

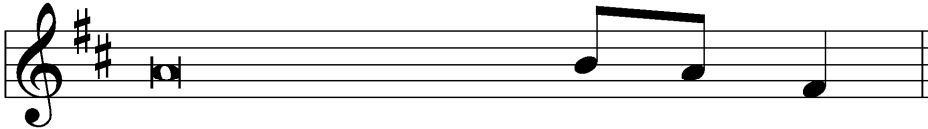
**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Hazen, ND
Pastor Peters
December 6, 2023**

Look Up! The Star of Peace Draws Near

The season of Advent is filled with the relentless seeking of things. Shopping is in full swing, and we hear the promise again and again: If we have all the right stuff, buy all the perfect gifts, attend all the posh parties, and decorate with all the trendy decorations, then we will feel complete and at peace. Counter this line of thinking with what God's Word teaches us about contentment. The apostle Paul writes, "Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content" (1 Timothy 6:6–8). As we pause during this first week of Advent and pray for the Lord to stir up our hearts for the arrival of His Son, we remember the story of the ancient Magi, who followed the star and found contentment in the King who had been born to save them. Jesus now invites us also to follow Him and receive from Him that same peace, that "godliness with contentment," which the Magi also received.

Opening Sentences

L O Lord, open my lips,



C and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.

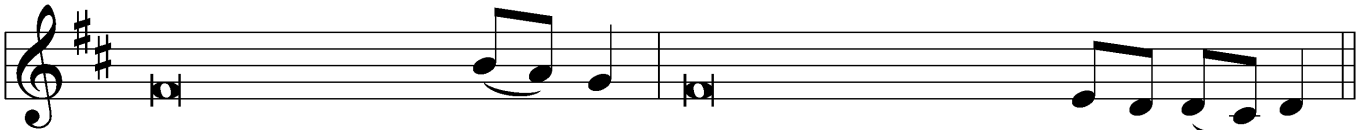
L Make haste, O God, to deliver me;



C make haste to help me, O Lord.



C Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.



Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.

Psalmody

Psalm

Psalm 80:1–7; antiphon: v. 7

P Restore us, O God of hosts;

C let Your face shine, that we may be saved!

P Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
You who lead Joseph like a flock!

C You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine
forth.

P Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,

C stir up Your might and come to save us!

P Restore us, O God;

C let Your face shine, that we may be saved!

P O LORD God of hosts,

C how long will You be angry with Your people's prayers?

P You have fed them with the bread of tears

C and given them tears to drink in full measure.

P You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,

C and our enemies laugh among themselves.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P Restore us, O God of hosts;

C let Your face shine, that we may be saved!

332 Savior of the Nations, Come



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
God was there up - on His throne.
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

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.

Text: sttr. Ambrose of Milan, 340–397; German version, Martin Luther, 1483–1546; (sts. 1–2): tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812–76; (sts. 3, 6): tr. Lutheran Service Book, 2006; (sts. 4–5, 8): tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001; (st. 7): tr. Gifford A. Grobier, 1973
Tune: Geistliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter
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Readings

First Reading

1 Timothy 6:6–9

P A reading from 1 Timothy, the sixth chapter.

⁶Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment,
⁷for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take
anything out of the world. ⁸But if we have food and clothing,
with these we will be content. ⁹But those who desire to be
rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless
and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and
destruction.

C Thanks be to God.

Matthew 2:1–2, 9–10

P A reading from Matthew, the second chapter.

⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.


C Thanks be to God.

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L 1 Behold, the days
are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise
up for David a right-teous Branch.

2 In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will
dwell se - cure - ly.

3 Glory be to the
Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it.

 This is the name
by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

397 As with Gladness Men of Old



1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be-hold;
 2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to Thy low-ly bed,
 3 As they of-fered gifts most rare At Thy cra-dle, rude and bare,
 4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-'ry day Keep us in the nar-row way;
 5 In the heav'n-ly coun-try bright Need they no cre-at-ed light;



As with joy they hailed its light, Lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
 There to bend the knee be-fore Thee, whom heav'n and earth a-dore;
 So may we with ho-ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al-loy,
 And when earth-ly things are past, Bring our ran-somed souls at last
 Thou its light, its joy, its crown, Thou its sun which goes not down;



So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev-er-more be led by Thee.
 So may we with will-ing feet Ev-er seek Thy mer-cy seat.
 All our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'n-ly King.
 Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds Thy glo-ry hide.
 There for-ev-er may we sing Al-le-lu-ias to our King.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98, alt.
 Tune: Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872
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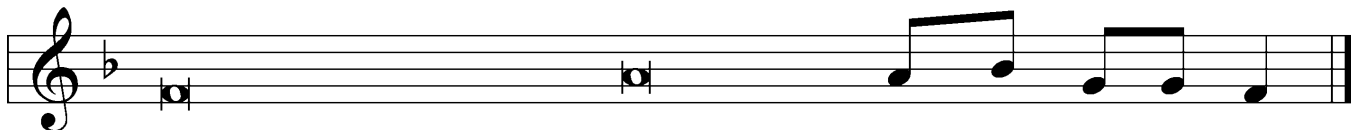
Sermon

Canticle

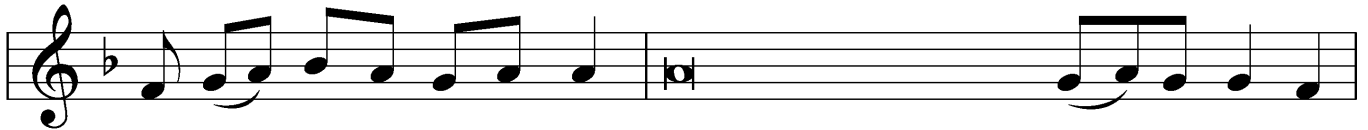
Antiphon

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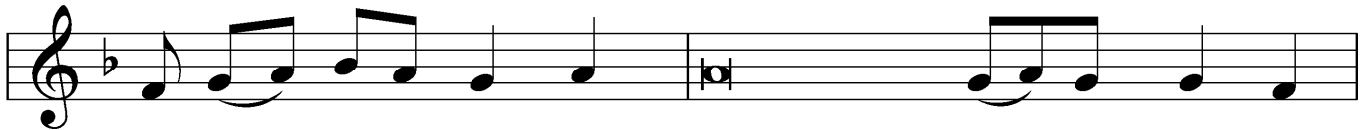
L Let my prayer rise before You as incense,



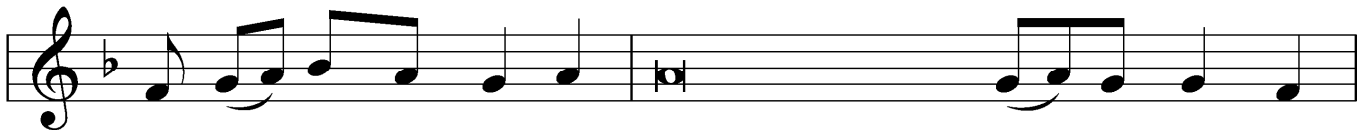
C and the lifting up of my hands as the eve-ning sac-ri-fice.



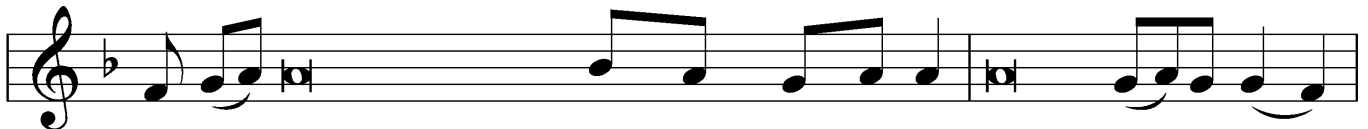
I My soul mag-ni-fies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Sav-ior;



I for He has re-gard - ed the lowliness of His hand-maid - en.



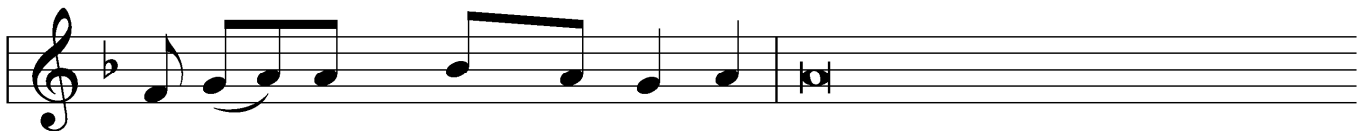
II For be-hold, from this day all generations will call me bless - ed.



