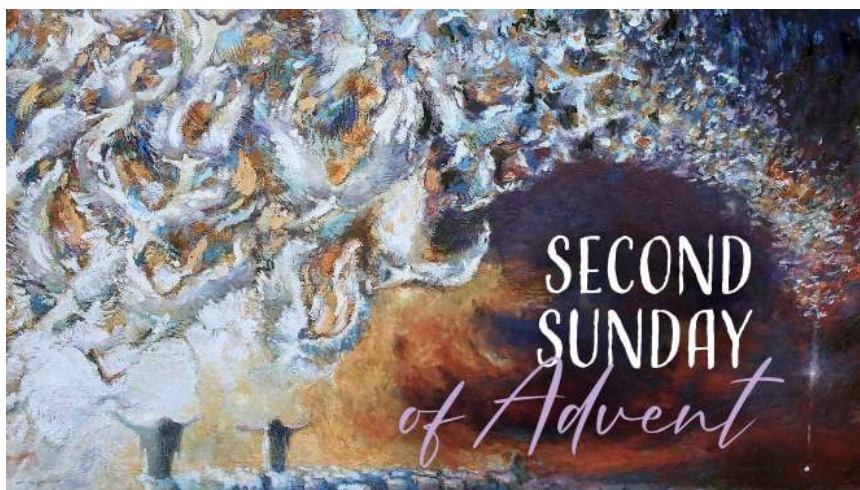


NORTH WILKESBORO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WELCOMING • GROWING • SERVING • LOVING

December 7, 2025 - 11:00 a.m.



Prelude

O Come, Little Children

Handbell Choir

Words of Welcome

Rev. Amanda Horan

WE BECOME AWARE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

Call to Worship

Turner York & Bob Vickery

One: Magnify the Lord, for God has done great things.
God is mindful of the least and the last.

Many: We praise the one who builds up the poor and casts down the powerful.

One: A child is coming who will turn the world upside down.
Let us be like his mother and worship while we wait.

**Many: We worship God, who performs mighty deeds with God's arm
and gives voice to the outcast.**

One: God fills the hungry with good things and sends the rich away empty.

Many: We will wait and not be afraid.

Lighting the Candle of Peace

***Hymn (#82)**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

WE OPEN OURSELVES TO GOD'S GRACE

***Call to Confession**

Rev. R.C. Griffin III

***Prayer of Confession**

God of Grace, we confess that we are not ready for you to come into our world — not quite yet. We cling to the known and familiar, afraid of the transformation your grace will bring. Yet you are always a step ahead of us, a voice crying out in the wilderness, inviting us into to bold new ways of being disciples. Humble us, O God, and teach us to do the work of repentance so that, fully reliant on your grace, we may know the richness of restored relationship with you and one another. (Silence)

***Responsive Assurance of Pardon**

One: Friends, let's share the good news:

Many: God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

One: Before we repent and change our ways,
God's love has already claimed us as God's own.

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

***Sharing a Sign of Christ's Peace**

***Congregational Response (#76, refrain)**

Do Not Be Afraid

Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Chosen and beloved, you are my own.

Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you: by your name I called you for my own.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD TO US

Prayer for Illumination (#95, sing 2x)

Prepare the Way of the Lord

First Scripture Lesson

Matthew 3:1-12

*(One: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Many: Thanks be to God.**)*

Anthem

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming/He Will Come

Benjamin Harlan

Second Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-10

*(One: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Many: Thanks be to God.**)*

Sermon

New Growth

Rev. Amanda Horan

WE RESPOND TO GOD IN FAITH

***Affirmation of Faith**

Adapted from *The Confession of 1967*

God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ embraces the whole of human life: social and cultural, economic and political, scientific and technological, individual and corporate. It includes our natural environment as exploited and despoiled by sin. God wills that God's purpose for human life shall be fulfilled under the rule of Christ, and all evil be banished from God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in all people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

***Hymn (#373)**

O Day of Peace

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

Call to Generosity

Elder Karen Worley

Offertory

Meditation of "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"
Marty Franklin

John Carter

***Congregational Response (#607, alt. tune #147)**

Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise triune God whom we adore.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel. Born is the King of Israel.*

***Responsive Prayer of Dedication**

One: We give you thanks, Holy One, for all good things:

**Many: for this universe and for Earth itself, for creatures and plants, for water
and food, for light and darkness;**

One: We give you thanks for Jesus, our brother,

**Many: who enlarged our vision and teaches us to believe in and work for in a life
of peace and abundance for all.**

One: Take the gifts of our lives.

**All: Turn our offerings to your good will, and turn us always to you in
gratitude. Amen.**

WE DEPART TO SERVE

***Hymn (#106)**

Prepare the Way, O Zion

***Charge & Benediction**

***Postlude**

Postlude on VENI VENI EMMANUEL

***Please rise, in body or spirit.**



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news, and more!

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus 82



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.



Is-rael's strength and con-so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf-fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo-rious throne.



With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

Do Not Be Afraid

76

Refrain

All E B C#m G D/F# E B

Do not be a - fraid, for I am with you. Cho-sen and be -

C#m D Bm7 Dmaj7 E B C#m

loved, you are my own. Do not be a - fraid, for I have re -

E7 D Bm7 C Em Am7 Bm7 E *Last time*

deemed you: by your name I called you for my own.

