

*The beginning of the prelude is a call to silent,
personal preparation for the worship of God.*

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come Nikolaus Vetter
Savior of the Nations, Come Dietrich Buxtehude

Introit

“Freedom Is Coming” South African song
O freedom is coming, O yes, I know.

*Doxology (*sung*). The Hymnal, 606
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Call to Worship

Leader: *Awake! Rejoice! Prepare to meet your God!*

People: Christ is coming. Open the door.
Sweep the path. Prepare the way!

Leader: *Christ came at Christmas to live as one of us.*

People: Christ comes today to love us and to lead us.

Leader: *Christ will come tomorrow, wherever we may be.*

People: Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

*Hymn 88 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Advent Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Almighty God, you who shaped out of nothing all that is,
forgive us for returning empty-handed.

You who called for the light, forgive our preference for the shadows!

You who sent John to be a voice crying,
forgive our unwillingness to say anything at all.

We yearn for clean hearts, O God, and renewed spirits within us.

Hear us, O God, as we come to you in this time of silence,
confessing those sins we speak only in our hearts . . .

(Please hold silence)

Sung Response (*unison*)

“Wait for the Lord” (Psalm 27) The Hymnal, 90

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!

Declaration of Pardon

Leader: *Friends, believe the good news.*

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

*Exchange of Peace

Leader: *The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.*

People: **And also with you.**

We invite you to greet those around you, wishing them “peace” or “the peace of Christ.”

Concerns of the Church

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Psalter (*sung*)

“O God, Show Mercy to Us” (Psalm 67) The Hymnal, 341

Anthem

“Prepare the Way, O Zion” Robert Lau

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!

Let every hill and valley a level way appear.

Greet one who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.

O blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name.

He brings God’s rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.

His rule is peace and freedom, justice, truth, and love.

Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding.

Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior’s rule embrace.

His tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.

All lands will bow before him, their voices will adore him.

First Lesson

Isaiah 35:1–10 Old Testament, page 623

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Gloria Patri (*sung*) The Hymnal, 581
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.

Second Lesson

Mark 1:1–8, 16:5–8 New Testament, page 32, 51
Minister: *The Word of the Lord*.
People: Thanks be to God.

Advent Sermon Series: A Tour of Gospel Homes

“Christmas at Mark’s House” Shannon J. Kershner

Responding to the Word

*Hymn 79 “Light Dawns on a Weary World”

*Affirmation of Faith Apostles’ Creed

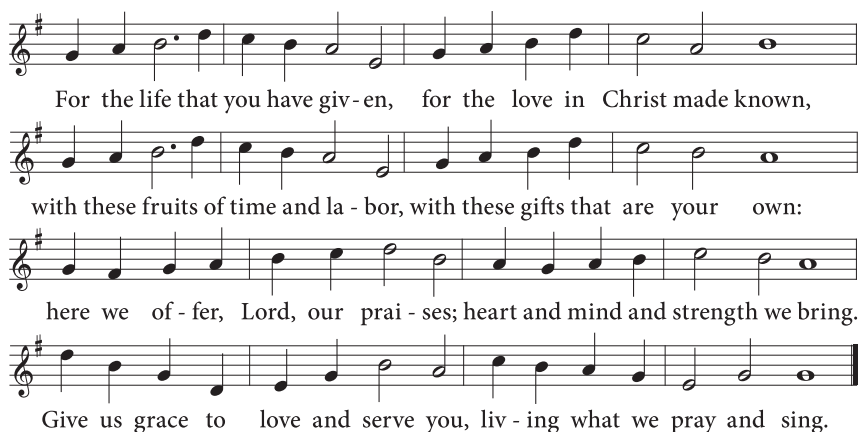
I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
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.

Offering

Offertory Voluntary

“Come Thou Now, Down from Heaven” Johann Sebastian Bach

*Offertory Response



For the life that you have giv-en, for the love in Christ made known,
with these fruits of time and la-bor, with these gifts that are your own:
here we of-fer, Lord, our prai-ses; heart and mind and strength we bring.
Give us grace to love and serve you, liv-ing what we pray and sing.

Sealing the Word

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Great Thanksgiving

Minister: *The Lord be with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

Minister: *Lift up your hearts.*

People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Minister: *Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.*

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Prayer

Minister: *We praise you, for you are Emmanuel . . .*

. . . forever singing to the glory of your name:

Sanctus (*sung*) The Hymnal, 565

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

Minister: . . . *Great is the mystery of faith:*

Memorial Acclamation (*sung*) The Hymnal, 566

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

The Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

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.

The Communion

Communion Anthem

"Rorate Coeli" Christopher Tye

*Drop dew ye heavens from above and let the clouds break forth
in showers upon the righteous ones, in rain upon the just.
Let the earth be opened and blossom forth with heavenly fruit, a Savior.*

Prayer after Communion (*unison*)

O God, in this meal we have been given a foretaste
of the feast that is to come.
Help us always to be alert to your gifts in our midst;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn 163 "Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice"

*Benediction and Response

Postlude

On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry Aaron David Miller

Worship Leaders

Matt Helms, Sue Thompson, Shannon J. Kershner

The Music Today

The Chancel Choir

John W. W. Sherer, Organist and Director of Music

Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist

Grant Nill, Organ Scholar

Worship Notes

THIS MORNING, COMMUNION IS SERVED by intinction. The congregation comes forward by the center aisle to receive the bread, which they then dip into the chalice of grape juice. (Gluten-free bread is available in a small tumbler in each basket of bread.) Worshipers return to their pews by the side aisles.

The invitation to the Lord's Supper is not just for Presbyterians or "members of the church." All who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper. Even one who doubts or whose trust is wavering may receive the bread and grape juice (in place of wine) in order to be assured of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

SOURCES AND CREDITS: The Call to Worship is from *Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayers for Public Worship* by Brian Wren. Hymn tune names—as well as composers of the music and authors of the text—are listed in the hymnal with each hymn. The words to "For the Life that You Have Given" are by Carl P. Daw Jr. © 1987; music is by Morgan Simmons © 1990, 1992 Hope Publishing Co. The Prayer of Confession is adapted from *The Worship Sourcebook*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.

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