



The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

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PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Can one be homesick for something you've never known?

**We are homesick for a just world,
for peace like rivers,
for the end of suffering.**

Yes, we are homesick—

**for joy that is contagious,
for nations that feel like neighbors,
and for hospitals that run empty.**

We are homesick for the world God promises.

We are homesick, but we are on our way.

God is here. God is still creating.

Let us worship Holy God.

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Worship Leader: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, "What gives you hope?" From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

Adult: My two-year-old son.

Child: Dogs wagging their tails.

Older Adult: Talking with young people.

Teenager: Kindness from strangers.

Adult: Spending time in the woods.

Child: Waffles.

Older Adult: Hands clasped in prayer.

Teenager: Social progress.

Adult: The way my son calls everybody "buddy."

Child: The ringing of church bells.

Older Adult: Babies trying over and over to take their first step.

Teenager: The turning of seasons.

Adult: Christian community.

Child: Books.

Older Adult: Friendship with my adult children.

Teenager: Advocates for justice.

Adult: Hearing children in the pews sing the hymns.

Child: The sunrise every single morning.

Older Adult: What gives you hope?

Teenager: Today we light the candle of hope to remind ourselves that God is at work in this world.

Another worship leader or reader lights the candle.

Teenager: From generation to generation, God has brought good news of love and compassion, justice and community. Let us rest and abide in that good news. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers



- 1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
- 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
- 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ring bore,
- 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In God's house, everyone is welcome—
those who seem like they have it all together,
and those who feel like their world is falling apart.
No matter who we are, there's room for us here.
With that confidence, we turn to God in prayer,
speaking the truth of our lives.
Let us pray:

God of today and God of tomorrow,
you say, "Bring your full self. There's room for you here."

But we say, "Our lives are too messy."

You say, "Bring your hopes and your dreams. There's room for you here."

But we say, "It's too risky to hope."

You say, "Bring your grief and your prayers. There's room for you here."

But we say, "Some things are easier to forget."

God of today and God of tomorrow,
we know in our hearts that there's room for us here.

Forgive us for withholding our full selves from you.

Forgive us for giving only our Sunday best.

Help us remember, today and tomorrow,

There's room for every story. Amen.

Family of faith,

We who feel scattered are held together.

We who have lost our way are forgiven and found.

And we who are lonely are brought into the fold and are told,
"There's room for you here."

From generation to generation, this is the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are held, forgiven, found, and welcomed.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

1st Sunday of Advent

(♩.)
come.

Congregation mp
Come, come Em - man - u - el.

Cantor mf

1. To the house of the Lord we
 2. Let us climb God's mountain and
 3. Let us walk in the light and
 4. Let us wake from our sleep and
 5. For the day draws near, so
 6. Be prepared for the day God will

Come, Em - man - u - el.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

A God of the ages, in scripture we hear stories of people like us—ordinary people, people who longed to know you, people who longed to follow you, people who made mistakes, people who tried to grow—old, young, native, immigrant, new to the faith, lifelong believer. In scripture we hear stories of people like us, so just as you walked with them, help us to hear and remember all the ways that you walk with us. We are listening. We are grateful. We are yours. **Amen.**

READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

³Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

⁵O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 122

¹I was glad when they said to me,

"Let us go to the house of the LORD."

²**Now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

³Jerusalem is built as a city
that is at unity with itself;

⁴**to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD,
the assembly of Israel, to praise the name ^l of the LORD.**

⁵For there are the thrones of judgment,
the thrones of the house of David.

⁶**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
"May they prosper who love you.**

⁷Peace be within your walls
and quietness within your towers.

⁸**For the sake of my kindred and companions,
I pray for your prosperity.**

⁹Because of the house of the LORD our God,
I will seek to do you good."

READING: Romans 13:11-14

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44**

The Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶“About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

P The Gospel of our Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Wake, Awake for Night is Flying



1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and all her
3 Glo - ri - a! Let heav'n a - dore you! Let saints and



on the heights are cry - ing; a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
heart with joy is spring-ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom.
an - gels sing be - fore you, with harp and cym-bal's clear-est tone.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
Her dear friend comes down, all glo - rious, the strong in
Gates of pearl, twelve por - tals gleam - ing, lead us to



thrill-ing cry re - joic - es: "Come forth, you maid - ens! Night is past.
grace, in truth vic - to - rious: her star - is ris'n; her light is come.
bliss be - yond all dream - ing, with an - gel choirs a - round your throne.



The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!"
Now come, O Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God's own Son.
No eye has caught the light, no ear the thun - d'ring might



Al - le - lu - ia! Rise and pre - pare the feast to share;
Sing ho - san - na! Oh, hear the call! Come one, come all,
of such glo - ry. There we will go: what joy we'll know!



go, meet the bride - groom, who draws near.
and fol - low to the ban - quet hall.
There sweet de - light will ev - er flow.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608; tr. composite
Music: WACHET AUF, Philipp Nicolai
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***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God of all, your children everywhere cry out for mercy. Awaken the global church to the urgent needs of our time. Break down barriers of culture and custom and unite people of all faiths in your redemptive and healing work. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of wonder, the earth's beauty and abundance is your gift. Teach us your ways of sharing resources and caring for life. Guard fragile habitats, preserve the wild places, and protect endangered plants and animals. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of peace, you judge the nations. Beat our weapons into tools for serving the neighbor. Strengthen the resolve of all who work for an end to war. We pray for lasting peace in the land of Jesus' birth (*other places of conflict may be named*). God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of lovingkindness, you desire fullness of life for everyone. Fill those who hunger. Comfort the grieving and attend to those near death. Bring help and hope to any who are sick or needing your care (*especially*). God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of community, you are present when we gather in your name. Guide congregations in transition or conflict, we especially pray for our time of transition here at Spirit in the Hills. Give wisdom to congregational councils, call committees, and ministry leaders. Keep us alert to unexpected opportunities for mission. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of promise, your goodness is everlasting. We give thanks for the lives of the faithful who now rest in you. We trust that you will bring us into the company of all the saints with rejoicing. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

