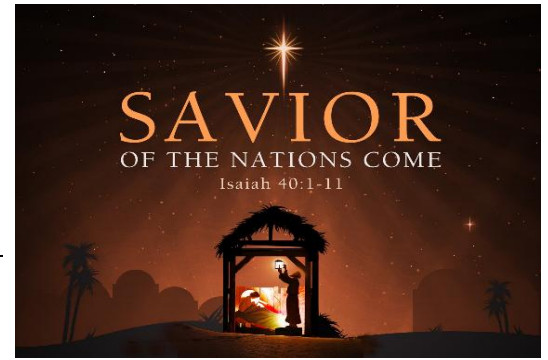


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DECEMBER 7, 2025 • 8:30 AM • 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
*Savior of the Nations Come* – Prepare the Royal Highway

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**Welcome!** We're excited you're here. In our service, we gather before Almighty God to offer Him our worship and praise. We come together to be strengthened by His Word to be His witnesses.

**Families**, if you brought your children with you today, we want you to know that the spiritual well-being of your child is very important to us. Many families wish to teach and encourage their younger child(ren) to be in church and get what they can out of it. If you feel that you need to take your child out for whatever reason; there is a cry room near the back of the sanctuary and a restroom with a baby changing station is located by the elevator (to the left as you exit the sanctuary). **Guests**, we welcome you. If you will, please help us to get to know you by filling out the Guest side of the Welcome Card found in the pews/ chair backs and place it in the offering plates.

**As We Gather:** We often cry, "Let me out!" Many know addictive behavior like high anxiety, unpredictable anger, or biting sarcasm. Others are chained to a grudge that won't leave until there's revenge. Still others are fighting an inner battle with a skeleton in their closet that is rattling louder and louder. Repentance is the doorway to freedom from these besetting sins, with the result that we see anew God's magnificent glory in Christ our Lord!

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## WELCOME / VIDEO

*"Come and See, Peace" – Skit Guys*

*Please Stand*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

**P** In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

## OPENING HYMN

344 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry"

- 1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry; Announces that the Lord is nigh;  
Awake and hearken, for he brings; Glad tidings of the King of kings!
- 2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,  
And let us all our hearts prepare; For Christ to come and enter there.
- 3 We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;  
Without Thy grace we waste away; Like flow'rs that wither and decay.

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## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*(From John 1:1-14)*

*[ Two purple candles are lit. ]*

**P** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**C He was with God in the beginning.**

**P** Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the Light of men.

**C The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.**

**P** There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that Light, so that through Him all men might believe. He himself was not the Light; he came only as a witness to the Light.

**C The true Light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.**

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH (cont.)

(From John 1:1-14)

- P He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His Own, but His Own did not receive Him.
- C Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His Name, He gave the right to become children of God—**
- P Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.
- C We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

(based upon Isaiah 40:3-5)

*(silence for a time of reflection)*

- P God of comfort, how grateful we are that You are patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but for everyone to come to repentance. Today we come before You repenting of our sin, confessing our transgressions and longing for Your forgiveness.
- C Almighty God, I confess my sin. It robs me of peace and fills me with shame.**
- P I have experienced the futility of my own sinfulness.
- C I need Your forgiving love.**
- P I ask that You come down and take away my sin.
- C Because Jesus died for me, I ask in confidence that You will forgive me.**
- P Yet a voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." John the Baptist came preaching repentance and faith in Jesus.
- C He says, "Every 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."**
- P And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." And he has spoken definitively and eternally in Jesus. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. In the stead and by the command of Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.**

## GREETING

### HYMN OF PREPARATION

344 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry,"

- 4 Lay on the sick Thy healing hand; And make the fallen strong to stand;  
Show us the glory of Thy face; Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.
- 5 All praise, eternal Son, to Thee; Whose advent sets Thy people free,  
Whom with the Father we adore; And Holy Spirit evermore.

