

The background of the image is the interior of a Gothic Revival style church. It features tall, narrow stained glass windows with colorful depictions of religious scenes. The architecture includes pointed arches, ribbed vaulting, and a large, ornate stone column on the left with a carved capital. The lighting is warm, coming from the windows.

*Welcome to
Worship at
Zion Lutheran Church*

*Sunday, December 10, 2023
9:00 am*

Photo by Vicki Dalager



Welcome and Announcements



**Beautify Zion's sanctuary with
Poinsettias for Christmas**

**Order forms are available in the
Gathering Space.**

Orders are due by December 17.

**There are still times in December you
can schedule your photo for
Zion's online photo directory.**

December 10:

10:05 am

10:45 am

10:55 am

11:05 am

11:15 am

11:25 am



Sign up in the Gathering Space.



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

5:30 pm During worship

If any of the students wish to perform their Christmas recital pieces as Prelude that night, please notify Shelley Galle.

Rehearsal after Church School on the 13th.



*Lighting of the
Advent Candles*

Prepare The Royal Highway

ELW #264

Text: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1772-1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Music: Swedish fold tune, 17th cent. Public Domain. Text © *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Reprinted with permission under OneLicense #731814-A. All rights reserved.

- 1. Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!**

**2. God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you!
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!**

**3. Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised King!
Your King, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before Him;
their voices join your singing:
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!**

**4. His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding:
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!**

Confession and Forgiveness

L: In the name of the Father,
and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

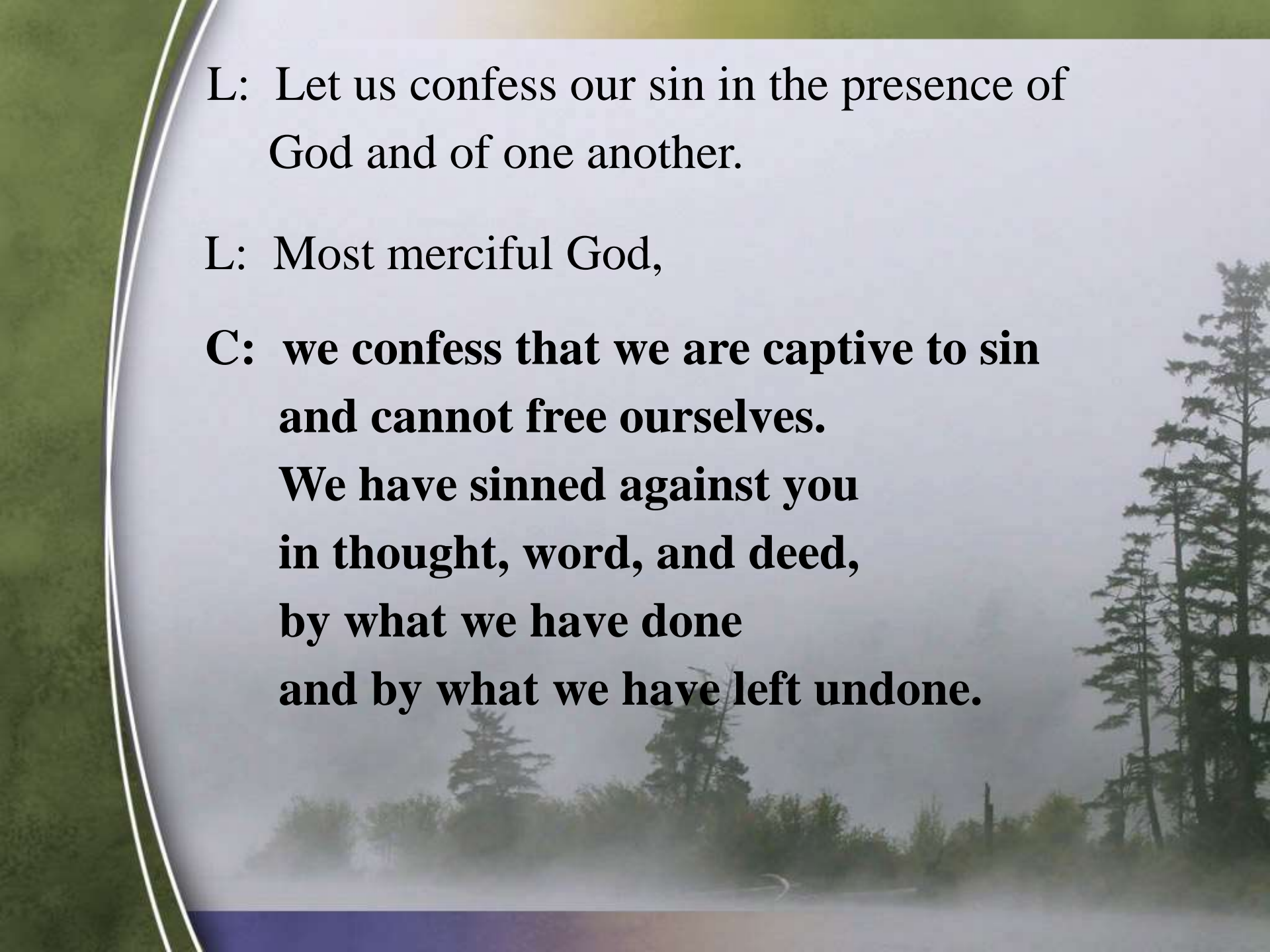
C: Amen.