OFFERING

We give to God what we have first received, ourselves, our time, our possessions. If you'd like to make a gift online or via text you can do so at spiritinthehills.org/give or by texting a dollar amount to 512-648-5542.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray, Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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 today 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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Jesus is the host, therefore all are invited to the table to partake in the bread and wine, the true and real presence of Christ broken and poured out for you. The outer ring of the trays contain wine and the inner contain grape juice. Gluten free bread is available upon request.

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*STATEMENT OF MISSION *(in unison)*

All We at Spirit in the Hills are people diversely centered in Christ, inspired by the Holy Spirit and sent to share God's love in the world.

*SENDING HYMN

My Lord, What A Morning

Refrain



My Lord, what a morn-ing; my Lord, what a morn - ing; oh,



my Lord, what a morn-ing, when the stars be - gin to fall.



- 1 You will hear the trum - pet sound,
- 2 You will hear the sin - ner cry, to wake the na-tions un - der - ground,
- 3 You will hear the Chris-tian shout,



look-ing to my God's right hand, when the stars be - gin to fall.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: BURLEIGH, African American spiritual

THANKSGIVING AT THE CONCLUSION OF A CALL FOR PASTOR DREW INGRAM

Pastor Drew, in April 2016 the people of Spirit in the Hills Lutheran Church called you to be pastor in this place: to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's table. With the gospel you have comforted them in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of loved ones. Sharing joys and sorrows, you and your family have been important to the life of this community within the church of Jesus Christ, in their service to this community, and as they participate in God's mission to the whole world.

Today, November 27, 2022, the congregation's call to you comes to an end. As you leave this community of faith and say farewell to one another, we give thanks for your ministry and pray for God's blessing.

PULPIT: You were invited into this pulpit. From this place you have proclaimed the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ countless times throughout these past years. This preaching ministry has not belonged to you; the saving message of Christ is not something one can possess, but only bear witness to. You have been a faithful occupant of this church's pulpit and messenger of the good news of God's love in Christ. As you leave this pulpit we thank God for your preaching ministry.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

FONT: At this font you have presided at the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Through the cleansing waters of baptism we welcome new members into the family of Christ. The gift of new life in Christ belongs to God. The church is the custodian of this rite of welcome, and you have introduced this congregation to many new brothers and sisters in the faith. You have presided as confirmands affirmed their baptismal promises. As you leave this font, we thank you for your ministry surrounding baptismal promises.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

ALTAR: At this altar you have presided at the Sacrament of Holy Communion. You have reminded the members here of how Jesus began this meal with his disciples. You have provided instruction to those who would receive it for the first time. The meal is the Lord's, and this congregation has been provider of this meal to all who seek to be fed with the living presence of Christ. You have presided over this meal so that it could be served in a

faithful and orderly fashion. As you leave this table, we thank you for presiding at the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL STEP: Standing in front of this congregation you have led services of thankfulness to God for people who had died. You led this community in the midst of grief while expressing gratitude for God's gift of life. You proclaimed the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and encouraged the community with the comfort of the gospel. As you leave this sanctuary, we thank you for your presence in times of loss.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL: It is here that you presided at services where couples were married. You were present to rejoice with those who rejoice. Thank you for sharing those and other great times of joy.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

People of God, as representatives of the members of Spirit in the Hills Lutheran, and with thanks to God for the ministry of Pastor Drew among you, do you now release him from service as your pastor?

We do, and we give thanks to God.

Pastor, with thanks to God for the members of this community and for their ministry with you, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with Spirit in the Hills Lutheran Church?

I do, and I give thanks to God.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. We give you thanks for the ministry of Pastor Drew among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in: bless this time of ending and beginning. You surround your people in every time and place: keep us close in your love. You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial: prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together; heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us. Help Pastor Drew and his family as well as the people of this congregation to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

As they have been a blessing to this congregation, so now send them forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

***BENEDICTION AND SENDING**

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved. From generation to generation, God has been by our side. From generation to generation, we are not alone. The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, "Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon." **May it be so. Amen.**

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.

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There's room for every story

Room

I asked God— what about my fingernail-biting habit or the way I leave all the cabinets open in the kitchen?

What about the way I can be dramatic, drumming up a fight, only to hand out apologies like souvenirs?

What about the way I second-guess myself, let shame drive, or stay quiet when I have something to say?

What about the way I chase accomplishments like a dog with a bone?

What about the doubt, or the fact that I'm terrible at prayer and cannot help but yawn during church?

What about

What about

What about?

My baggage might be too big for the van.

But then

God called me by my first and middle name, which always means business, and said:

Who told you that you were too much?

Sugar, there is so much room for you here.

So that's when I grabbed a seat and we hit the road and I knew right then that the rumors were true.

There is room.

There is room.

There is room.

Written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed