

# THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

November 29, 2020 10:30 am

PRELUDE

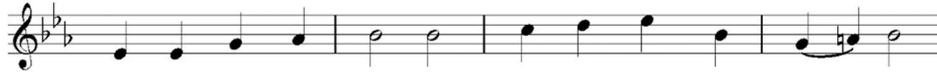
Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645  
(Tune of Hymn 61, "Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us)

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

HYMN 53

Once he came in blessing

Tune: *Gottes Sohn ist kommen*



1 Once he came in bless - ing, all our ills re - dress - ing;  
2 Still he comes with - in us, still his voice would win us  
3 Thus, if thou canst name him, not a - shamed to claim him,  
4 One who thus en - dur - eth bright re - ward se - cur - eth.



came in like-ness low - ly, Son of God most ho - ly;  
from the sins that hurt us, would to Truth con - vert us:  
but wilt trust him bold - ly nor dost love him cold - ly,  
Come, then, O Lord Je - sus, from our sins re - lease us;



bore the cross to save us, hope and free - dom gave us.  
not in tor - ment hold us, but in love en - fold us.  
he will then re - ceive thee, heal thee, and for - give thee.  
let us here con - fess thee till in heaven we bless thee.

Words: Jan Roh (1485?-1547); tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878), alt. Music: *Gottes Sohn ist kommen*, melody Michael Weisse (d. 1534); harm. Jack W. Burnam (b. 1946) Copyright ©1984, Jack W. Burnam. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

THE OPENING SENTENCE

Book of Common Prayer p. 355

*Celebrant:* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

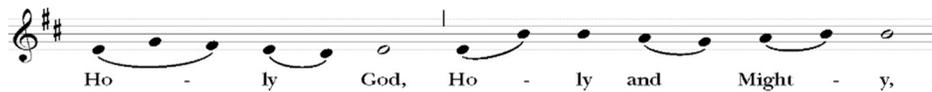
*People:* **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF PURITY

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

TRISAGION (S-99)

*Plainsong*



Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,



Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.



Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,



Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.



Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,



Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Celebrant:* The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

*Celebrant:* Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*All sit for the lessons*

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 64:1-9

A reading from the Book of Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence--as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil--to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 80:1-7, 16-18

Simplified Chant: based on *Veni, veni Emmanuel*, adapted by William Bradley Roberts (b. 1947)

*In this style of chanting, the slashes in the text indicate when to change notes in the chant.*



- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a / flock; \*  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the / cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Ma-/nasseh, \*  
stir up your strength and come to / help us.
- 3 **Restore us, O God of / hosts; \***  
**show the light of your countenance, and we shall be / saved.**
- 4 **O Lord God of / hosts, \***  
**how long will you be angered**  
**despite the prayers of your / people?**
- 5 **You have fed them with the bread of / tears; \***  
**you have given them bowls of tears to / drink.**
- 6 **You have made us the derision of our / neighbors, \***  
**and our enemies laugh us to / scorn.**

- 7 **Restore us, O God of / hosts; \***  
**show the light of your countenance, and we shall be / saved.**
- 16 **Let your hand be upon the man of your right / hand, \***  
**the son of man you have made so strong for your-/self.**
- 17 **And so will we never turn away from / you; \***  
**give us life, that we may call upon your / Name.**
- 18 **Restore us, O Lord God of / hosts; \***  
**show the light of your countenance, and we shall be / saved.**

SECOND LESSON

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind--just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you--so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

**People: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Plainsong*

*The cantor introduces the Alleluia, and then all repeat.*

*The cantor sings the verse below, and then all repeat the Alleluia.*



V: Show us your mercy, O Lord,  
and grant us your salvation. (Psalm 85:7)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 13:24-37

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

**People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

THE HOMILY

Thomas Alexander

*Silence may be kept after the homily.*

*All stand, as able*

THE NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,**

**the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,**

**the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven:**

**by the power of the Holy Spirit**

**he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;**

**he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again**

**in accordance with the Scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,**

**and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,**

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,**

**and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FORM II

*In the course of the silence after each bidding, the People offer their own prayers, either silently or aloud.*

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for our Bishop(s) \_\_\_\_\_; for this gathering; and for all ministers and people.

Pray for the Church.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people.

Pray for justice and peace.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison.

Pray for those in any need or trouble.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.

Pray that they may find and be found by him.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for the departed.

Pray for those who have died.

*Silence*

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored.

Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

*Silence*

Today we prayer especially for **Roscoe, Josephine, Larry, Bill, Gisela, Catherine, James, John, Susan, Betty, Ruth, Corwin, Beth, Janet, Bob, Burtchus, Dickinson, Oscar, Jane, Christine, Sally, Paige, Sherry, Alan, Pam, Elaine, Ricky, Beverly, Lee, Avis, Roger, Kimberly, Missy, Lydia, Mike, the Snelgrove family, and all those on our long term prayer list.** Are there others? (Please add the names of others either silently or aloud)

In thanksgiving we pray for those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries in the coming week, especially **Brian Robertson (4).**

We pray for all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad especially those listed on our military prayer list. We pray also for their families, friends, and neighbors who await their safe return.

