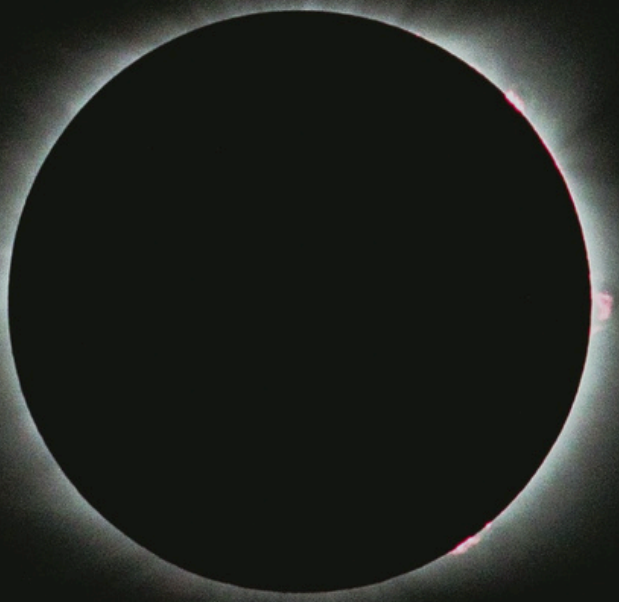
FIRST SUNDAY IN

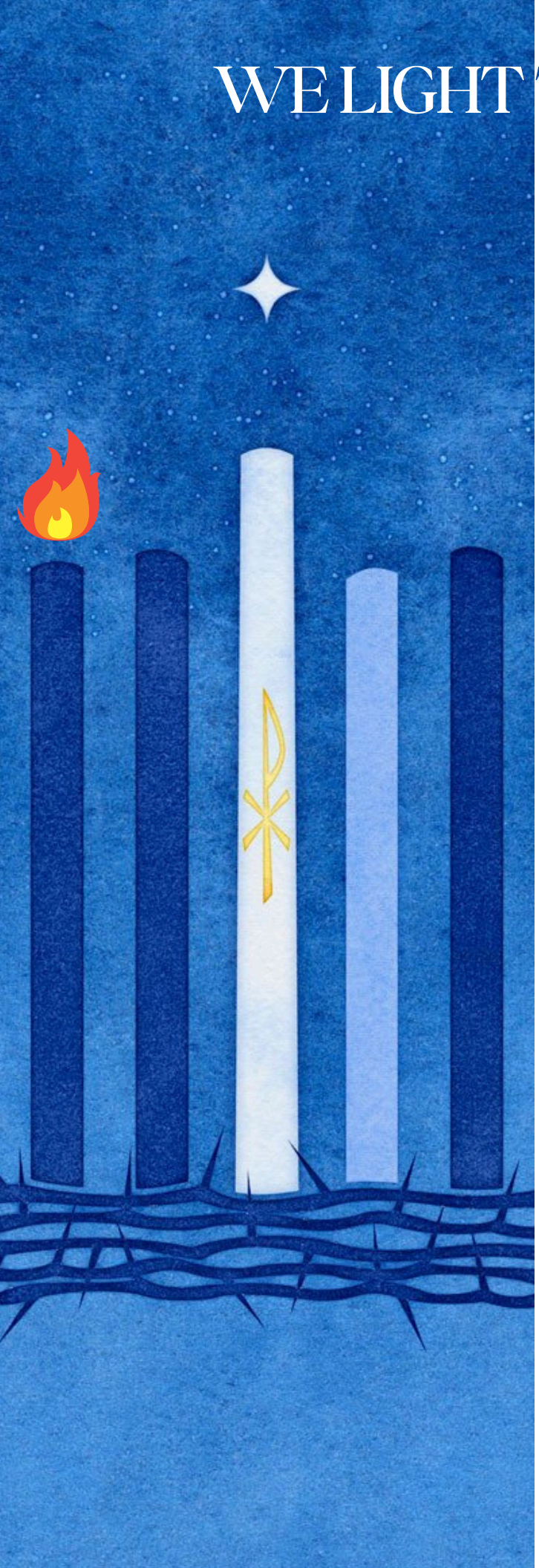
ADVENT

NOVEMBER 29



ST. STEPHEN'S

SSLV.ORG/ADVENT



WE LIGHT THE FIRST CANDLE

Reader: The first week of Advent we remember the gift of hope we have in Christ. The prophets of Israel all spoke of the coming of Christ, of how a savior would be born, a king in the line of David. They spoke of how he would rule the world wisely and bless all nations.

Reader: As followers of Christ, we wait with hope for his return. As we light this candle, we remember that it was from the manger at Bethlehem that he came and gave light to the world. As we light this candle, we are reminded to be alert and to watch for the light of Christ even in the most unlikely places and people.

Reader lights the first blue candle on the Advent Wreath.

When lighting your wreath at home, family members are encouraged to share one way they have experienced hope today.

Reader: Let us pray.

