

ADVENT WORSHIP SERVICES

PRELUDE

WELCOME

GATHERING HYMN

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn ELW 242

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in -
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

WEEK 4: LOVE

Leader 1: We gather in the season of Advent, waiting and watching for the One who comes not in splendor, but in humility. The God of the universe has changed addresses—leaving heaven’s throne to dwell among us in a manger. This is grace: not earned, not expected, but freely given.

Leader 2: We light the candle of Love, marveling that the Creator of galaxies chose a manger as a cradle.

All: Jesus, your love is not distant. It is near to us, flesh and bone, living and breathing. Let your love transform our lives.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING SONG – LOVE *To the tune of “Away in a Manger”*

The candle of Love now tenderly shines,
A sign that God’s heart beats close to our minds.
No throne, but a stable; no crown, but the hay—
Love stooped to the ground to show us the Way.

PRAYER:

God of love, you moved into our world with tenderness and truth. May we welcome you not just in our churches but in our hearts. Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Based on Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph was uncertain, afraid, and ready to walk away. Yet God’s grace met him in a dream. God’s grace gave him courage to say “yes.” We too wrestle with fear, doubt, and hesitation. We too need God’s grace to say “yes” to love. Let us confess our sin, opening our hearts to the mercy of Emmanuel— God with us.

(Silence for reflection)

Merciful God,

We confess that we have often said “no” to your call.

We say “no” when your will surprises us.

We say “no” when your plan feels too hard.

We doubt your grace is enough for us.

We cling to control instead of trust.

We turn from your Spirit’s nudging.

We let fear silence our obedience.

We forget that Jesus is Emmanuel—God with us.

Forgive us, Lord.

Forgive us for the times we hide in shame.

Forgive us for the times we resist your mercy.

Forgive us when we say “no” to our neighbor in need.

Forgive us when we say “no” to your call of love.

Pour out your grace upon us.

Transform our fear into faith.

Place your mercy deep within us.

Hear the good news: The angel said to Joseph, *“Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. You shall name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”*

This is the promise of Advent: God’s grace comes close.

God’s grace meets us on the ground floor of our lives.

Grace that forgives every “no.”

Grace that gives courage to say “yes.”

Grace that carries us when we falter.

Grace that frees us to begin again.

In Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Jesus Christ, our lives are made new. Walk now in grace, strengthened by the Spirit. Say “yes” to mercy, say “yes” to justice, say “yes” to love.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. We give you thanks, O God, for the gift of your grace that brings us joy. Free us from all that binds us,

that we may receive your joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

READINGS

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 7:10-16

A reading from Isaiah.

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Theme of the Psalm: Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Ps. 80:7)

- 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;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- ⁴ **O Lord God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**
- 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;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- ¹⁷ **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**
- ¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- ¹⁹ **Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND LESSON: Romans 1:1-7

A reading from Romans.

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

- ¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through

his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

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

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-25

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 1st chapter.

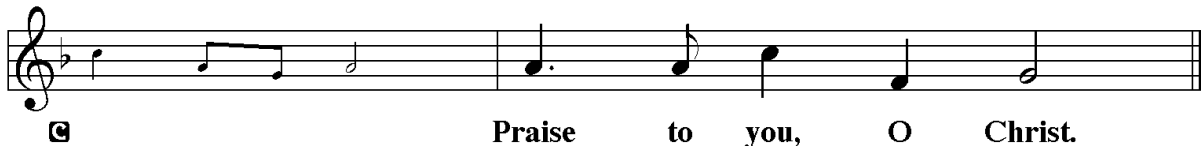


Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"
which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.



MESSAGE

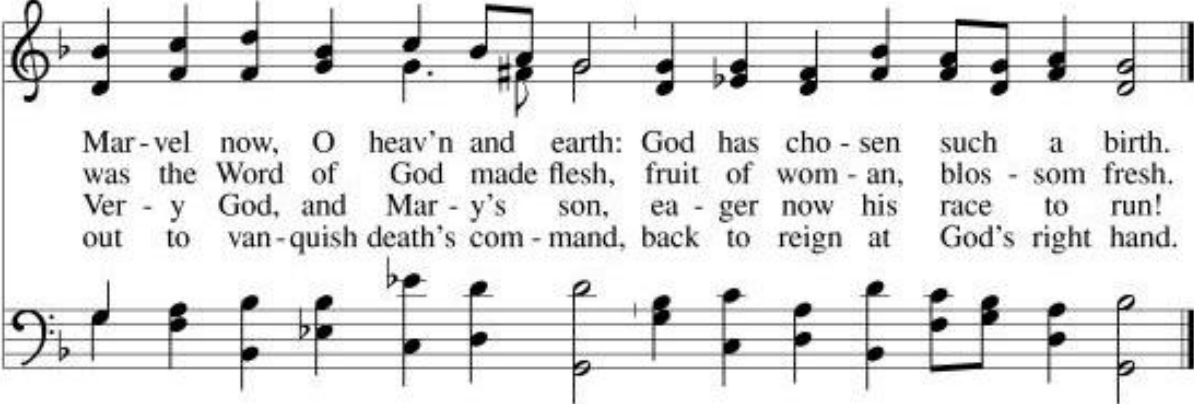
HYMN OF THE DAY

Savior of the Nations Come ELW 263

Savior of the Nations, Come



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
3 Won - drous birth— oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

NICENE CREED

Together, we profess our faith with the words of the Nicene Creed.

**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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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 INTERCESSION

Week 4 - Love

As we wait for you, O loving God, we place before you our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Silence for reflection.

Love comes from you, O Lord. You come to us in unexpected ways and places. In these dark days, as the church celebrates your coming among us through the gift of the infant Jesus, make us mindful of the small ways in which you continue to break into our midst. No act is too

small. No prayer is too insignificant. Infuse your love into the tiniest spaces and bring transformation. God of promise,
Receive our prayer.

Love comes from you, O Lord. In some places the snow is falling. In some places, people gather on sandy beaches. In some places creation groans in pain. From the tallest mountains to the tiniest creatures, you are Maker of it all. Hold your beautiful, broken, beloved world in your tender care. God of promise,
Receive our prayer.

Love comes from you, O Lord. We call you King of Kings and Lord of Lords, yet the nations remain in uproar. Peace seems far off. Sometimes, so do you. We cry out with those who cry out. We cry out with all who feel unsafe in their homes, neighborhoods, and nations. Hear our honest prayers. God of promise,
Receive our prayer.

Love comes from you, O Lord. Some of us are looking forward to the days ahead. Some of us have dreaded these days. We pray for families, for those that will gather and those that experience discord. We pray for people who feel lonely and people who are grieving. We pray for marriages and relationships of all kinds. Hold in your mercy all for whom we pray. God of promise,
Receive our prayer.

Love comes from you, O Lord. Bless the ministry of this congregation. Bless the friendship we have with one another. We are not perfect, and we pray that your love may show up in our ministry in spite of us. When we gather for our Christmas worship services, send your Holy Spirit so love will be born again in us. Join our voices with the angels, as together we sing of the good news of our Savior's birth. God of promise,
Receive our prayer.

Love comes from you, O Lord. Neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, can separate us from your love. For the saints who

have gone before us and for the heavenly home you have prepared for us, we give you thanks. God of promise,
Receive our prayers.

Trusting in your steadfast and abiding love, we place these petitions before you asking that your will be done.
Amen.

PEACE

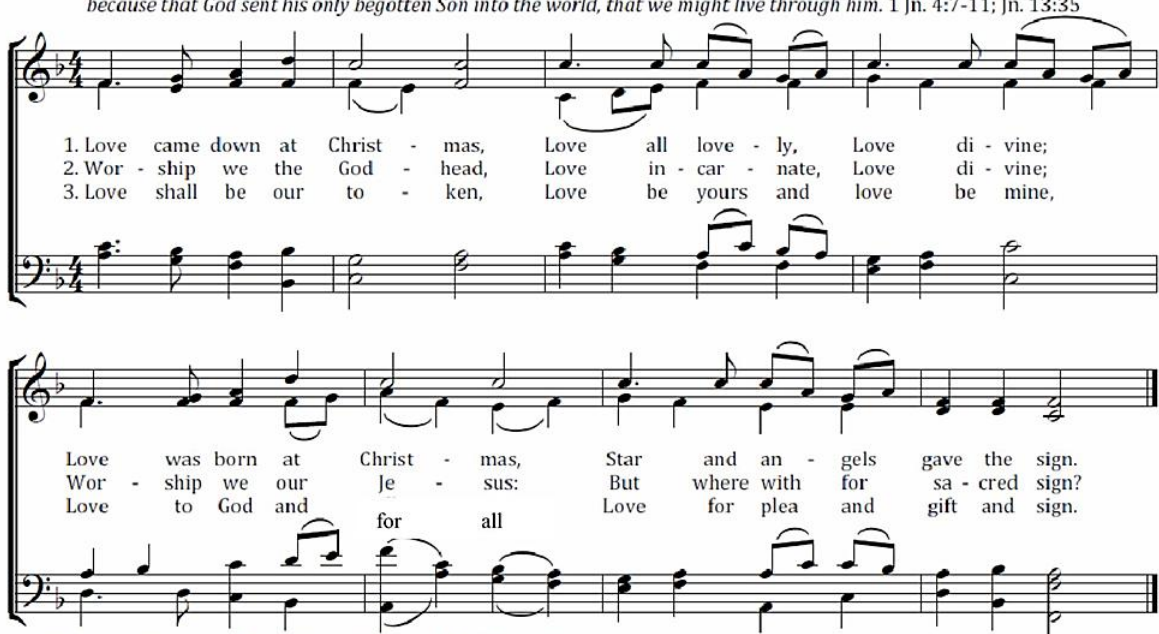
May the peace of God be with you and ignite Christ's love in you so that you share it abundantly with all around you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Love Came Down at Christmas

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God.... In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 1 Jn. 4:7-11; Jn. 13:35



1. Love came down at Christ - mas, Love all love - ly, Love di - vine;
2. Wor - ship we the God - head, Love in - car - nate, Love di - vine;
3. Love shall be our to - ken, Love be yours and love be mine,

Love was born at Christ - mas, Star and an - gels gave the sign.
Wor - ship we our Je - sus: But where with for sa - cred sign?
Love to God and for all Love for plea and gift and sign.

WORDS: Christina G. Rossetti, *pub.* 1885. MUSIC: "Gartan"; Irish melody. Public Domain.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

We pause to remember that you are God. All that we have comes as a gift from you.

Pause

Each breath we take, each item in our home, each dollar in our pocket, is only ours for the moment. We pause and give thanks for all that you have provided, grace upon grace.

Pause

Now, we offer ourselves that we might do good in this world. We offer our money that it might be used for good in this world. Receive us and what we offer now, in Jesus' name. Amen.

COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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.