We pray for our sister church St. Gabriel's. In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for Christ Church in Sparta and Church of the Savior in Newland. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for the Lusitanian Church.

We pray for our missionaries and their work in the world, for **Russ and Heidi Smith in Chile, John and Zsófi Wilson in Hungary, Daniel & Rachel Aytes in Thailand, and Jim & Jennifer Bowers in Mali.**

We pray for St. Francis Day School, and for its students and teachers and their families, that they may grow in stature and wisdom, and in the knowledge and love of your grace and truth.

*The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.*

THE CONFESSION OF SIN

*The Deacon or Celebrant says*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Minister and People*

**Most merciful God,**

**we confess that we have sinned against you**

**in thought, word, and deed,**

**by what we have done,**

**and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,**

**have mercy on us and forgive us;**

**that we may delight in your will,**

**and walk in your ways,**

**to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

THE ABSOLUTION

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

*Celebrant:* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

*The ministers and people greet each other in the name of the Lord.*

# THE HOLY COMMUNION

## THE OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

## OFFERTORY

Choral orné sur le 'Rorate caeli,' Op. 8, No. 1

J. Demessieux (1921-1968)

## HYMN 66

Come, thou long-expected Jesus

Tune: *Stuttgart*

1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;  
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,  
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;

from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.  
dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) Music: *Stuttgart*, melody from *Psalmodia Sacra, oder Andächtige und Schöne Gesänge*, 1715; adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870), alt.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING - Prayer C

*The people remain standing.*

*Celebrant:* The Lord be with you.

***People:* And also with you.**

*Celebrant:* Lift up your hearts.

***People:* We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***People:* It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

*Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

**Glory to you for ever and ever.**

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

**By your will they were created and have their being.**

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

**Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.**

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

**By his blood, he reconciled us.**

**By his wounds, we are healed.**

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

SANCTUS (S-122)

*Plainsong*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
power and might, hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The Celebrant continues*

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

**We celebrate his death and resurrection,**

**as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our Fathers; God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

**Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.**

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to pray,

*People and Celebrant*

**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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.*

*Celebrant:* Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

***People:* Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

AGNUS DEI (S-160)

*Plainsong*

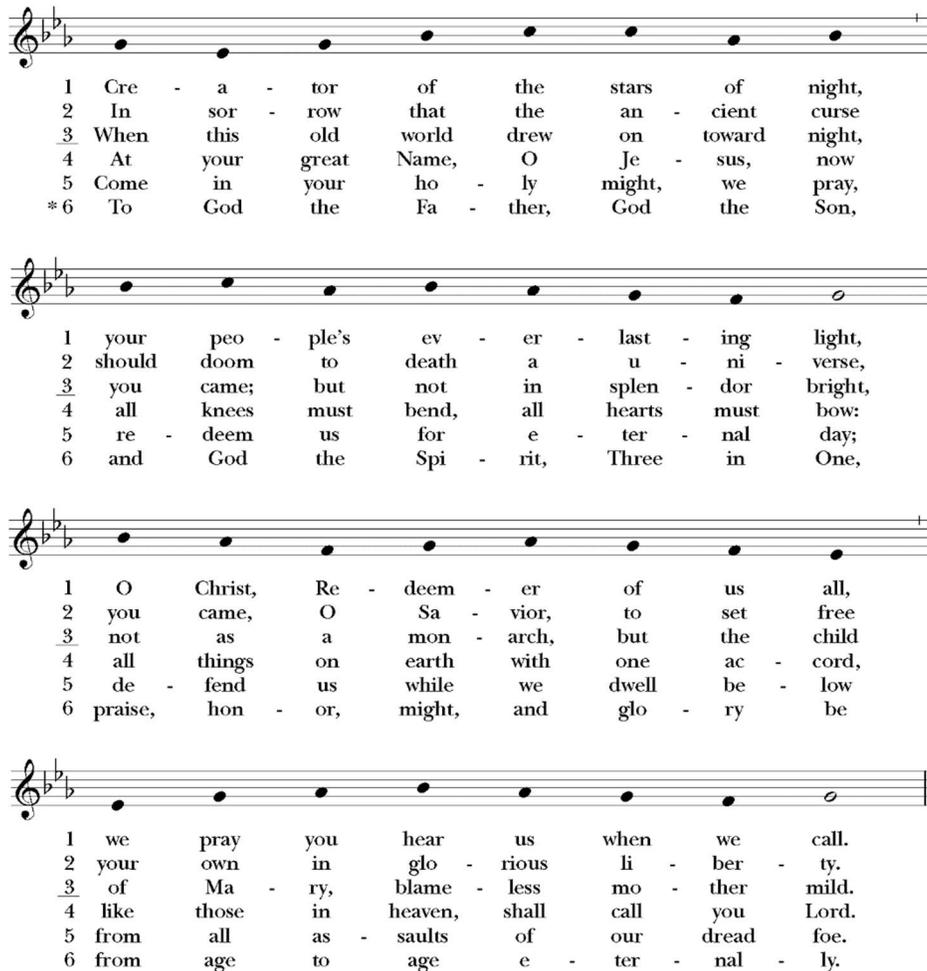
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:  
have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,  
you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS *(The minister and the people receive communion at this time.)*

