SONGS IN THE WAITING

Advent voices of hope, peace, joy and love

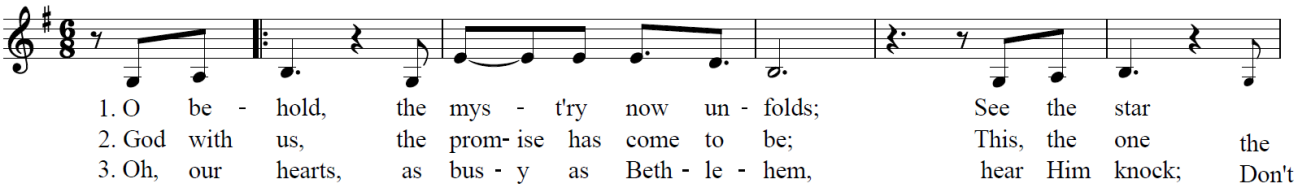
Service of Worship November 29, 2026 9:30am
First Sunday of Advent

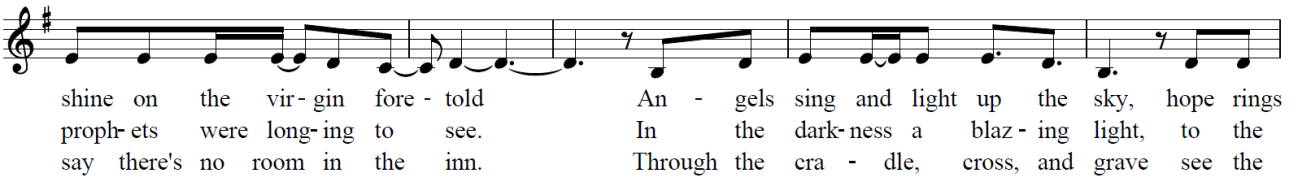
Gathering

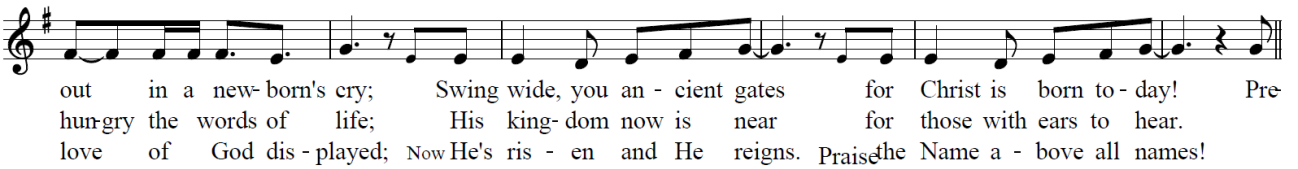
The prelude, the first act of worship, sets the tone for what is to follow.
So, we invite you as worshipers to gather, to transition from your busy lives
into a sacred place of communion with God and with each other. – Dr. Kimo Smith, adapted

SONG TO GATHER "Prepare Him Room" by Rebecca Elliot & Dave Fournier
Verses 1,2 **All**

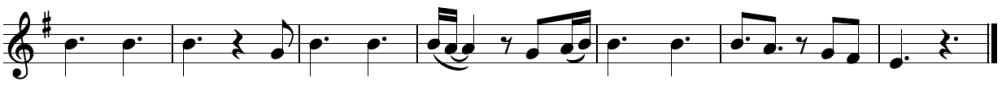
VERSE







CHORUS



WELCOME AND ANNOUNCMENTS Rev. Karen Wright

COMMISSIONING OF THE ACOLYTES

LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY

ONE**:** For those who walk in darkness,
All: may the light of Christ break in.
ONE**:** For the weary, the grieving, and the afraid,
All: may the light of Christ break in.
ONE**:** For those crushed by the yoke of fear, injustice, or war,
All: may the light of Christ break in.
ONE**:** For our own restless hearts,
All: may the light of Christ break in.
ONE**:** For a world longing for peace without end,
All: may the light of Christ break in.
ONE**:** We light the first candle of Advent, the candle of hope. *(lights the candle.)*
ONE**:** In the midst of waiting,
All: we light a flame.
ONE The candle is small,
ONE: but it doesn't need to be bright to be a sign.
ONE**:** It only needs to be lit.
ONE: Come, Lord Jesus.
All: Come, Lord Jesus, our hope.