Loving God, we thank you for the hope you give us. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by being open seeing to the light of Christ in others. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

Worship Leaders November 29, 2026

Presider: The Rev. Nic Mather
Deacon: The Rev. Ari Wolfe
Musician: Riki Davis
Altar Guild : Robin Swecker
Reader: Mary Lyons, John Edmiston
Greeter: Rob Painter-Johnson
Chalice Bearer: Karen Miller , Dee Taylor
Usher: Don Willows
Verger : John Edmiston
Vestry Presence: Mary Lyons, Bill Reade
Coffee Hour: Advent Potluck

We as people of faith who are called to care for this creation want to respectfully **acknowledge the Cowlitz and Chinook People**, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth. We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Cowlitz and Chinook People. We pay respects to their elders past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths.

St. Stephen's is a reconciling, affirming, and inclusive Christian community striving through worship, love and service to **welcome all people just as God created you.** No matter where you are on your journey of faith, and whether you are single, married, divorced, separated, or partnered, our welcome knows no boundaries of age, race, ethnicity, culture, political affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, economic condition, physical or mental ability. We believe that God delights in the diversity of creation and so do we!

Connect with St. Stephen's!
Please leave your name and email/phone number and Fr. Nic will connect with you this week with an invitation to enjoy a cup of coffee on us!

Your Name: _____

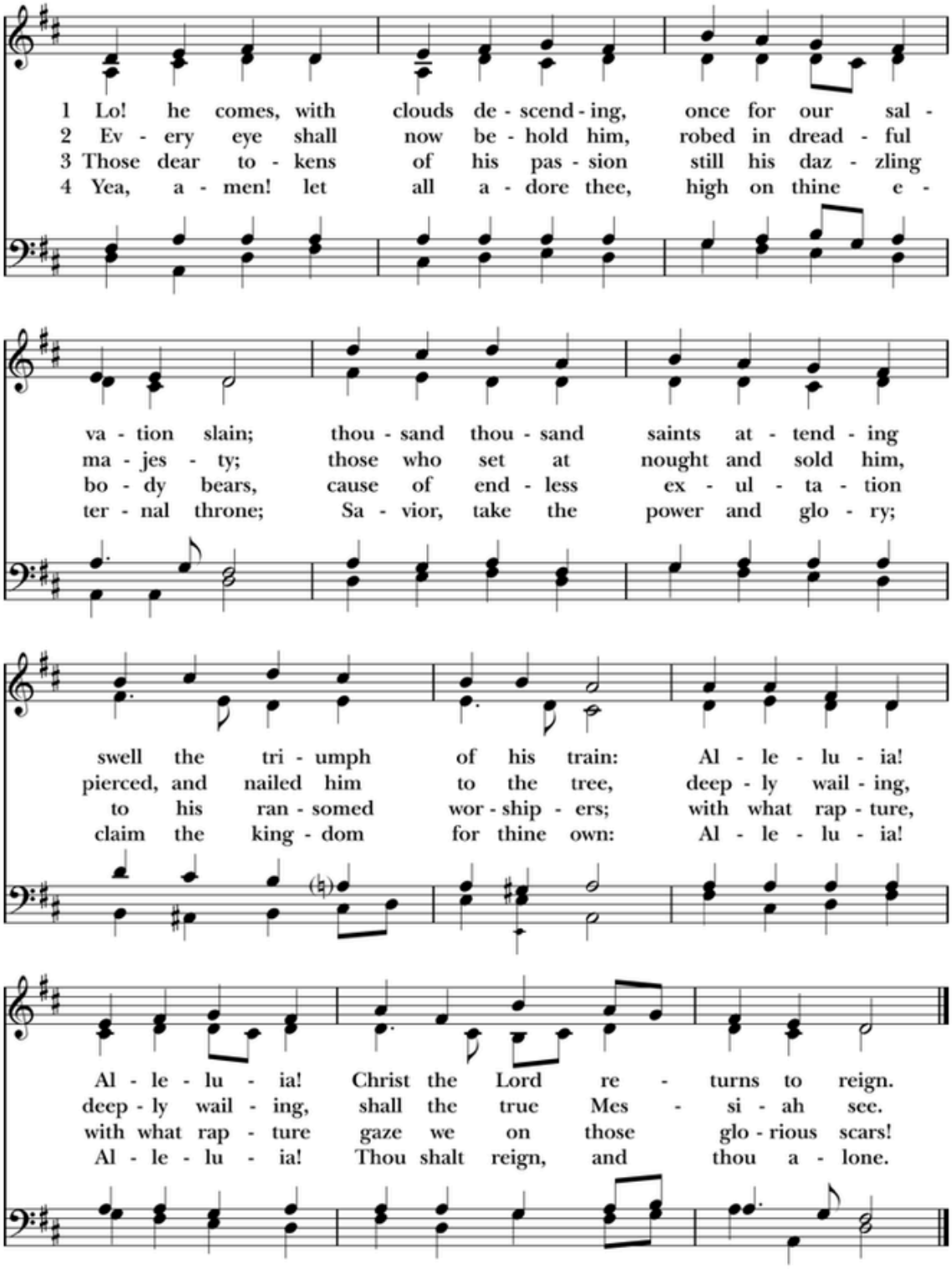
Your Phone Number: _____

Your Email:_____



Lo! he comes, with clouds descending

The Hymnal 1982, **#58**



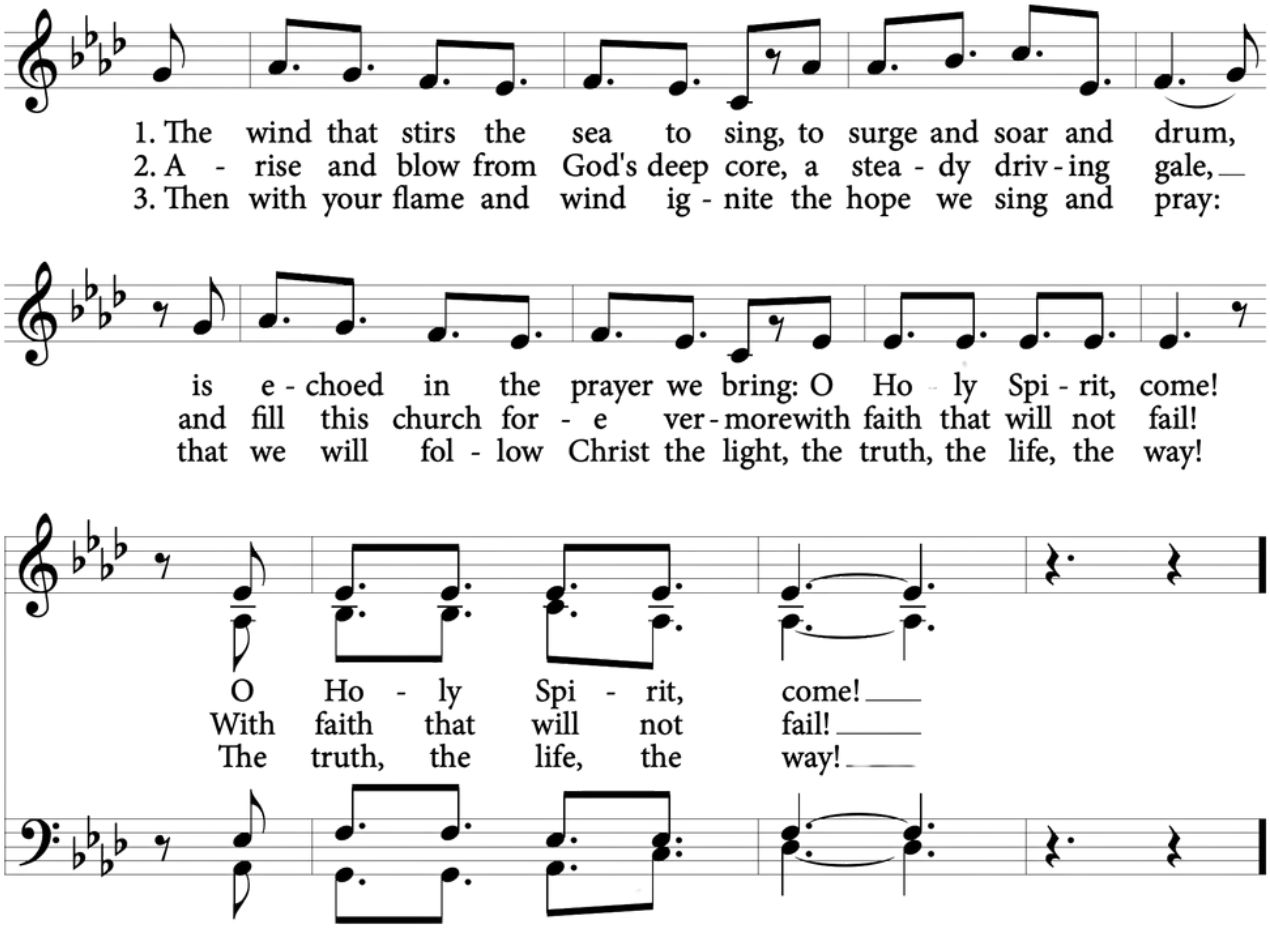
Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Music: *St. Thomas*, melody att. John Francis Wade (1711-1786); harm. att. Vincent Francis Novello (1781-1861).

Blessed are you, holy and living One.
You come to your people and set them free.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

Children are invited to follow the procession of the cross from the Church to the Parish Hall for Sunday School. While the program is geared for children 10 & under, ALL children are welcome to attend. Parents are also welcome to attend. Children will return to the church in time for Eucharist (typically returning after the passing of the peace).

The Wind that Stirs the Sea to Sing



Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945
Music: John Tirro, b. 1966
Text ©2015 Oxford University Press, Music ©2017 Mondo Zen Music.



Jesus as a child at The Creche Orphanage Bethlehem

The Liturgy of The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**.

Please be seated for readings from Holy Scripture.

A reading from Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence--

as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil--

to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,

no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.

You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

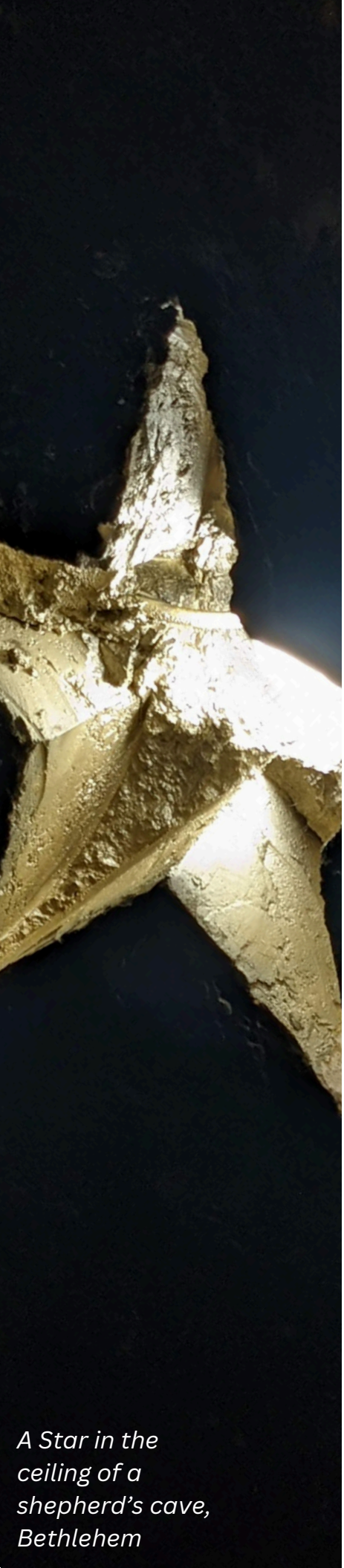
There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;

for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
Thanks be to God.



A Star in the ceiling of a shepherd's cave, Bethlehem

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.

3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

4 O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

18 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.



The Birthplace of Christ, Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem

The Liturgy of The Word

A reading from 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

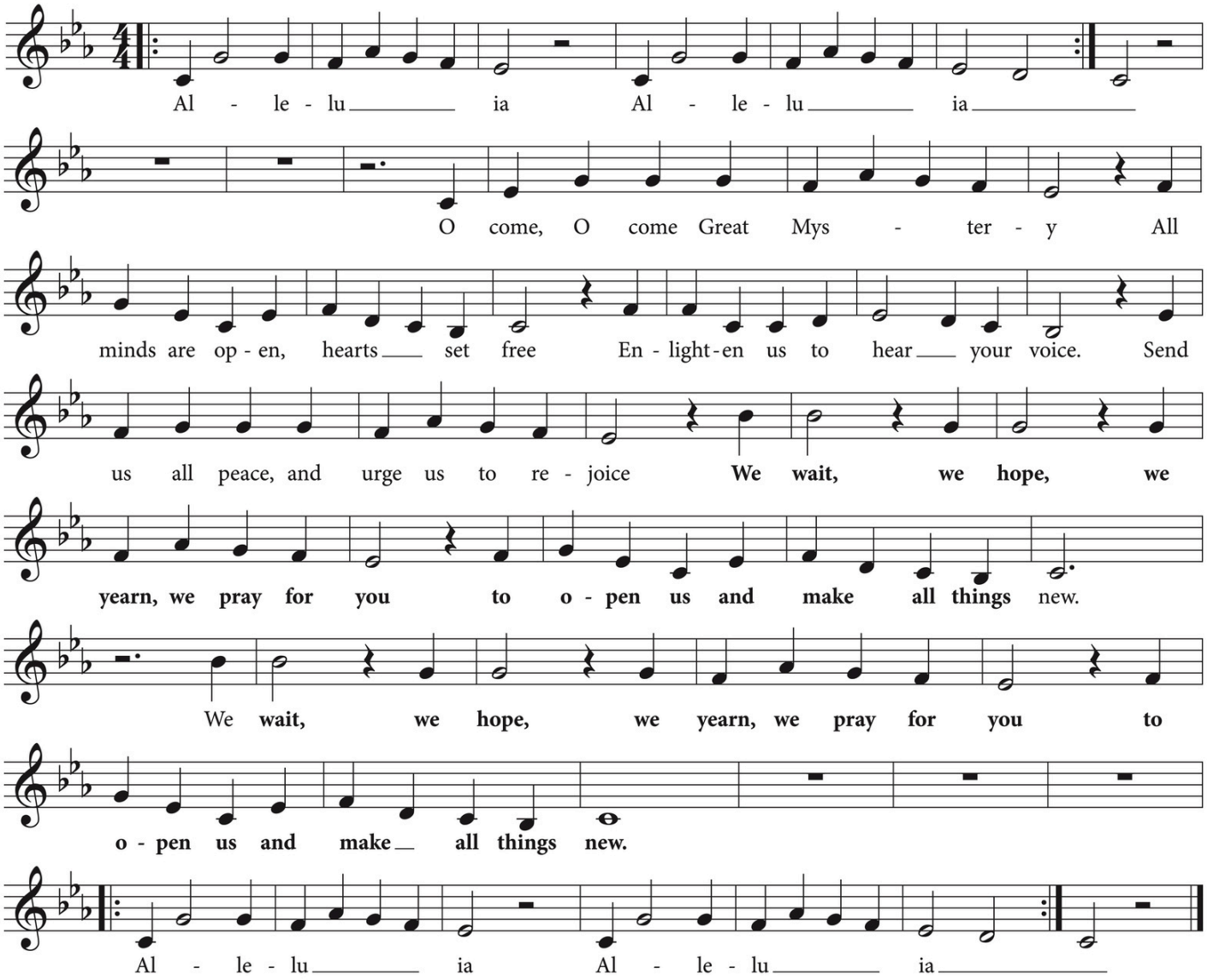
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Procession (before reading) & Recession (after reading)
(please stand in body or spirit)

O Come, O Come, Great Mystery
Advent Gospel Acclamation



Melody: VENI, EMMANUEL, French Procession, 15 cent.
Arrangement: Lacey Brown, b. 1981
Text: Lacey Brown, b. 1981
©Lacey Brown 2021

The Holy Gospel of Our Savior Jesus Christ According to Mark. **Glory to you O Christ.**

Jesus said, “In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,

and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of Our Savior.
Praise to you O Christ.