*A spiritual Communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive holy communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion. Please note elements are being made available, prior to the liturgy, for use at this time. Details can be found in the Lych Gate.*

INVITATION TO THE EUCHARIST FOR THOSE AT HOME (may be said during communion)

**In union with the faithful of every generation and especially with those present at Saint Francis Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer my own thanks and praise to You, my Lord and my God. I present my mind, soul and body towards heaven with the earnest intention of being present in spirit with those who call You, Lord of all. I remember Your death and resurrection and I await Your coming in glory. I unite myself with those gathered at your altar and embrace You with all my heart, knowing that nothing can ever separate Your love from me. May I live, move and have my being in Your loving presence. Amen** (prayer adapted from the Armed Services Prayer Book by Fr. Walker+)



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night,  
 2 In sor - row that the an - cient curse  
 3 When this old world drew on toward night,  
 4 At your great Name, O Je - sus, now  
 5 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray,  
 \* 6 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son,

1 your peo - ple's ev - er - last - ing light,  
 2 should doom to death a u - ni - verse,  
 3 you came; but not in splen - dor bright,  
 4 all knees must bend, all hearts must bow;  
 5 re - deem us for e - ter - nal day;  
 6 and God the Spi - rit, Three in One,

1 O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all,  
 2 you came, O Sa - vior, to set free  
 3 not as a mon - arch, but the child  
 4 all things on earth with one ac - cord,  
 5 de - fend us while we dwell be - low  
 6 praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be

1 we pray you hear us when we call.  
 2 your own in glo - rious li - ber - ty.  
 3 of Ma - ry, blame - less mo - ther mild.  
 4 like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.  
 5 from all as - saults of our dread foe.  
 6 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

Words: Latin, 9th cent.; ver. *Hymnal 1940*, alt. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *Conditor alme siderum*, plainsong, Mode 4; acc. Bruce Neswick (b. 1956) Copyright ©1984, Bruce Neswick. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

## THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Book of Common Prayer p. 365

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

**Almighty and everliving God,  
 we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food  
 of the most precious Body and Blood  
 of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
 and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
 that we are living members of the Body of your Son,  
 and heirs of your eternal kingdom.  
 And now, Father, send us out  
 to do the work you have given us to do,  
 to love and serve you  
 as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.  
 To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
 be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING

1 “Sleep-ers, wake!” A voice a - stounds us, the  
 2 Zi - on hears the watch - men sing - ing; her  
 3 Lamb of God, the heavens a - dore you; let

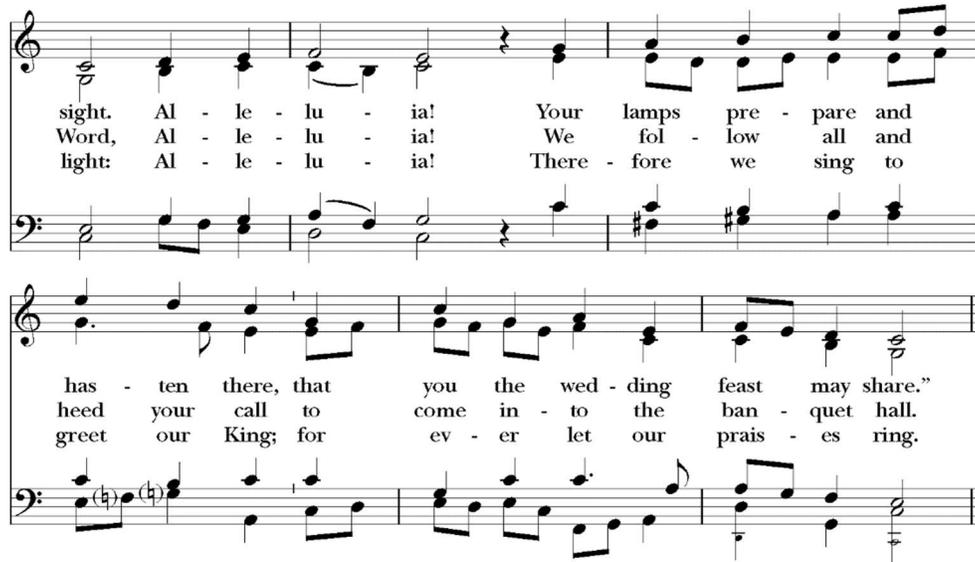
shout of ram - part - guards sur - rounds us: “A -  
 heart with joy - ful hope is spring - ing, she  
 saints and an - gels sing be - fore you, as

wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, a - rise!” Mid - night’s peace their  
 wakes and hur - ries through the night. Forth he comes, her  
 harps and cym - bals swell the sound. Twelve great pearls, the

cry has bro - ken, their ur - gent sum - mons clear - ly spo -  
 Bride-groom glo - rious in strength of grace, in truth vic - to -  
 ci - ty’s por - tals: through them we stream to join the im - mor -

ken: “The time has come, O maid - ens wise!  
 rious: her star is risen, her light grows bright.  
 tals as we with joy your throne sur - round.

Rise up, and give us light; the Bride - groom is in  
 Now come, most wor - thy Lord, God’s Son, In - car - nate  
 No eye has known the sight, no ear heard such de -



sight, Al - le - lu - ia! Your lamps pre - pare and  
 Word, Al - le - lu - ia! We fol - low all and  
 light: Al - le - lu - ia! There - fore we sing to

has - ten there, that you the wed - ding feast may share."  
 heed your call to come in - to the ban - quet hall.  
 greet our King; for ev - er let our prais - es ring.

Words: Philip Nicolai (1556-1608); tr. Carl P. Daw, Jr. (b. 1944) Copyright ©1982, Carl P. Daw, Jr. All rights reserved. Used with permission.  
 Music: *Wachet auf*, melody Hans Sachs (1494-1576); adapt. Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608); arr. and harm. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

THE DISMISSAL

*Celebrant:* Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia.

***People:* Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

POSTLUDE

Ciacona c-moll, BuxWV 159

D. Buxtehude (c. 1637-1707)

*The Complete Organ Works of Dietrich Buxtehude: XIV*

A Prayer for our Time of Transition

**O God, as we proceed through this interim time, we confidently rely upon your Holy Presence to guide us, and we are thankful for the many blessings you have bestowed upon the parishes of St. Francis and St. Gabriel's.**

**May we use this time well to discern your will for us in our reading of Sacred Scripture, in our celebration of the Holy Eucharist, through our sensitivity to one another, in our personal meditation and prayer, and through our sharing with others in fellowship.**

**We ask this, Lord of our lives, through your son Jesus, and through your Holy Spirit, who teaches us how to pray, and how to live together in peace forever. Amen.**

## COMMUNION NOTES

*A spiritual Communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive holy communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion. Please note elements are being made available, prior to the liturgy, for use at this time. Details can be found in the Lych Gate.*

## LONG TERM PRAYER LIST:

Addison, Zoey, Courtney, Tom, Harper, Emmanuel, Kimberly, Maureen, Edmonds, Diana, Michael, Tony, Becca, Brian.

## MUSIC NOTES

Welcome to the season of Advent! Advent comes from a Latin word meaning “to come.” This season is all about the coming of Christ, both his coming at the manger all those years ago and his mysterious final coming sometime in the future. So, this is a season of restraint and of delayed gratification. We dwell in the Advent season, singing Advent hymns and reading prophetic scripture, saving the Christmas celebration for a few weeks. The hymns are some of the finest in our tradition. Let’s enjoy them while we can in this four week season!

The organ music for Advent are some of my favorites. The prelude is by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), who was truly the greatest organist-composer of all time. This piece is a sacred-work, based on the beloved Advent hymn “Sleepers, wake!” A voice astounds us, which we will sing at the end of the service. This prelude is actually a trio, a three-voice piece of organ music. Trios are often the most difficult music for an organist. The organist must play one part with the right hand on one keyboard, one with the left hand on another keyboard, and then another part with the feet, all at the same time. Imagine three different violins playing at once — except all by one person!

At the Offertory, I’ll play Jeanne Demessieux’s lovely setting of the ancient chant for Advent, *Rorate cæli* (“Drop down, ye heavens”). Demessieux (1921-1968) was a famed organist working in Paris during the mid-twentieth century, and while she died young, her organ music is substantial and will surely last for years to come.

The postlude marks our fourteenth week of our complete Buxtehude project. The *Ciacona* in c minor, BuxWV 159 is another one of Buxtehude’s *ostinato* works, where there is a repeating obstinate melody throughout the piece (imagine Pachelbel’s *Canon* in D major). Composers often imagine the key of “C minor” as the stormiest, darkest, and most primitive keys in the music world, so having this piece seems fitting for the beginning of our Advent journey together.

- Thomas Alexander