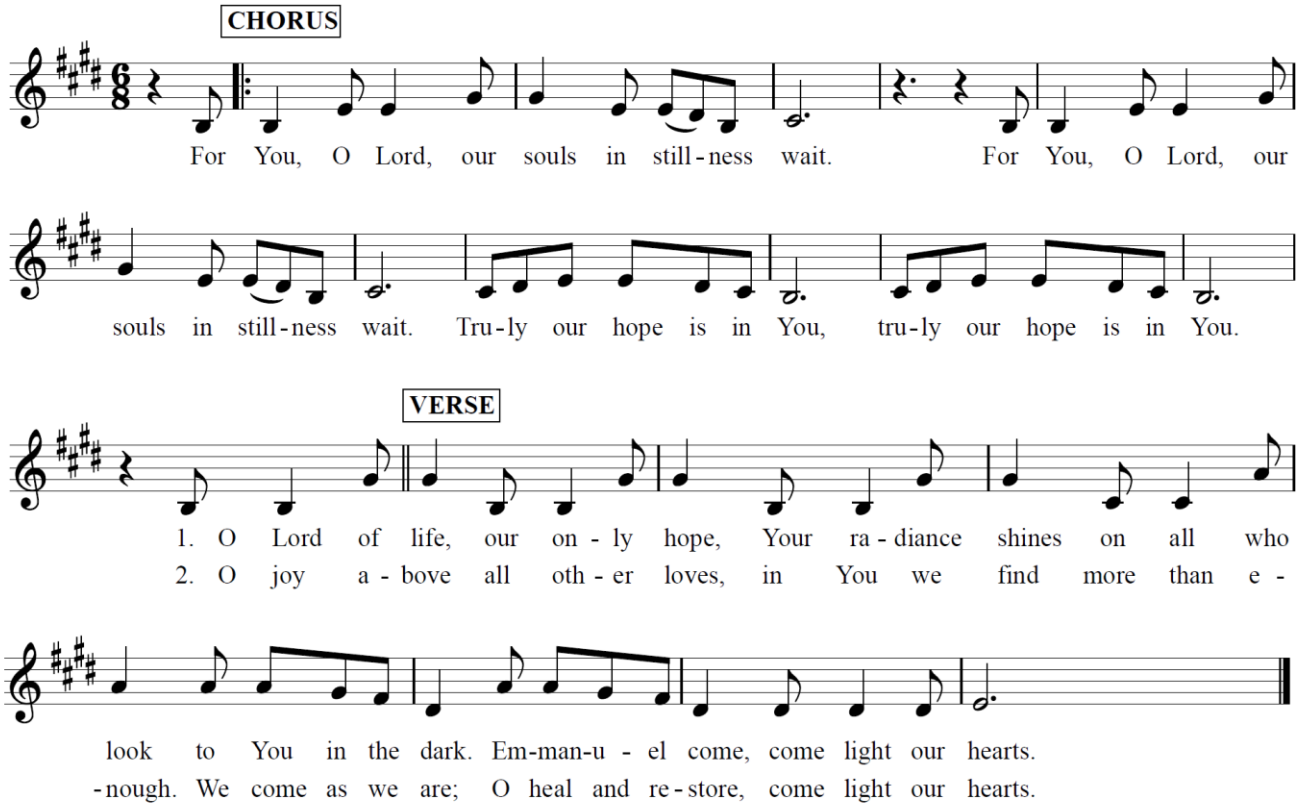
Closing Prayer (All)

God of promise, you remember what we forget and keep faith when we falter. As this first light shines, awaken in us a hope that is patient and steady. Let it be enough for this day, and lead us toward the dawn you have prepared. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE "Come Light Our Hearts" by Sandra McCracken
All

Come Light Our Hearts

Words and Music by
Sandra McCracken



CALL TO CONFESSION

Emily Nelson Dixon

In this season of waiting, we look for signs of hope and long for God to make all things new. Yet we grow impatient, lose heart, and fail to recognize the ways God is already at work. Trusting in God's promise to come near, let us confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of hope, we confess that we grow weary of waiting. We see the brokenness of the world and wonder when things will change. We allow fear to overshadow hope, despair to quiet our joy, and busyness to distract us from your presence. Forgive us when we lose sight of your promises, fail to prepare the way for your love, and resist the refining work of your Spirit. Clear away what keeps us from you. Renew our hearts, strengthen our faith, and help us carry your light into the darkness. Teach us to wait with hope, live with compassion, and trust that your salvation is drawing near. In the name of Christ, our hope and peace. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The dawn from on high is breaking upon us! In Jesus Christ, God comes near to guide our feet into the way of peace. God's mercy shines even in the darkest places, and no darkness can overcome it. Friends, believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and made new.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

SUNG RESPONSE 583 "Glory to God"

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

(Children ages 4 through 1st grade may go to Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time. Greeters at the back of the Sanctuary will go with children to Room 12 downstairs where parents may pick up their children following worship. Our Nursery welcomes young children and our ushers can assist families to the nursery located in the children's wing. Worship bags are available for children who stay in worship.)

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON Malachi 3:1–4 Allen York

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like washers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

SONG TO REFLECT "The Hope of Christmas" by Matthew West, Praise Team Andrew Jacob Pruis

Take me back to eight years old~the little church on a dead end road
With a candle flicker in one hand and dad's hand in the other
Take me back to silent night~My heart was full and the world was right
'Cause right now the world looks nothing like those innocent Decembers

These days peace on earth is hard to find, and I need You to remind me one more time

You're still the hope of Christmas You're still the light when the world looks dark
You're still the hope of Christmas, and You're still the hope of my heart

Watch the snowflakes falling down like a blanket on this town
For a moment we can hardly see the pain this year has brought us.
May the sick find healing's touch~ May hatred's fight be won with love
And may every heart make room for You, the One who came to save us

I bowed my head to pray tonight, felt my little girl by my side
She slipped her tiny hand in mine and we both talked to You
And it took me back to eight years old ~My daddy's hand and a story told
About heaven's love and a manger low and a promise that's still true.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 1:67–79

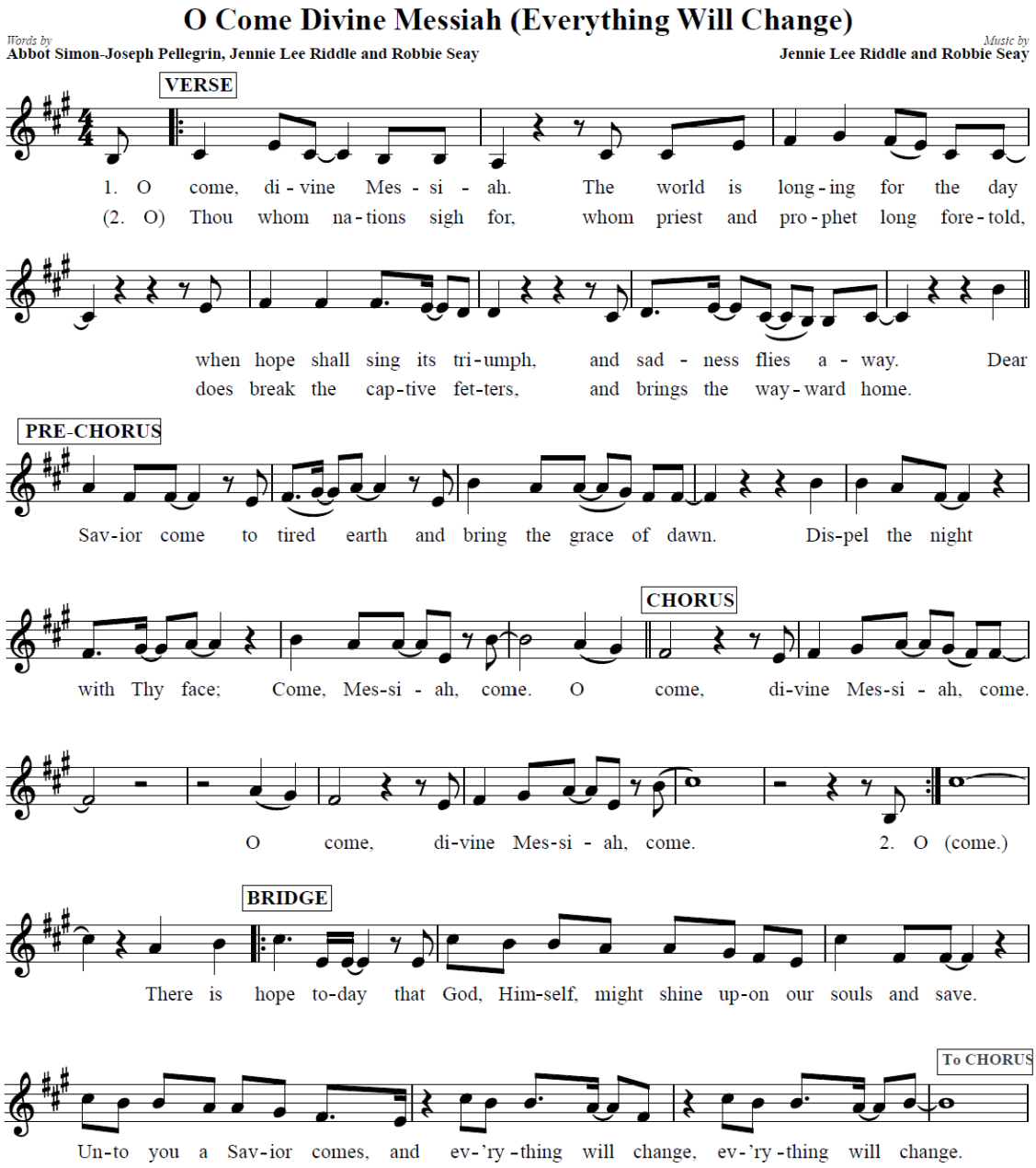
Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a mighty savior for us
in the house of his child David,
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors
and has remembered his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness
in his presence all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
Because of the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words
Thanks be to God!

SERMON "Hope in God's Promise: The Song of Zechariah" Rev. Karen Wright

SONG OF PEACE "O Come Divine Messiah"
All



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC "Once Upon" by Sovereign Grace
Praise Team

Once upon a midnight clear, Heaven's song broke through the air
Peace and goodwill toward men, Born now in Bethlehem

Once upon a bed of straw Slept the Sovereign Son of God
Lord of the universe Breathing the dust of earth

Wonderful Counselor Mighty God our Messiah
Name above every name gloria (in the highest)

Once upon a splintered cross Jesus died to rescue us
All of our shame and sin Nailed to the tree with Him

Once upon a brilliant day Christ the Conqueror was raised
Heaven and nature sing Praise to the King of kings

RESPONSE 144 v. 4 "In the Bleak Midwinter"

Sending

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION Rev. Karen Wright

SONG TO SEND "Prepare Him Room" by Rebecca Elliot & Dave Fournier
Verse 3 **All**

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

Today we commission the following youth as Acolytes. During the prelude music, two Acolytes will bring the light of Christ into our worship service, and at the conclusion of the service, they will lead us in taking the light of Christ out into the world. We appreciate these youth for their commitment to God's church.

Eloise Armbrecht	Evelyn Schmidt
Margo Armbrecht	James Schmidt
Kamden Frye	Magnolia Sellers
Aidan Hussey	Lucas Wright
Liam Hussey	Sarah Wright

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Click this link: https://bit.ly/GCPCattendance, or scan the QR Code below, and it will take you to the link.

GRACE COVENANT
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