

December 14, 2025  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Messiah Lutheran Church, Amherst, NH

PRELUDE

J. Abrams

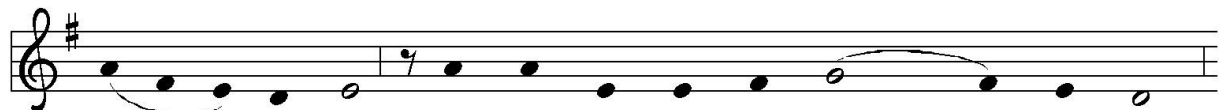


WELCOME

YULE LOG      ELW 257      O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vv. 1-3



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things  
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!  
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.  
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

One: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever.

**All: Amen.**

One: Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

One: Gracious God,

**All: have mercy on us.  
We confess that we have honored you with our lips,  
but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues.  
The cravings at war within us  
cause conflicts and disputes.**

**In our desire to be first  
we make distinctions among ourselves.  
We place the needs of the poor and the suffering  
last.**

**In your great mercy, forgive us our sins.  
Draw near to us with grace in time of need,  
and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ,  
our Savior and Lord.  
Amen.**

One: God promises to forgive our iniquity  
and to remember our sin no more.  
By grace you have been saved.  
In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ,  
the source of eternal healing,  
your sins are forgiven.

**All: Amen.**

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing  
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is  
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the  
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,  
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,  
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,  
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look  
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look  
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look  
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANÇON, French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934

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One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ✠, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

## KYRIE

*Assistant:* In peace, in peace,

**Refrain**

*Assistant:* *Congregation:*

Let us pray to the Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy. *to Verses*

*Assistant:* For the Reign of God, and for peace throughout the world, for the unity of all . . . (to Refrain)

*Assistant:* For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word . . . (to Refrain)

*Assistant:*

Help, save and de - fend us, O God. A - men.

*Congregation:*

## NOW THE FEAST

### Refrain

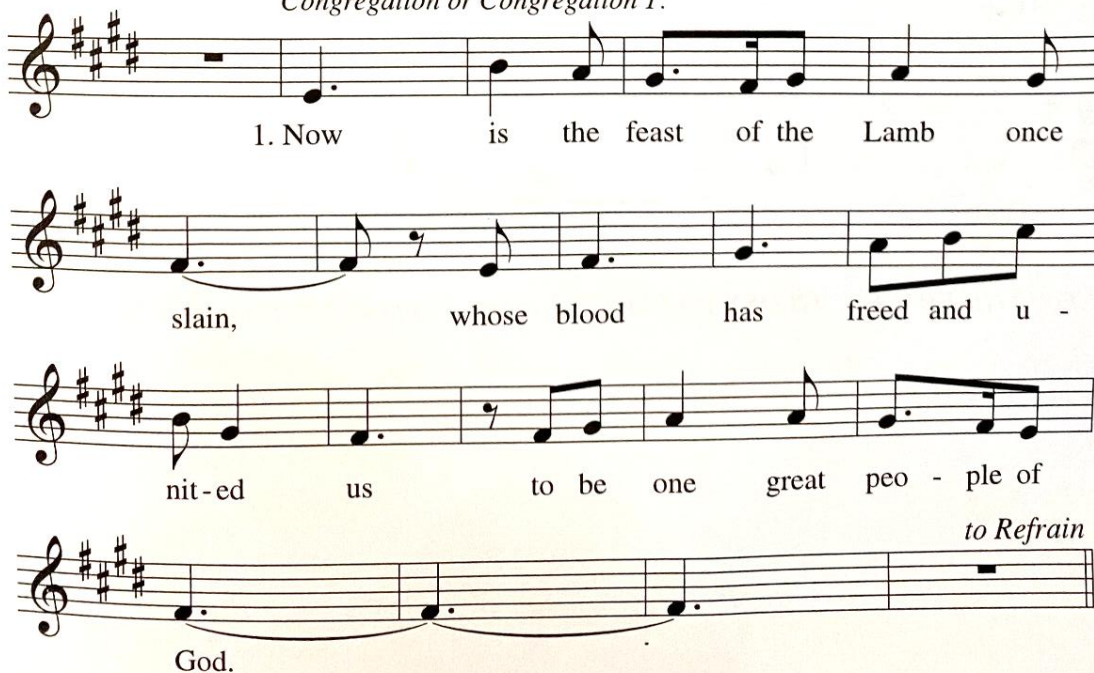
*Congregation:*



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,  
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy  
to the God of life and love and  
free - dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -  
er - more!