Text and tune: Public domain

### SALUTATION AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P The Lord be with you.
- C And also with you.**
- P Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.**

*Be Seated*

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

+ WORD +

*Taking the cross of grace and peace to form a community of uncommon servants.*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING -** *(The highlighted section is read together.)*

*Isaiah 40:1-11*

*(Comfort Given to God's People.)*

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup>A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every 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. <sup>5</sup>And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." <sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. <sup>9</sup>Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" is with him, and his recompense before him. <sup>11</sup>He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

*L This is the Word of the Lord.*

**C Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN**

*346 "When all the World was Cursed"*

- 1 When all the world was cursed; By Moses' condemnation,  
Saint John the Baptist came; With words of consolation.  
With true forerunner's zeal; The greater One he named,  
And Him, as yet unknown, As Savior he proclaimed.
- 3 Behold the Lamb of God; That bears the world's transgression,  
Whose sacrifice removes; The devil's dread oppression.  
Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away our sin,  
Who for our peace and joy; Will full atonement win.
- 4 O grant, dear Lord of love, That we receive, rejoicing,  
The word proclaimed by John, Our true repentance voicing,  
That gladly we may walk; Upon our Savior's way  
Until we live with Him; In His eternal day.

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**EPISTLE**

*2 Corinthians 7:1-10*

*(Paul's godly grief.)*

<sup>1</sup>Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. <sup>2</sup>Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. <sup>3</sup>I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. <sup>4</sup>I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy. <sup>5</sup>For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. <sup>6</sup>But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, <sup>7</sup>and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. <sup>8</sup>For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. <sup>9</sup>As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. <sup>10</sup>For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

*L This is the Word of the Lord.*

**C Thanks be to God.**

*Please Stand*

*Taking the cross of grace and peace to form a community of uncommon servants.*

## VERSE

Luke 3:4b, 6

P Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord,

**C make His paths straight; all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.**

## HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1–12

*("The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord.'")*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the third chapter.

**C Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup> "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." <sup>3</sup> For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" <sup>4</sup> Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were Baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" <sup>8</sup> Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup> And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to You, O Christ.**

*Be Seated – Children Dismissed for Children's Church*

## MESSAGE HYMN

343 "Prepare the Royal Highway"

- 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: {Refrain}

*Refrain: 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! {Refrain}
- 3 Then fling the gates wide open; To greet your promised king!  
Your king, yet ev'ry nation; Its tribute too should bring.  
All lands, bow down before Him! All nations, now adore Him! {Refrain}
- 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: {Refrain}

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## MESSAGE

*Please Stand – Children return from Children's Church*

*Taking the cross of grace and peace to form a community of uncommon servants.*

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

**C** 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 Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

**OFFERING** *(Thanks for your ongoing stewardship and support of God's mission here!)*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*(Prayer response after each petition...)*

**P** Comfort, comfort my people,

**C** Says your God.

## LORD'S PRAYER

*Matthew 6:9–13*

+ SACRAMENT +

## PREFACE

*2 Timothy 4:22*

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them to the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

## PROPER PREFACE

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

## HYMN

*873 "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"*

1 Christ, whose glory fills the skies, Christ, the true and only light,  
Sun of righteousness, arise; Triumph o'er the shades of night.  
Dayspring from on high, be near; Daystar, in my heart appear.

3 Visit then this soul of mine, Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
Fill me, radiance divine, Scatter all my unbelief;  
More and more Thyself display, Shining to the perfect day.

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## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

*Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24;  
Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

## PAX DOMINI

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

*Be Seated*

After the Distribution - Please Stand

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

- P Grant us Your grace, O Lord God, that what we have here received in Word and Sacrament we may keep holy and without blemish in our hearts and lives. Keep the earthly preparations for a holiday from distracting us from being ready to receive Him on the day You have appointed, when all people shall stand before Him, our Savior and our Judge; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26

- P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
- C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

332 "Savior of the Nations, Come"

- 1 Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home!  
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.
- 5 God the Father was His source, Back to God He ran His course.  
Into hell His road went down, Back then to His throne and crown.
- 6 For You are the Father's Son; Who in flesh the vict'ry won.  
By Your mighty pow'r make whole; All our ills of flesh and soul.
- 7 From the manger newborn light; Shines in glory through the night.  
Darkness there no more resides; In this light faith now abides.
- 8 Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our king,  
Glory to the Spirit be; Now and through eternity.

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POSTLUDE

Into the world, readying our world for Jesus ...

A HUGE "Thank you" to those that served to make worship happen (virtual and in-person) today...

Pastor .....	Rev. Jason Hoerth	Reader .....	Robin Greene
Children's Message .....	Chris Graves	Musician .....	Cheryl Heck
Deaconess Intern .....	Julia Witt	Acolyte .....	Dean Remmele
Trustee.....		Elder .....	Bob Remmele

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