L: God of all mercy and consolation,
come to the help of your people,
turning us from our sin
to live for you alone.

Give us the power of your Holy Spirit
that we may confess our sin,
receive your forgiveness,
and grow into the fullness
of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection

A background image of a misty forest with tall evergreen trees and a body of water in the foreground. The scene is hazy and atmospheric.

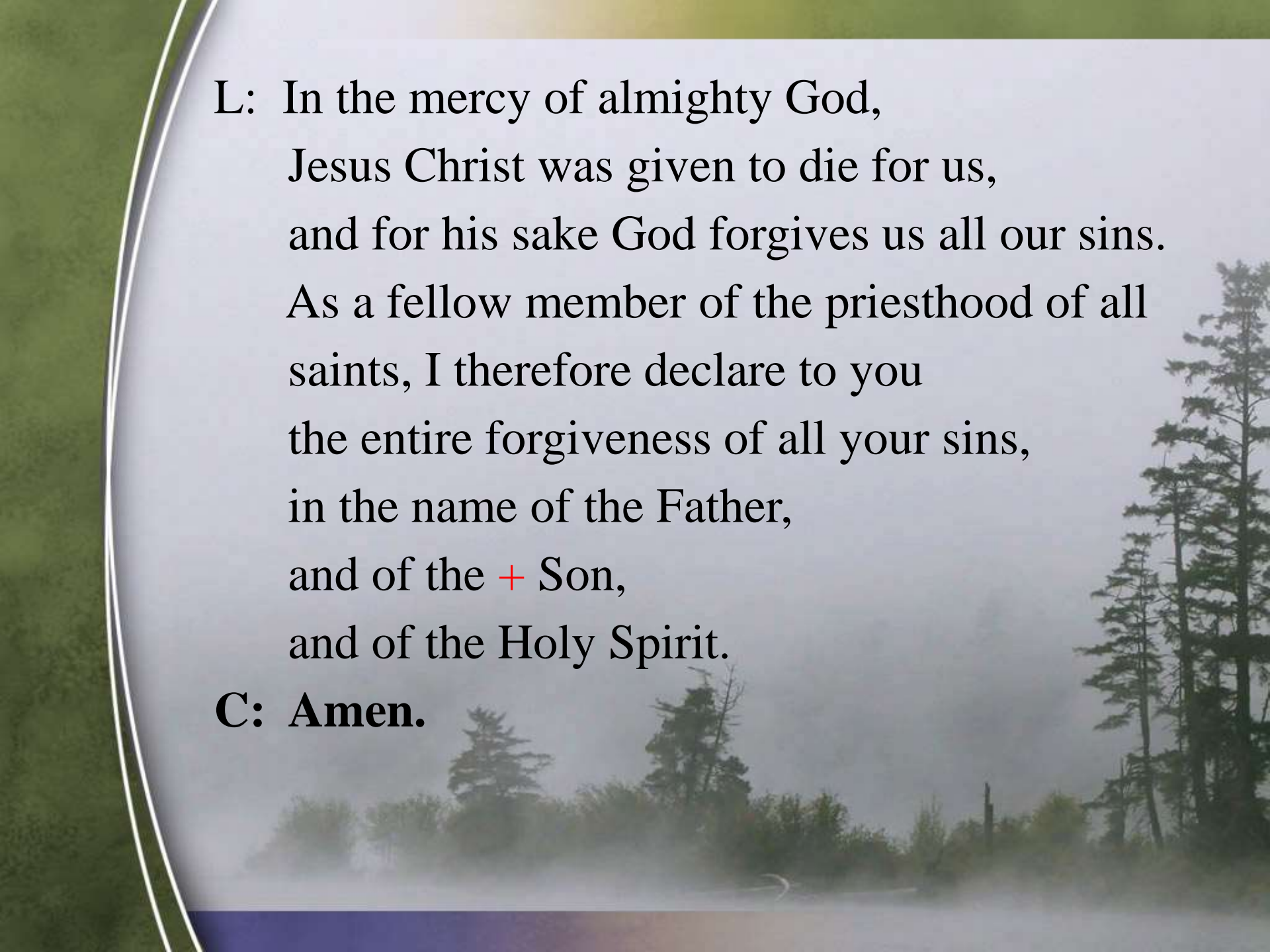
L: Let us confess our sin in the presence of
God and of one another.

L: Most merciful God,

**C: we confess that we are captive to sin
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done
and by what we have left undone.**

**C: We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
For the sake of your Son,
Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
so that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name.
Amen.**

A background image of a misty forest with tall evergreen trees and a body of water in the foreground. The scene is shrouded in fog, creating a serene and somewhat somber atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

L: In the mercy of almighty God,
Jesus Christ was given to die for us,
and for his sake God forgives us all our sins.
As a fellow member of the priesthood of all
saints, I therefore declare to you
the entire forgiveness of all your sins,
in the name of the Father,
and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



Greeting

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

C: And also with you.

Kyrie

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L: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For the peace from above,
and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord have mercy.

L: For the peace of the whole world,
for the well-being of the church of God,
and the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For this holy house,
and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

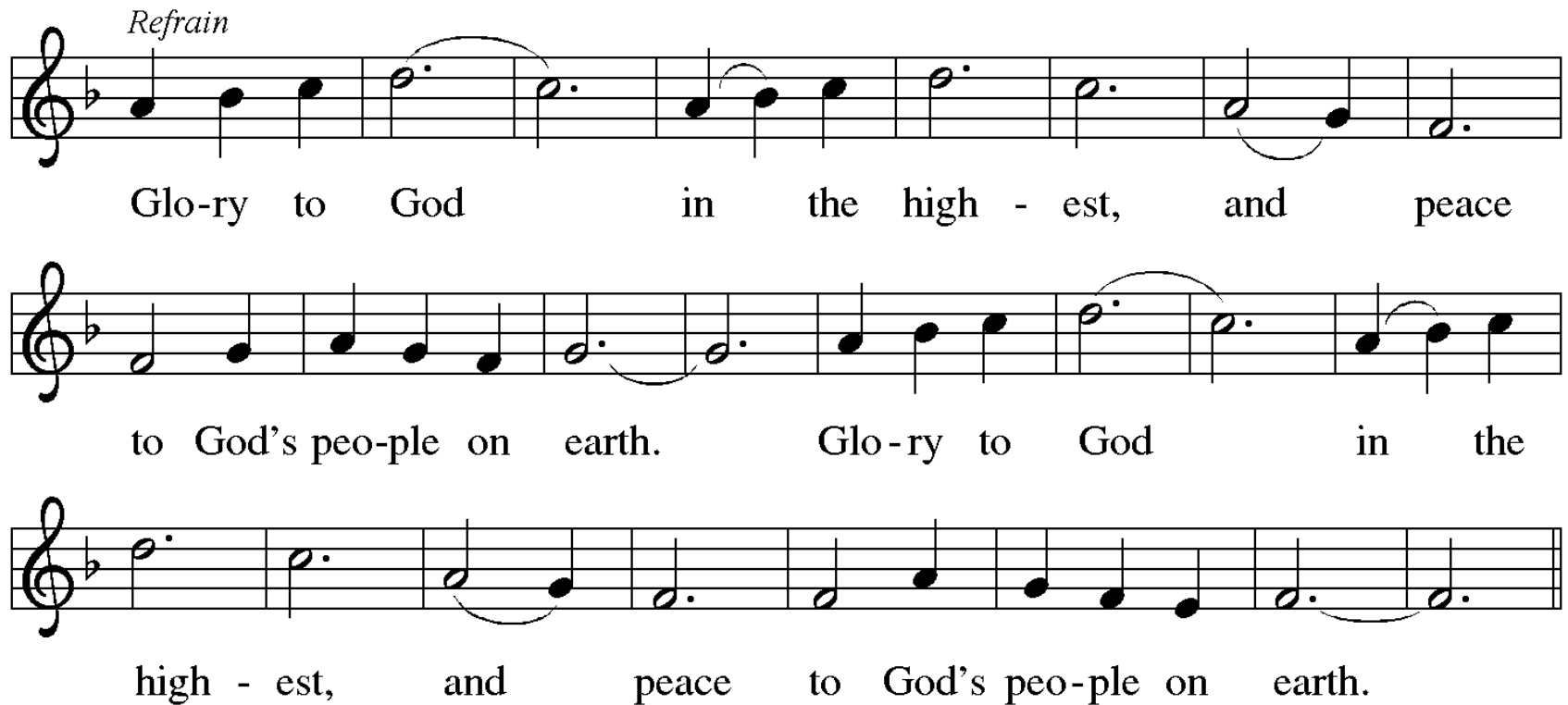
L: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise

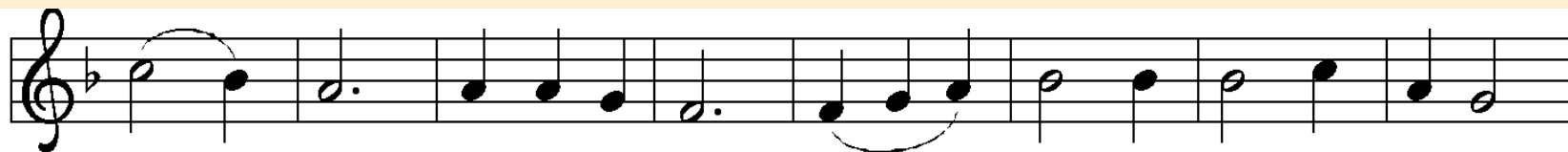
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Refrain



The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the refrain, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some notes beamed together. The second staff continues the melody for the second line. The third staff continues the melody for the third line. The lyrics are printed below the notes, aligned with the syllables.

Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace
to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the
high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa-ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth.

Final refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est.

A - men, a - men.

A landscape photograph featuring a vibrant green field in the foreground, dotted with small white flowers. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a vast blue sky filled with wispy white clouds. A bright sun is positioned on the right side of the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the scene.

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Children's Message



Noisy Offering!!!

**Drop your change in the buckets
and make some noise!**

**Proceeds will go to the
Giving Tree at the Security State Bank.**






Away in a Manger

ELW #277

Text: North American, 19th cent. Music: James R. Murray, 1841-1905. Public Domain.

- 1. Away in a manger; no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
 the stars in the bright sky
 looked down where he lay,
 the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**
- 



**2. The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
 but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
 and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**





**3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**



First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.



¹Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”



⁶A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,


their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,

when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;

but the word of our God will stand forever.



⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.