### Verse 1

*Congregation or Congregation 1:*



1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once  
slain, whose blood has freed and u -  
nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of  
God. *to Refrain*

## Verse 2

*Congregation or Congregation 2:*

2. Pow - er and rich-es, wis - dom and  
might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ  
for ev - er. *to Refrain*

## Verse 3

*Congregation:*

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to  
make us peo - ple of God; to make  
all things new. *to Refrain*

## SALUTATION

*Presider:**Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.



## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

One:        Let us pray

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**All:            Amen.**

## **FIRST LESSON**

One:        A reading from 35<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah chapter:

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.]]

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you."

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;  
<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.

<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the Lord shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God, word of life.

**All:**

**Thanks be to God.**



**PSALMODY Luke 1 46b-55 (sung)**

MLC Psalm tones by J. Abrams 2024

MLC Psalm Tone IV



46b My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,  
47 my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,

**48 for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will | call me blessed:**

<sup>49</sup> you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me  
and holy | is your name.

**50 You have mercy on | those who fear you,  
from generation to | generation.**

<sup>51</sup> You have shown strength | with your arm  
and scattered the proud in | their conceit,

**52 casting down the mighty | from their thrones  
and lifting | up the lowly.**

<sup>53</sup> You have filled the hungry I with good things  
and sent the rich I away empty.

**54 You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,  
to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,**

<sup>55</sup> the promise made I to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his chil- I dren forever.

## SECOND LESSON

One: A reading from James the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter:

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

One: Word of God, word of life.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL VERSE

*Congregation:*



Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we  
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal  
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Optional Repeat*

One: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**All: Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>2</sup>When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup>and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup>And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

<sup>7</sup>As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup>What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup> "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

One: The Gospel of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

## **SERMON**

## HYMN OF THE DAY Annunciation & Magnificat from Holden Evening Prayer

Leader: The Light shines in the darkness

**All:** and the darkness has not overcome it.

Leader: An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary. The angel said to her, "Rejoice O highly favored, for God is with you. You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus, the Chosen One of God Most High." And Mary said, "I am the servant of my God, I live to do your will."



1. My soul pro-claims your great-ness, O God, and my



spir - it re - joic - es in you. You have looked with love on your



ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.



Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One,



strong is your kind-ness ev - er - more. How you fa - vor the



weak and low - ly one, hum - bling the proud of heart!



2. You have cast the might - y down from their thrones, and up -



lift - ed the hum-ble of heart. You have filled the hun - gry with



won - drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.



Great and might - y are you, O Faith - ful One,



strong is your jus - tice, strong your love, as you prom-ised to



Sar - ah and A - bra - ham, kind - ness for - ev - er - more.



3. My soul pro-claims your great-ness, O God, and my



spir - it re - joic - es in you. You have looked with love on your



ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.

## **CREED**

One: Together we confess our faith in the words of the Apostles  
Creed:

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and dead,  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**



## PRAYERS

One: Let us pray:

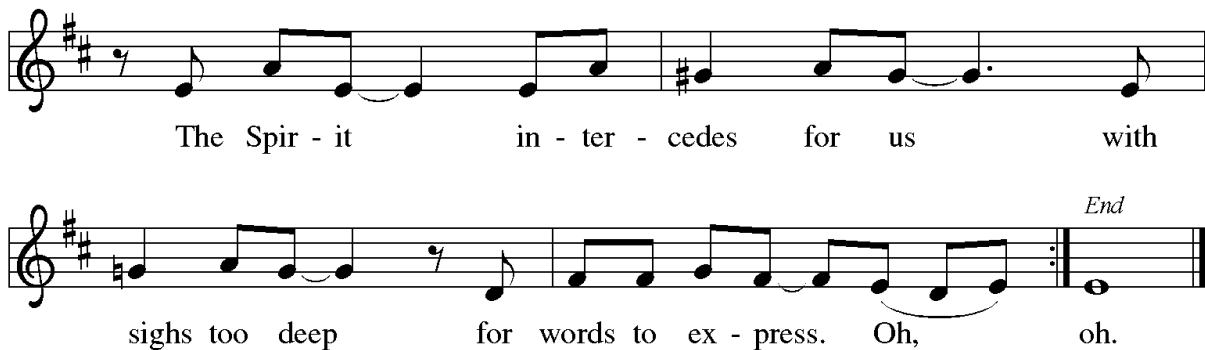
*A brief silence.*

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

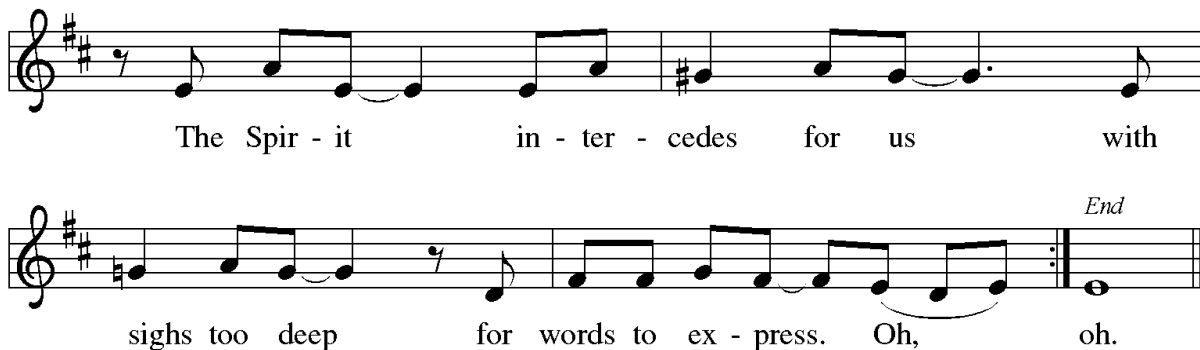
God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you.

... come Holy Spirit

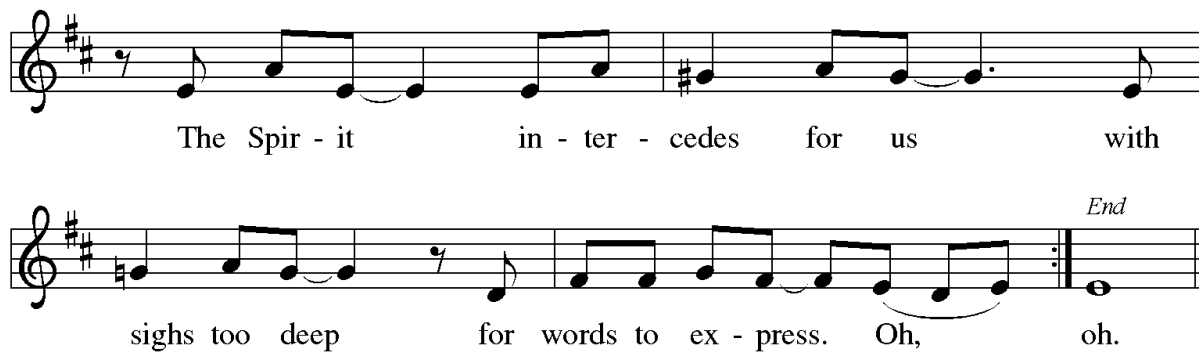


When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works.

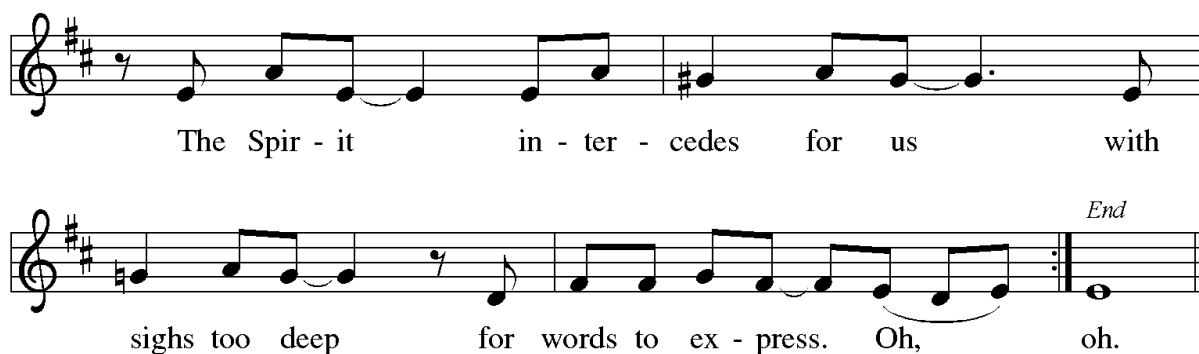
... Come Holy Spirit



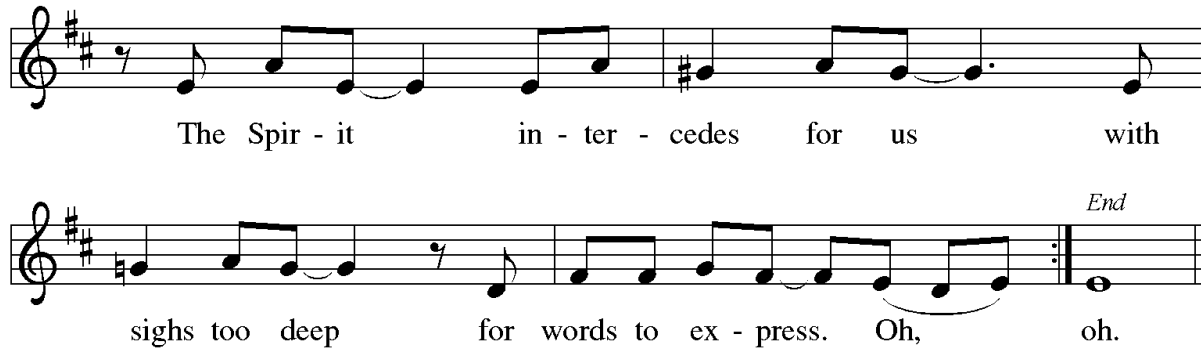
When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern.  
... come Holy Spirit



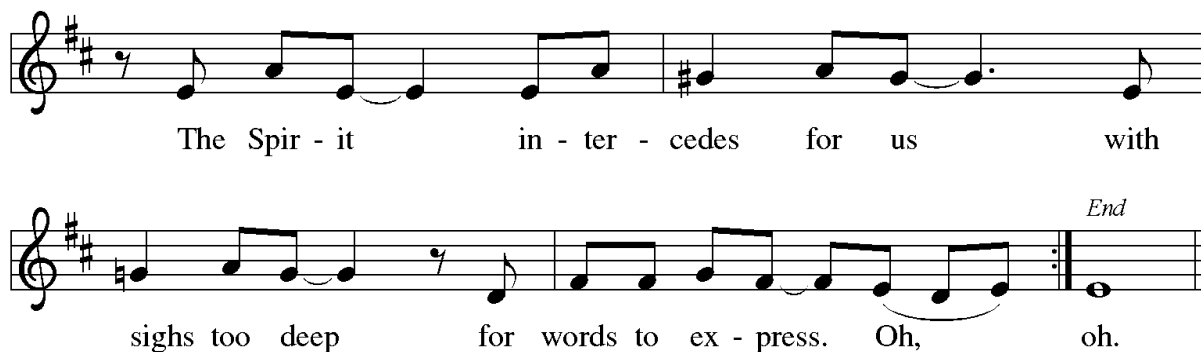
When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. (We pray especially for) Claudette Briere, Ed Costa, Norm and Polly Cote, Deloris Jay, Carol Clark, Elia Herlinda Soteldo Cuica, Kayann Laughlin, Timothy Alexander, The Wurst Family, Rev Bob Kocher, Carly Hoeni, Shelly Stama, Eric Ball, Connor McCaffrey, Marc Bouchard, Jeffery Lindenberg, Jim Bellig, Diane Hazel, Linnea Micciulla, Phil Stinnett, Susan Poutre, Krista Seckinger, Carly King, Christine Covel, the Demello family, Connie Wisneski and friends and family of Terri Yensz. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith.  
... come Holy Spirit



You invite all people to your table of grace. Make this a community of radical hospitality where all feel loved and celebrated. Show us how to better welcome visitors and bless the ministries of hospitality in this place such as ELCA World Hunger and our local food pantries including Share, bless the efforts of AMMPARO, the ELCA congregations of the New Hampshire conference, Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Disaster Response, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire, Border Servant Corps, His mansion. ...come Holy Spirit