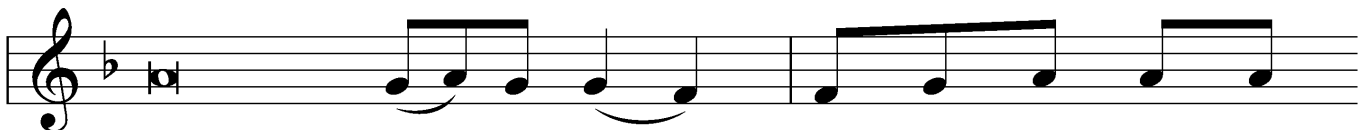
I For the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy is His name;



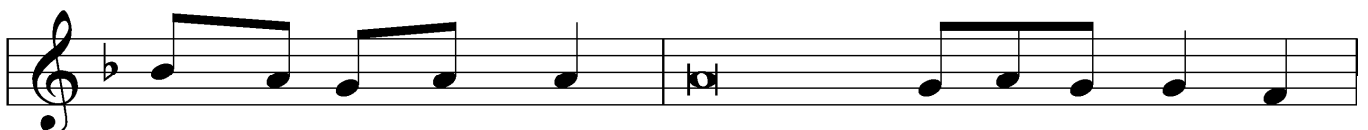
II and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to gen - er - a - tion.



I He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the



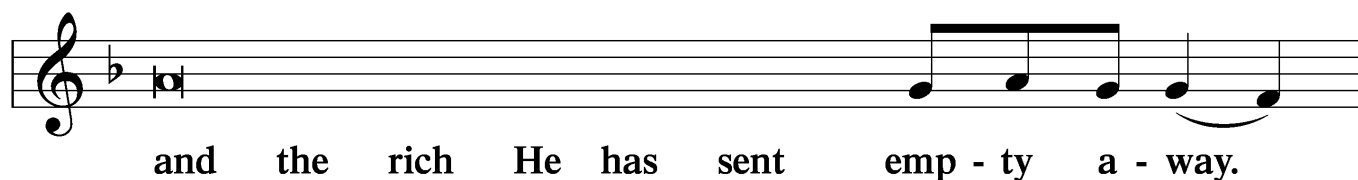
imagination of their hearts. **II** He has cast down the



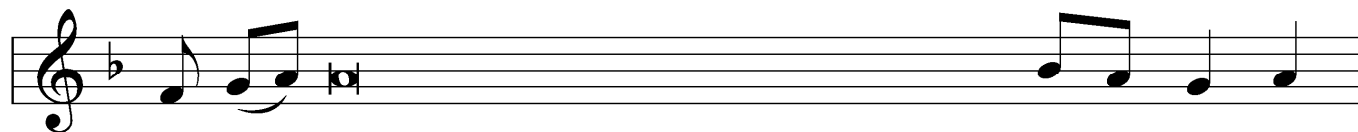
might-y from their thrones and has ex - alt - ed the low - ly.



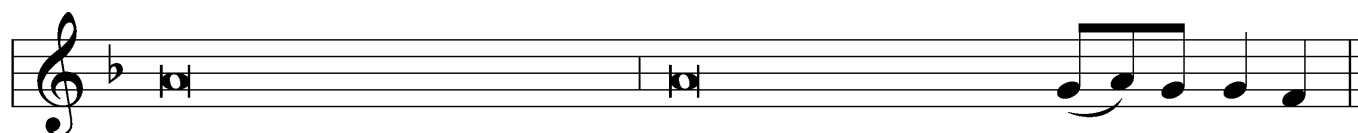
I He has filled the hun - gry with good things,



and the rich He has sent emp - ty a - way.



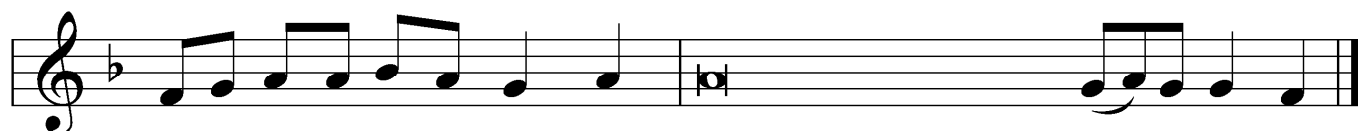
II He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mer - cy



as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for-ev - er.



C Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

Offering

Prayer

Kyrie

LSB 233



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Lord's Prayer

C 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;
and 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.

Collects

LSB 233

L O Lord, hear my prayer.



C And let my cry come to You.

Collect of the Day

P Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by the light of Your Holy Word, we may be drawn to Jesus and lay our lives before Him in worship, receiving from Him the gift of perfect peace. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Additional Collects of Intercession and Thanksgiving

Collect

P Almighty and everlasting God, King of Glory, and Lord of heaven and earth, by whose Spirit all things are governed, by whose providence all things are ordered, the God of peace and the author of all concord, grant

us, we implore You, Your heavenly peace and concord that we may serve You in true fear, to the praise and glory of Your name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Collect for Peace

L O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Benedicamus

LSB 234

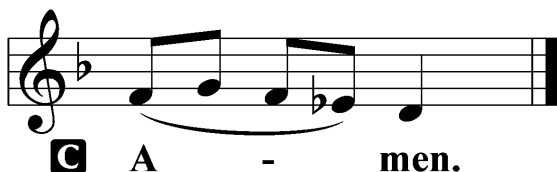
L Let us bless the Lord.



Benediction

LSB 234

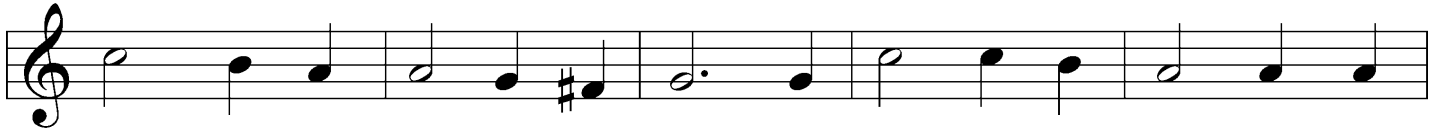
P The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.



763 When Peace, like a River



1 When peace, like a riv - er, at - tend - eth my way; When
 2 Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come, Let
 3 He lives— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought; My
 4 And, Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight, The

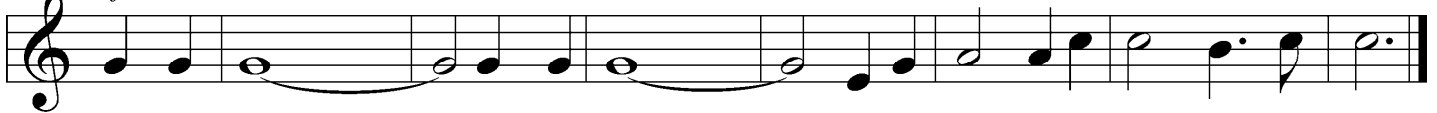


sor - rows, like sea bil - lows, roll; What - ev - er my lot, Thou hast
 this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, That Christ hath re - gard - ed my
 sin, not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to His cross, and I
 clouds be rolled back as a scroll, The trum - pet shall sound and the



taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul.
 help - less es - tate And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
 bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
 Lord shall de - scend; E - ven so it is well with my soul.

Refrain



It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul.

Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-88, alt.
 Tune: Philip P. Bliss, 1838-76
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Next Week: Wednesday, December 13

Advent Supper @ 5:30 PM

Hosts: LWML Serving: Scalloped Potatoes and Ham

Advent Worship @ 7:00 PM

MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 2: PEACE TO ALL, NEAR AND FAR

In week 2 of Advent, we have two contrasting pursuits of peace. These two make the two middle points of the star. First, *Peace is a place a long way away.* Peace is leaving it all behind. Peace is that perfectly calm lake. But God's true peace comes in the middle of the storm when the Savior is in the boat with us.

Second, we might also seek *Peace as the past—if only we could erase it.* If we could rearrange all the pieces of our past, putting some pieces far away, we imagine the peace we seek might finally come.

But God comes to us where we are and says, "Peace be to you." God "makes peace by the blood of his cross." (Colossians 1:20) Peace comes at the cross where we are completely forgiven. We find peace in God's telling of His Son's story, His death and His resurrection. In that story, we are not just better. In that story, we're forgiven and at peace.