L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

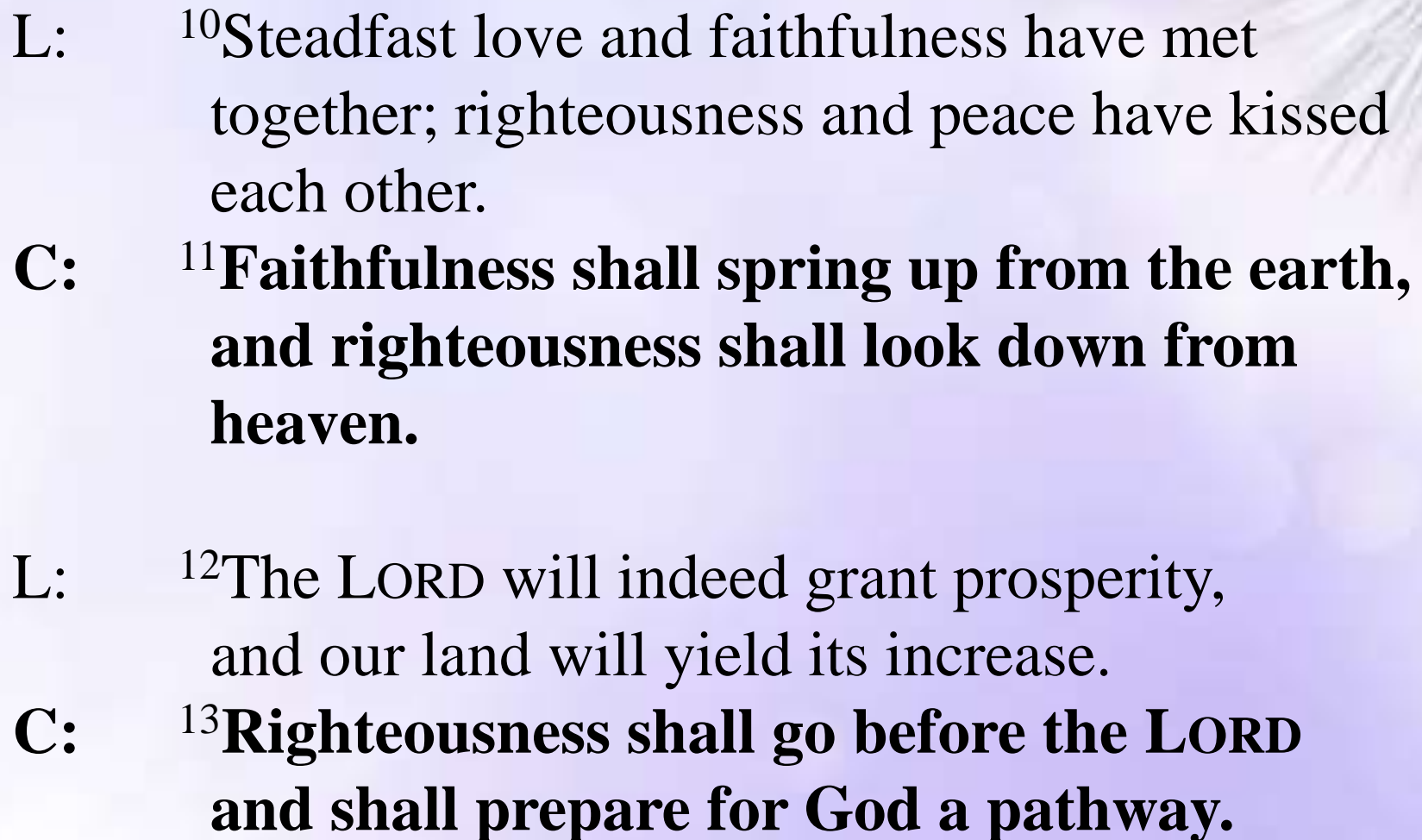
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

L: ¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

C: ²**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.**

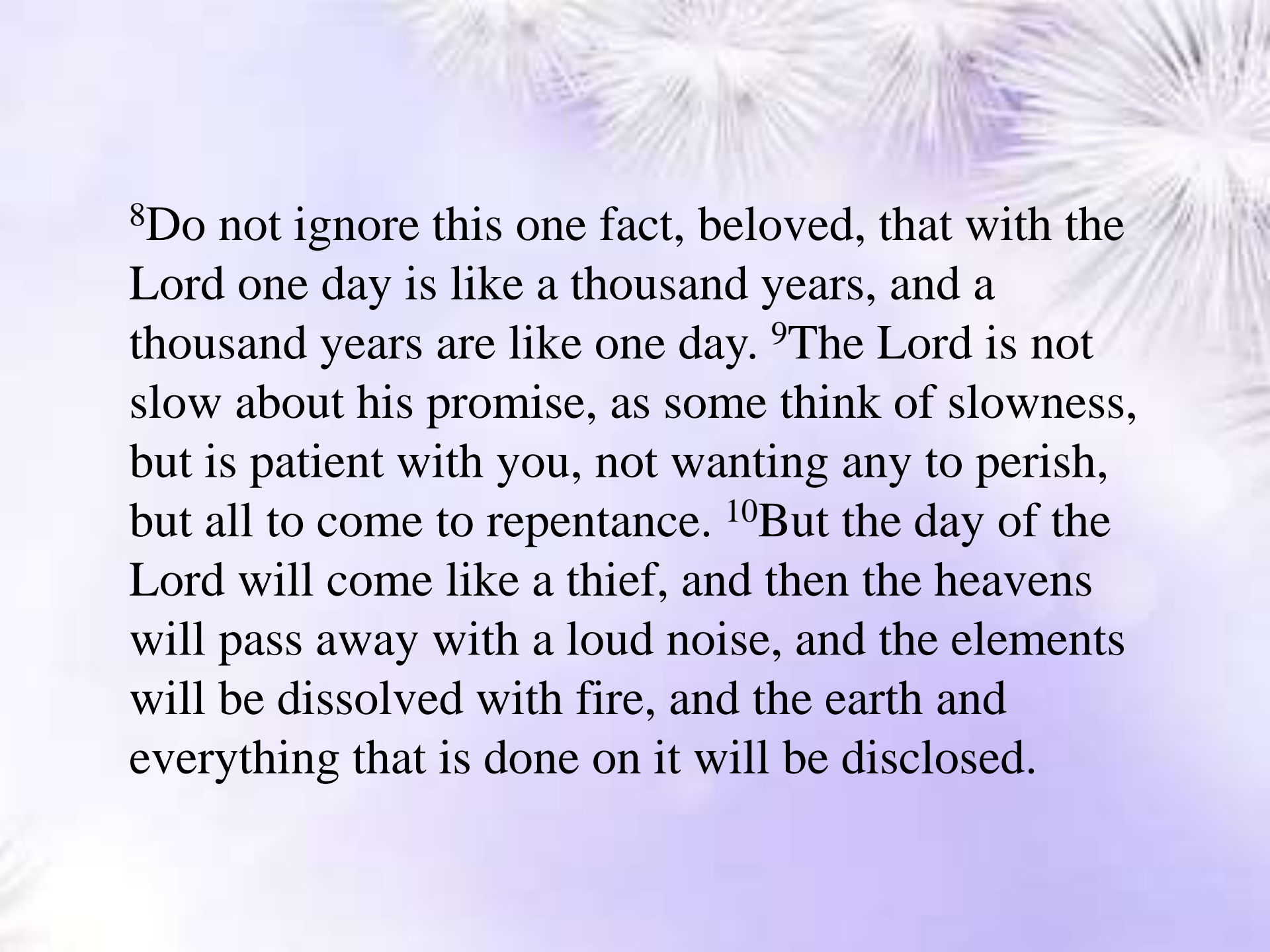
L: ⁸I will listen to what the LORD^l God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