Several verses from Isaiah 43 are paraphrased here: 1b (refrain), 19 (stanza 1), 25 (stanza 2). That prophetic oracle of salvation is rooted in the assurance of God's presence with the People of the Covenant. They, in turn, are called to seek God's will and proclaim God's power.

TEXT: Joy F. Patterson, 2004
MUSIC: Sally Ann Morris, 2008
Text and Music © 2009 GIA Publications, Inc.

ISAIAH 43
Irregular

Prepare the Way of the Lord

95

Capo 1: (D) (G) (D)

E^b A^b E^b (chords continue)

Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. Pre-prepare the way of the Lord,

and all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God.

**May be sung as a canon.*

All three synoptic gospels identify John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah (Matthew 3:3/ Mark 1:2-3/ Luke 3:4) in accord with Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 40:3b). Because the latter part of the text (Isaiah 52:10b) has yet to be accomplished, this is still our mission today.

TEXT: Taizé Community, 1984
MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1984
Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

PREPARE THE WAY
7.7.6.7

O Day of Peace

1 O day of peace that dim-ly shines through all our
 2 Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the

hopes and prayers and dreams, guide us to jus-tice, truth, and
 fierce de-vour the small; as beasts and cat-tle calm-ly

love, de-liv-ered from our self-ish schemes. May swords of hate
 graze, a lit-tle child shall lead them all. Then en-e-mies

fall from our hands, our hearts from en-vy find re-lease, till by God's
 shall learn to love, all crea-tures find their true ac-cord; the hope of

grace our war-ring world shall see Christ's prom-ised reign of peace.
 peace shall be ful-filled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This text on peace was created to offer non-nationalistic words for a popular British tune. The first stanza depicts *pax*, a mode of peace focused on ending conflict, and the second (based on Isaiah 11:6-9) describes *shalom*, the condition of living in harmony and mutual good will.

TEXT: Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982

MUSIC: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1916; harm. Charles H. Webb, 1987

Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

Music Melody © 1916, 1944, this Arr. © 1977 Robertson Publications (admin. Goodmusic Publishing Ltd.)

Music Harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

JERUSALEM
LMD

607

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Doxology



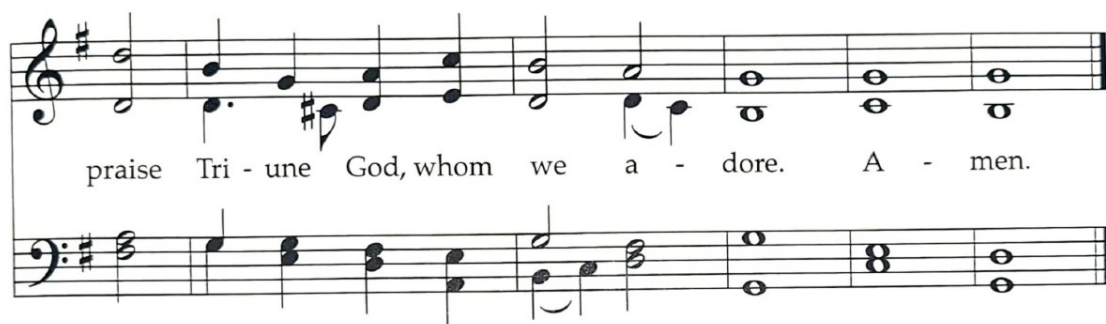
Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Christ, all peo - ple

TEXT: Neil Weatherhogg, 1988
MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551
Text © 1990 Neil Weatherhogg

OLD HUNDREDTH
LM



here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more;

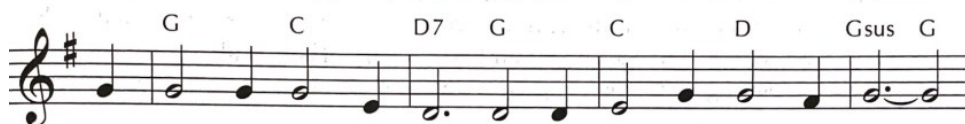


praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore. A - men.

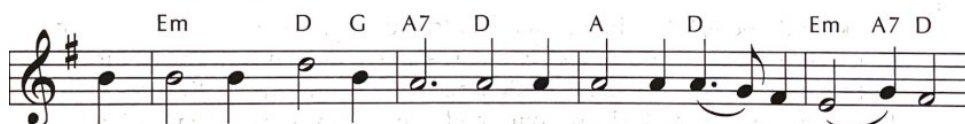
Prepare the Way, O Zion 106



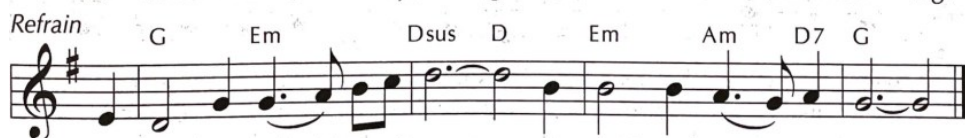
- 1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
- 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
- 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.



O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This engaging Advent text based on Isaiah 40:3–5 and Psalm 24:7–10 has been in use in the Church of Sweden for almost two hundred years. It is set to a version of an even older Swedish tune, which in turn seems to be derived from a German folktune that spread to Scandinavia.

TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812; rev. 1819; trans. Augustus Nelson, 1958;
adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980, alt.

MUSIC: *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; arr. *American Lutheran Hymnal*, 1930
Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN
7.6.7.6.7.7 with refrain