Homily--Fr. Nic Mather

The Nicene Creed

(please stand in body or spirit)

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Celebrant: God of anticipaton, listen and respond as we raise our voices in prayer, saying, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reader: For your church that it might be a herald of the age to come and a bastion of hope in the world today. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For leaders in our civic and communal lives, that they might look beyond the quarrles of today to lay the foundations of justice and mercy for tomorrow. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For this congregation, that we might rest in your promises as we prepare ourselves for the work of being the body of Christ in the world. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For our environment, that it might be restore and sustained that its lifegiving abundance might be preserved. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the sick, the suffering, the anxious, the despairing, and for all in need of your healing presence, that wholeness, reconciliation, and peace might be theirs. Especially we pray for Ron & Harriet Byrnes, D. Rowley, Marge Ofstun, Holly Miller Spieth, Jesse Lucas, Tom & Bev Finlay, Greg Lapic, Glenna Van Allen, and those you now name either silently or aloud. *pause.* Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who have died, and those who are dying, that through the power of your promises they may come to know the joy of your eternal presence. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: As we enter this time of waiting, strengthen and enliven our faith that we may know the joy of your presence and that our lives might be a reflection of your glory, All this we ask through Jesus, the light of our lives. **Amen**.

Confession & Absolution (please kneel in body or spirit)

Let us confess our sins to God

God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace (please stand in body or spirit)

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

The Offertory

God of our future, whose compassion is unlimited, all that we have is yours and to you we shall render account for all you have given us. As we offer you these gifts we enjoy from your bounty, grant that we may live well, love generously, and seek first your kingdom, on earth as in heaven, through Jesus Christ our most kind Judge and Savior. **Amen.**

Offertory Music

Watchmen, Tell Us
by David Lantz
Choir

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night
Words by John Bowring (1792 – 1872)
ABERSWYTH by Joseph Parry (1821-1902
Arranged by David Lantz III

Watchman, tell us of the night.
What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory beaming star.

Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of joy or hope foretell?
Traveler, yes, it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.

Watchman, tell us of the night,
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth, its course portends.

Watchman, will its beams alone,
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own;
See it bursts o'er all the earth.

Watchman tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.

Watchman, let your wanderings cease;
Hasten to your quiet home.
Traveler, lo, the Prince of Peace,'
Lo, the Son of God is come,
Lo, the Son of God is come

Amen

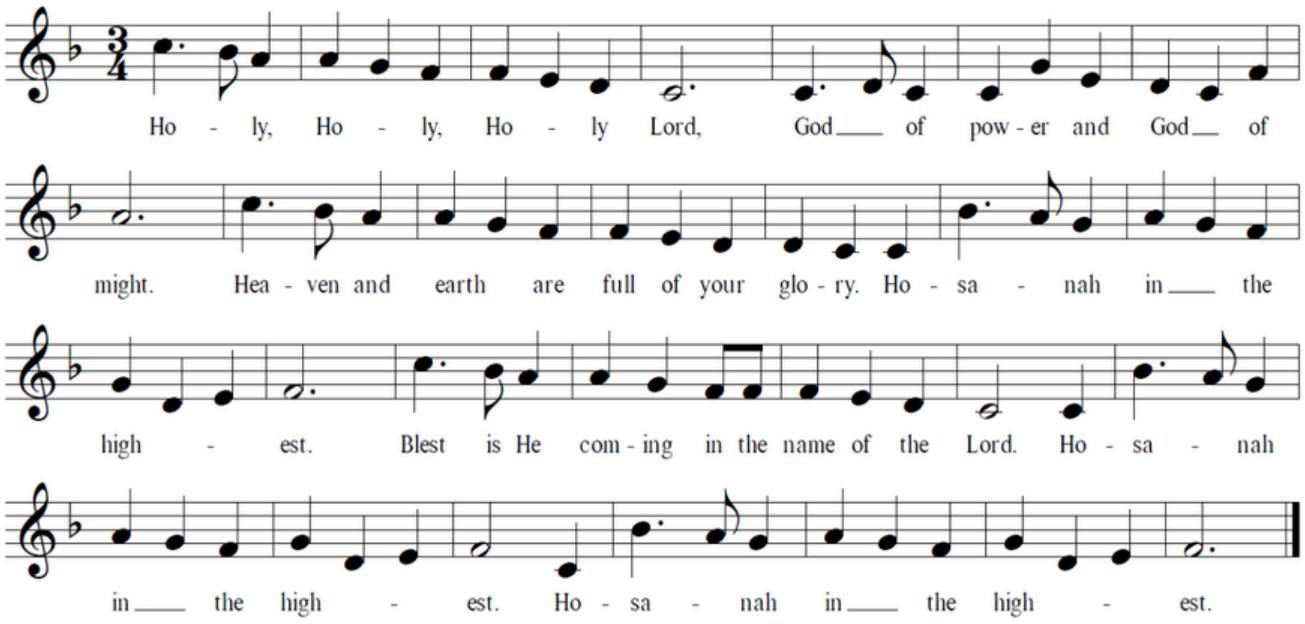
HOLY EUCHARIST

(please stand in body or spirit)

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 truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:

Sanctus



Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace. But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Remembering his death and resurrection we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine.

