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.*

*Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the pow'rs of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.*

At his feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,

*veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord Most High!"*

Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Sursum Corda

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And with your spirit.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: It is good and right to do so.

We welcome to Communion (also called The Lord's Table or The Eucharist) all baptized Christians who have received and are resting on Jesus alone for salvation, and are communing members of any church that faithfully proclaims the gospel. If that does not currently describe you, we invite you to participate by observing but not partaking of the elements – in part because of the warnings Scripture gives those who partake of the Supper without discerning its spiritual significance; but also because we don't want you to express something with your body that isn't true of your heart and mind, namely, that you're trusting in and depending on Jesus as your Lord and Savior. We invite you to take this time to consider what you've seen and heard in the worship service, including Jesus' love for sinners as it is portrayed in this meal. There's also a prayer below for those considering Christianity that you might wish to pray. If this raises questions or concerns, we welcome them and invite you to address them to our pastor or elders.

Prayer for those searching for truth: Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. If you are real, please open my heart and mind to the truth of who you are and what you have done in your life, death, and resurrection. Give me faith to trust you for salvation and satisfaction, and to follow you as my Lord. Help me to see this as the only way to the life you promise and for which I long. Amen.

Prayer for Christians: Lord, you have prepared for me a feast; and though I am unworthy to sit down as a guest, I rest on the merits of Jesus, and come clothed in his

righteousness. While I see the bread and the cup, may I ponder why Jesus died and hear him say, "I gave my life to purchase yours, presented myself as an offering to satisfy divine justice, shed my blood to blot out your guilt, opened my side to make you clean, endured your curses to set you free." May I obey, extend the hand, take the bread, receive the cup, eat and drink, testify before all that I gladly receive Jesus to be my life, strength, nourishment, joy, delight. In the Supper give me assurance of pardon, adoption, life, and glory. As the outward elements nourish my body, may your Spirit invigorate my soul, until that day when I hunger and thirst no more, and sit with Jesus at his heavenly feast. Amen.

- excerpted and adapted from *Valley of Vision*, "The Lord's Supper"

Charge and Blessing

Closing Hymn

Thou Who Wast Rich beyond All Splendor (TH230)

*Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour, All for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender, Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour, All for love's sake becomes poor.*

*Thou who art God beyond all praising, All for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising Heavenward by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising, All for love's sake becamest man.*

*Thou who art love beyond all telling, Saviour and King, we worship thee.
Emmanuel, within us dwelling, Make us what thou wouldst have us be.
Thou who art love beyond all telling, Saviour and King, we worship thee.*

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Benediction

**universal*