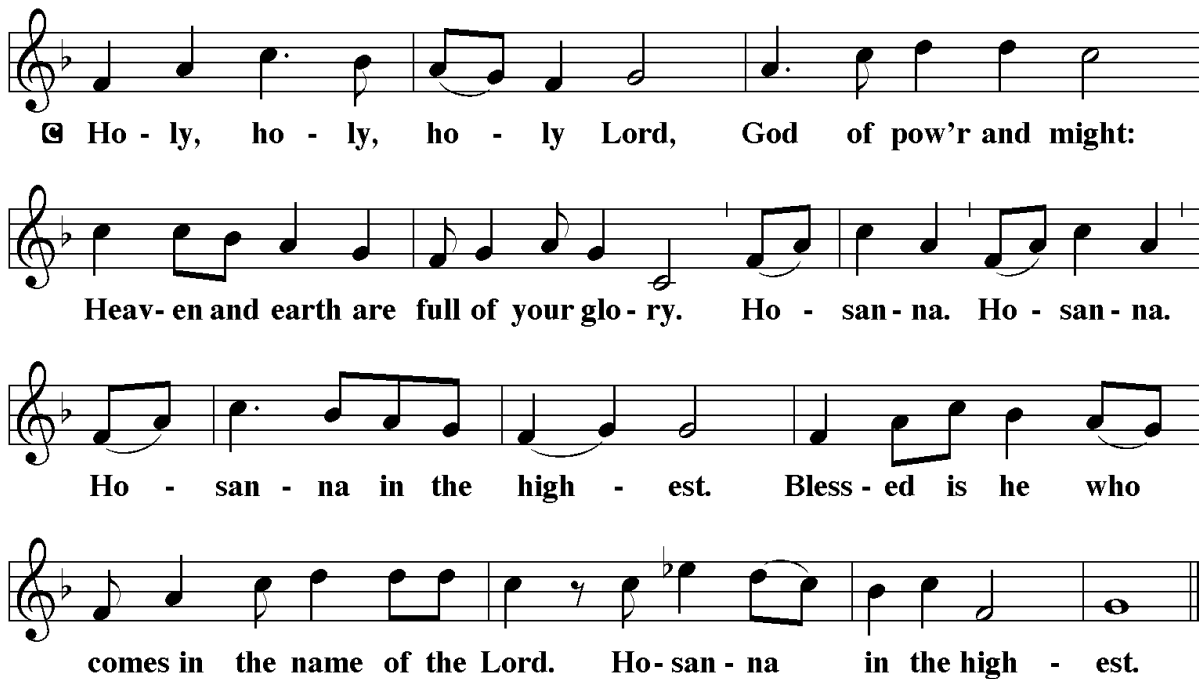
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav- en and earth are full of your glo- ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.
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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness you did not abandon us,
but guided us into the path of love and light.
In every age you sent prophets
to make known your loving will for all humanity.
The cry of the poor has become your own cry;
our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant
to preach good news to the afflicted,
to break bread with the outcast and despised,
and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,
we await the day when Jesus shall return
to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.
Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

Amen.

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate,
to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup
with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the
world.

Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

Amen.

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age,

that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection,

we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Each person responds

Amen.

COMMUNION SONG

One Bread, One Body ELW 496

One Bread, One Body

Refrain



One bread, one bod-y, one Lord of all; one cup of



bless-ing which we bless, and we, though man-y



through-out the earth, we are one bod - y in this one Lord.



1 Gen - tile or Jew, ser - vant or free,
2 Man - y the gifts, man - y the works,
3 Grain for the fields, scat-tered and grown,



wom - an or man, no more,
one in the Lord of all.
gath - ered to one for all.

Refrain

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy and gracious God, who shaped the stars and stooped to cradle dust, we give thanks that you meet us not in lofty heights, but on the ground floor—where life is raw, real, and aching for redemption. In this holy meal, You have fed us with mercy that took on flesh, with love that changed addresses and moved into a manger. You have entered our brokenness, not with distant judgment, but with hands dirtied by creation, by carpentry, by cross-bearing grace. You meet us there—again and again—with bread, with wine, with grace. Send us now, nourished and renewed, to be your people: to serve, to love, to lift, to listen. Let our lives echo your humility, and let our hands bear your healing.

In the name of Jesus, who came down to raise us up.

Amen.

BLESSING

May God who comes down to meet us where we are,
Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Joy to the World ELW 267

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin, and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

DISMISSAL

Go in joy. God's grace meets you where you are.
Thanks be to God.