By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with the Blessed Mother Mary, Stephen and all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **Amen**.

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Fraction (to the tune of Greensleeves)

What feast of love is offered here
What banquet come from heaven?
What food of everlasting life
What gracious gift is given?
This, this is Christ the king,
The bread come down from heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!
How sweet the manna given!

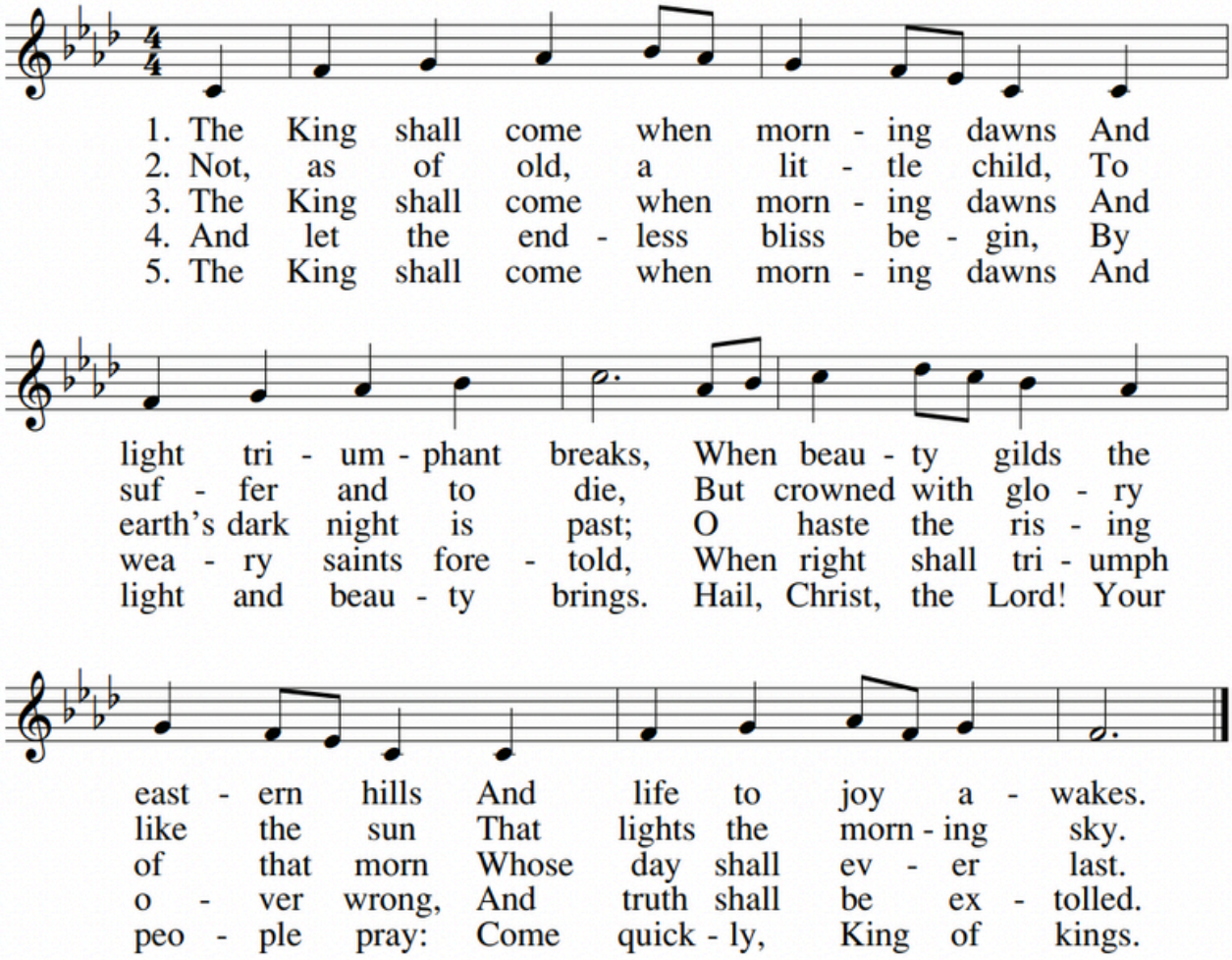
The Gifts of God, for the People of God.

You are invited to come forward and receive Eucharist at this time. We will be sharing wine from a common chalice, so if you would prefer intinction please leave the bread in your hand and the chalice minister will intinct for you. Gluten free communion is available and a non-alcoholic option in place of the wine is also available upon request.

For those joining via Live-Stream: A Prayer for a Person Unable to Take the Eucharist by St. Alphonsus de Liguori, 1696-1787

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns



Text: John Brownlie, 1857–1925, alt.
Tune: MORNING SONG, CM; John Wyeth, 1770–1858; arr. by Robert J. Batastini, b.1942

Prayer for Eucharistic Visitor

As you go to the sick and homebound, take with you not only the sacrament that we have celebrated, but also the Word of God which we have heard, as well as the affection of this parish community. Ask for the prayers of those whom you visit in return. Go, now, with God's peace and blessing. ***Amen.***

Postcommunion

(please stand in body or spirit)

God of abundance,
you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
you have united us with Christ and one another;
and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior.
Amen.