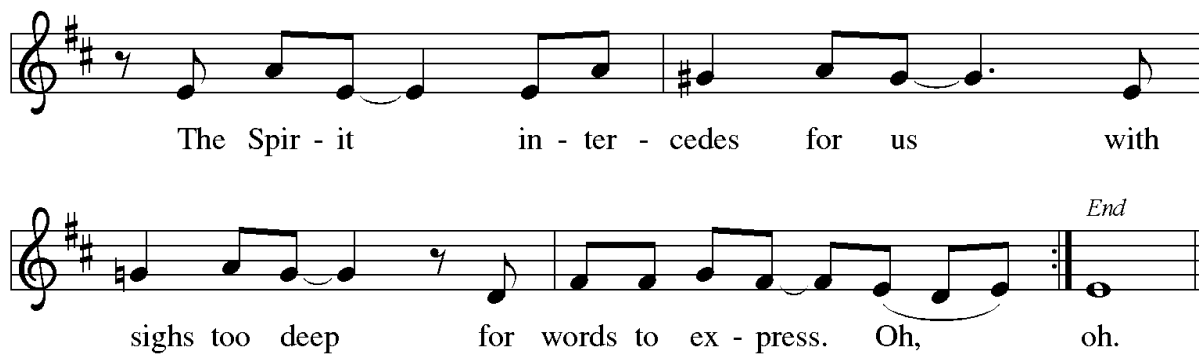
When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant (*especially we pray for Global Refuge and Lutheran Social Services*).  
... come Holy Spirit



*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith (especially *Mary, mother of Jesus, John of the Cross and . . .*). May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work.

... come Holy Spirit



Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

One: The peace of the Lord be with you.

**All:** And also with you.

## **OFFERING**

## AS THE GRAINS OF WHEAT

### Refrain

*Congregation:*



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were  
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;  
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be  
gath-ered in - to one in you.

### Verses



1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst  
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when  
to Refrain  
may we share the pres-ence of your love.  
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

One: Let us pray:

Merciful God,

**All: everything in heaven and earth belongs to you. We joyfully release what you have entrusted to us. May these gifts be signs of our whole lives returned to you, dedicated to the healing and unity of all creation, through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

# THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*Presider:* *Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al - so with

*Presider:* *Congregation:*

you. Lift up your hearts. We

*Presider:*

lift them to the Lord. Let us give

*Congregation:*

thanks to the Lord our God. It is

right to give God thanks and praise.

## PREFACE

In altar version of "Now the Feast and Celebration"

*Congregation:*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and  
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the  
One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

### **EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATION 1 (for use with other Eucharistic prayers)**

*Presider:*

Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will  
come, come a - gain.

*Congregation:*

Christ has died. Christ is  
ris - en. Christ will come, come a - gain.



## EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATION 2

*Presider:*

A - men. Come, Lord Je - sus. A -

*Congregation:*

men. Come, Lord Je - sus. A - men. Come, Lord

Je - sus. A - men. Come, Lord Je - sus.

## EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATION 3

*Presider:*

A - men. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it. A -

*Congregation:*

men. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it. A - men. Come, Ho - ly

Spir - it. A - men. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it.

## THROUGH CHRIST, WITH CHRIST, IN CHRIST

*Congregation:*

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: 'Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the u - ni - ty of the Spir - it, all glo - ry and hon - or is yours, O God, now and for ev - er. A - men.' The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the  
u - ni - ty of the Spir - it, all glo - ry and hon - or is  
yours, O God, now and for ev - er.  
A - men.

One: Together we pray the prayer our Lord taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven,  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
As we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

# LAMB OF GOD

*Congregation:*      *Congregation or Assistant:*

Lamb of God,      you take a - way the sin of the  
 \* you break the chains of ha - tred and  
 you are the way of jus - tice and  
 you are the way of mer - cy and

*Congregation:*

world:      have mer - cy on us,      mer - cy on us,  
 fear:  
 peace:  
 love:

*Final time Cong. or assistant:*

mer - cy on us.      Lamb of God,      you

*Congregation:*

take a - way the sins of the world:      grant us peace,

grant us peace,      grant us peace.