C: ⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.**

- 
- L: ¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met
together; righteousness and peace have kissed
each other.
- C: ¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from
heaven.**
- L: ¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.
- C: ¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.



⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire?

¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

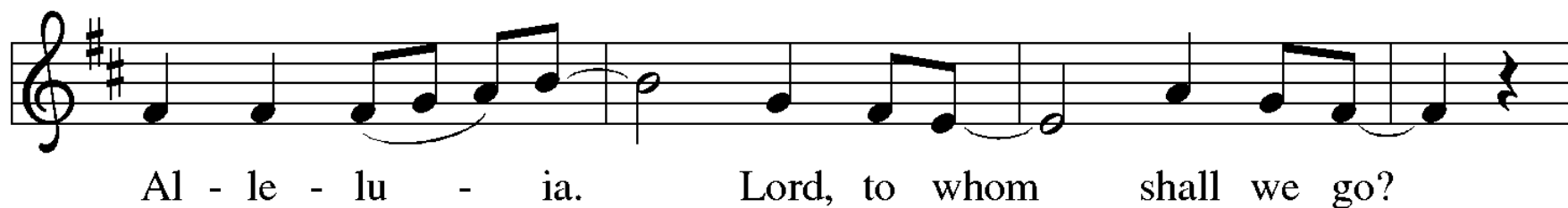



L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

p. 171





L: The Holy Gospel
according to St. Mark
the first chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ,
the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’ ”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



L: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Message

“The Beginning”

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ELW 279

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893. Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908. Public Domain.

- O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

2.

**For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all the earth.**

3.

**How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him,
still the dear Christ enters in.**

4.

**O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.**

**We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!**



Apostles' 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.

Offering



Praise and Thanksgiving

ELW #689 vv. 1, 2

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- 1. Praise and thanksgiving,
God, we would offer
for all things living,
you have made good:
harvest of sown fields,
fruits of the orchard,
hay from the mown fields,
blossom and wood.**

2.

**God, bless the labor
we bring to serve you,
that with our neighbor
we may be fed.**

**Sowing or tilling,
we would work with you,
harvesting, milling
for daily bread.**

Offering Prayer

L: God our provider,
by your merciful hand
abundance springs up from the earth.
Receive and bless these gifts of your own
bounty. Let them be a sign of your
steadfast love and faithfulness for all
people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Response after each petition:

L: Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

L: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

C: Amen.

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**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.**



Blessing

L: The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✝ remain
upon you now and forever.

C: **Amen.**


It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

#282

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876. Music: Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900. Public Domain.

1. It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:






**“Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav’ns all gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.**




2.

**Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.**





**Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.**







3.


**And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:**







**look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!**





**For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever circling years
shall come the time foretold,**





**when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.**





Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: In the name of Christ. Amen.



*Thank you
for worshipping
with us!*

God bless you!

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