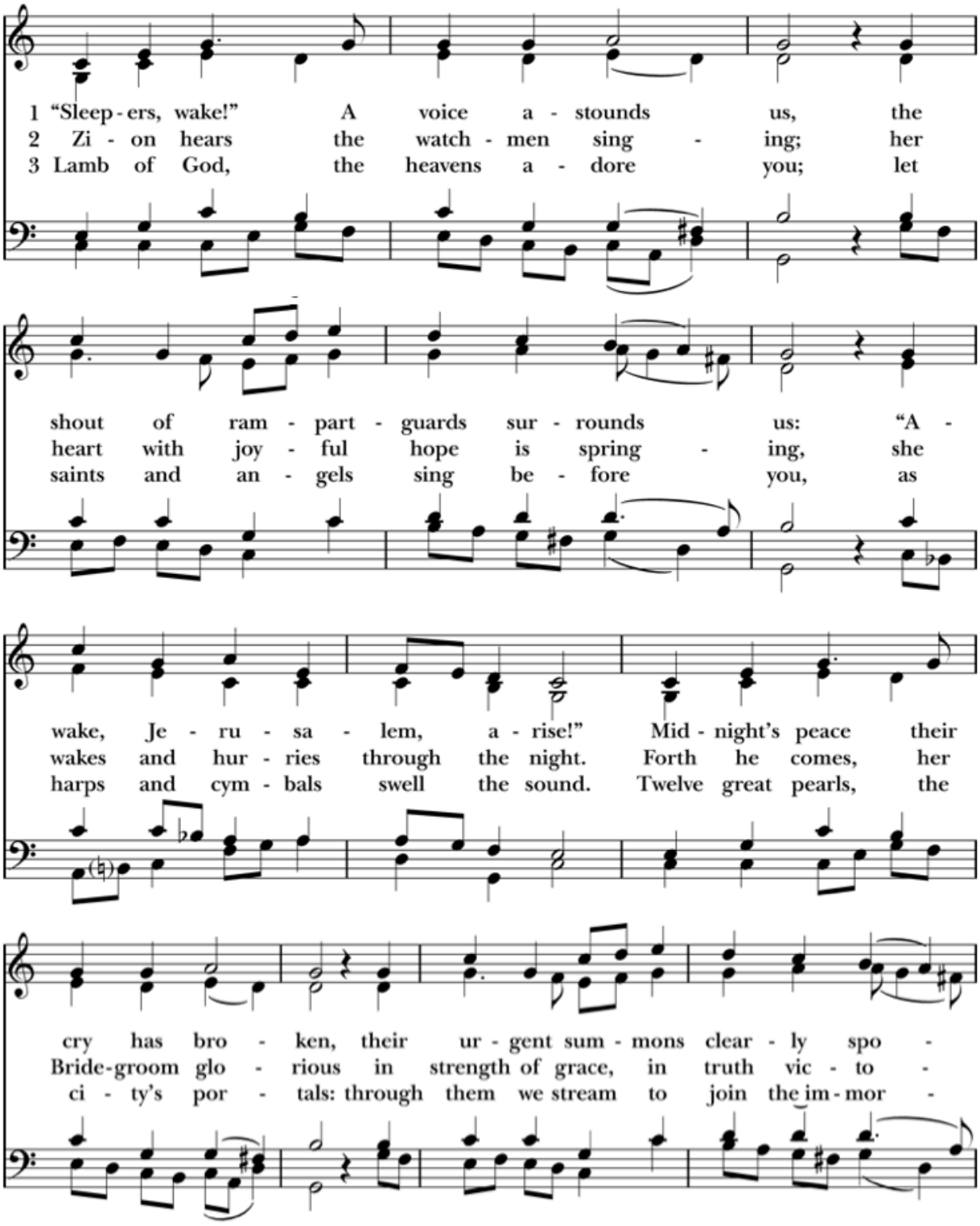
Holy eternal Majesty, Holy incarnate Word, Holy abiding Spirit, Bless you for evermore. **Amen.**