*\*At the repeat, one or more of these verses may be sung, or one of the seasonal verses which follow.*

*Advent:*      You give us hope as we wait for you:

# COMMUNION HYMN      ELW 485      I Am the Bread of Life

Leader or All

1 "I am the Bread of life. You who  
 2 "The bread that . . . I will give is my  
 3 "Un - less . . . you . . . eat of the  
 4 "I am the res - ur - rec - tion, . . .  
 5 Yes, Lord, . . . I be - lieve that . . .

come to me shall not hun - ger, and who be -  
 flesh for the life of the world, . . . and if you  
 flesh of the Son of Man . . . and . . .  
 I . . . am the life. . . If you be -  
 you . . . are the Christ, . . . the . . .

lieve in me shall not thirst. No one can come to  
 eat . . . of this bread, you shall . . live for -  
 drink . . . of his blood, and drink . . . of his  
 lieve . . . in . . . me, e - ven . . though you  
 Son . . . of . . . God, who . . . have . . .

me un - less the Fa - ther beck - ons."  
 ev - er, . . . you shall live for - ev - er."  
 blood, you shall not have life with - in you."  
 die, . . . you shall live for - ev - er."  
 come in - to . . . the . . . world. . .

*Refrain*  
 All

"And I will raise you up, and I will raise you up,

and I will raise you up on the last day."

Text: Suzanne Toolan, RSM, b. 1927, based on John 6  
 Music: I AM THE BREAD, Suzanne Toolan, RSM  
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*After all have returned to their places, the minister may say these or similar words:*

*Presider:* May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood strengthen, keep and unite us, now and for ever.

*Congregation:* **Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **BLESSING**

One:       Receive a blessing from the Lord:

May God bless us and keep us.

May God's face shine on us and be gracious

May God look on us with favor and ☩ give us peace.

**All:       Amen.**

SENDING HYMN    ELW 737    He Comes to Us as One Unknown



1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un - seen, un -  
2 He comes when souls in si - lence lie and thoughts of day de -  
3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o - cean's fume and  
4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and  
5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be - lieved, o - beyed, a -



heard; as though with - in a heart of stone, or shriv - eled seed in  
part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a fall - ing star a -  
foam; yet small and still up - on the breeze, a wind that stirs the  
birth; to bear with - in our mor - tal frame a life, a death, a  
dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as yet un - seen, but



dark - ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred.  
cross the sky of night with - in the heart, of night with - in the heart.  
tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home.  
sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth.  
not un - known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926

Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918

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One: Go in peace and serve the Lord  
All: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Jon Abrams

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flame image on yule log Designed by macrovector\_official / Freepik

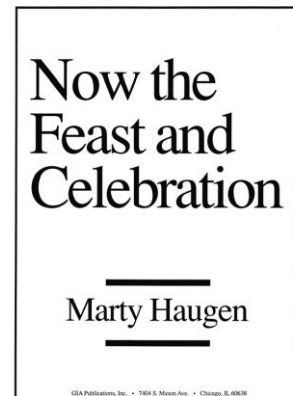
## **WORSHIP LEADERS**

Pastor Karl Hester

### **Musician**

Jon Abrams

## **LITURGY**



Messiah Lutheran Church  
303 Route 101  
Amherst, NH 03031  
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<b>WORSHIP ASSISTANTS</b>	<b>Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	<b>Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 4:00 pm</b>
<b>Preacher &amp; Presider</b>	<b>K. Hester</b>	<b>K. Hester</b>	<b>K. Hester</b>
<b>Liturgist</b>	<b>Doreen Rinas</b>	<b>T. Costa</b>	
<b>Musician</b>	<b>J. Abrams</b>	<b>Steve Kennedy</b>	
<b>Reader</b>	<b>J. Reitter</b>	<b>S. Steffensmeier</b>	<b>K. Brundage</b>
<b>Greeters/Ushers</b>	<b>Costas</b>	<b>Balls</b>	<b>G. De Noble</b>
<b>Altar</b>	<b>R. Ede</b>	<b>R. Meldrum</b>	
<b>Bread</b>	<b>D. Cordts</b>	<b>Schurs</b>	
<b>Tech</b>	<b>D. Schur</b>	<b>D. Schur</b>	
<b>Snacks</b>	<b>Schurs</b>	<b>R. Meldrum &amp; Doreen Rinas</b>	
<b>Lead Counter</b>	<b>Meldrum</b>	<b>L. Rosse</b>	