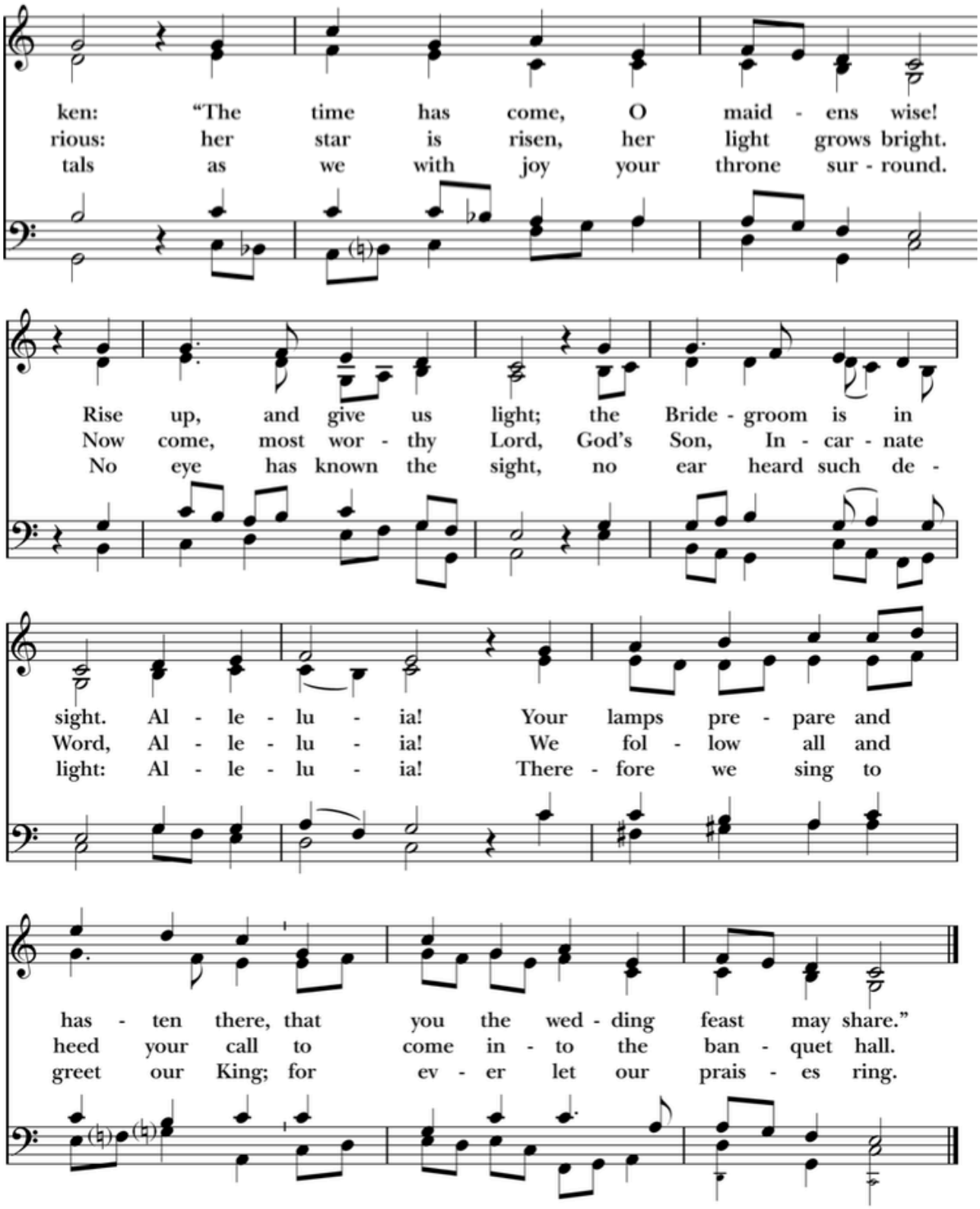
Let us go forth in the name of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Following the closing hymn you are invited to join us in the Parish Hall for Coffee Hour! If you are new today, please take a welcome packet and coffee mug (found at the front door)!

“Sleepers, wake!” A voice astounds us

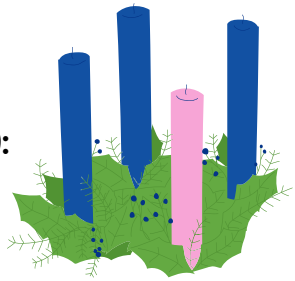
The Hymnal 1982, #**61**





Words: Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608); tr. Carl P. Daw, Jr. (b. 1944). Copyright © 1982, by Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission. Music: *Wachet auf*, melody Hans Sachs (1494-1576); adapt. Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608); arr. and harm. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

Save the Dates:





- **First Sunday of Advent, Sunday November 29:**
  - Advent Wreath Making @ Coffee Hour
  - Advent Potluck @ Coffee Hour

- **Feast of St. Nicholas, Thursday December 3, 5-7:30pm:**
  - Crafts & Food!
  - Joyful Noise Eucharist & Special Visitor at 6pm
  - ALL are welcome and invited!



- **Cocoa, Cookies, & Carols, Sunday December 13, 6-7:30pm**
  - ALL are welcome and invited!
  - YOU bring the cookies, WE provide the Cocoa & Carols!



- **Children's Christmas Pageant, Sunday December 20, 10:30am**
  - All children welcome and encouraged to participate
  - Pageant Rehearsal and Festive Family Breakfast @ 9am

- **Christmas Eve, Lessons & Carols with Holy Eucharist, 12/24, 4pm**

- **Christmas Day, Family-Friendly Eucharist, 12/25, 10:30am**



- **Save the Date! Women's Craft Day Saturday, January 16, 2027, 10AM to 3PM**
  - Join us for a fun day of creativity, laughter, and friendship! Whether you're an experienced crafter or just want to try something new, all are welcome.
  - We'll have morning and afternoon crafting sessions, with a soup and sides potluck lunch in between. It's a wonderful opportunity to enjoy some delicious food, visit with friends, and make new connections! More details to come, so stay tuned!
  - Planning to join us? Please RSVP to Darcy Davis at **darcymckee@msn.com** so we can plan accordingly. We hope to see you there!