



SOTC Worship  
December 22, 2024  
Fourth Sunday in Advent

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## GATHERING

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PRELUDE

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

In this weary world,

**we sing of joy.**

In this fragile world,

**we lift each other up.**

In this beautiful world,

**we look for God.**

In this tender world,

**we hold onto hope.**

This is the invitation of faith.

So in this time of worship,

may we sing, lift up, look for, and hold onto our with-us God.

**With hope in our hearts, Amen!**

GATHERING SONG

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

ELW 257  
vs. 1-2, 6-7

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*Pastor Aleese calls the congregation to confession.*

Gracious God,

You paint pictures of what could be,

**but we declare those visions impossible.**

You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb,

**but we spout skepticism and uncertainty.**

You dream of a more just day,

**but we poke holes in the plan, unable to fathom that horizon.**

Forgive us for losing sight of hope.

**Forgive us for assuming that what we see is all there is.**

Open up our hearts to see the world as you see it.

**Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams,  
and to not be afraid of either.**

**With gratitude we pray, amen.**

Dear friends in Christ,

No matter what you hold onto, and no matter what you let slip through your hands, God is holding onto you. That good news will never change. So hear and believe the good news of the Gospel: Today is a new day. Today, we have reason to hope as we look for the advent of Christ among us now, and Christ's coming again. Today, we are forgiven. And the same will be true tomorrow.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

**Amen.**

## GREETING

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

**And also with you.**

## KYRIE

ELW pg. 147

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

# ————— **WORD** —————

## STORYTELLING AND ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

*In preparation to receive God's Word, we light the Christ candle and pray for illumination from God's word. Take a moment for silent reflection.*

READINGS: LUKE 1:46-55; PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19; MATTHEW 1:18-25

*In response to the readings:*

Word of God, Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON

When He Said Like  
 Jo - seph planned to Ga - briel, Jo - seph  
 learned to leave "Jo - seph, woke  
 of her from  
 Ma - ry's state he  
 qui - et - ly and  
 do not fear to  
 sleep to find his

pon - dered her dis - grace  
 not cre - ate a scene  
 make Ma - ry your wife  
 path - way had been changed  
 He cal - cu - lat - ed  
 But Ma - ry still would  
 She bears in - side her  
 Still here to - day God

all the shame the  
 grow with child; what  
 womb the hope of  
 calls us all to  
 scan - dal would cre - ate  
 then would her fate  
 ev - er - last - ing  
 choose the bet - ter  
 life way  
 But  
 When  
 The  
 Be -

not con - tent to  
 Jo - seph went to  
 - yond our wild - est  
 see her stoned he  
 sleep that night an  
 bear to you is  
 dreams is still a  
 of - fered her some  
 an - gel in - ter -  
 Je - sus the Mes -  
 call - ing that re -

grace  
 - vened Oh  
 - siah" there is a  
 - mains bet - ter  
 way, God's bet - ter  
 way Oh

we can choose the  
 bet - ter  
 way

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe in a God who gives us reason to hope,  
a God who fills our nights with stars,  
who follows winter with spring,  
who dwells with and among us.**

**We believe that this God has dreams for creation,  
dreams of justice like a mighty stream  
and swords that will be beaten into plowshares.**

**Therefore, we push cynicism aside.  
We risk vulnerability.  
We hold onto hope,  
and we declare:  
“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Response to “Lord in your mercy” is “hear our prayer.”*

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always!  
**And also with you!**

*Congregation is invited to share a sign of peace with others.*

## ————— MEAL —————

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW pg. 152

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW pg. 153

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

### LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the 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 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.**

### COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*Together we receive God's gift of love given to us in the sacrament of communion. All are welcome at the table, where Christ is our host.*

*Receive the bread with open hands, and receive either the wine (red liquid) or juice (clear liquid). If you do not desire to receive communion, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest as an indication to the server.*

### LAMB OF GOD

ELW pg. 154

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

## ————— SENDING —————

### BLESSING

### SENDING SONG

AWAKE! AWAKE AND GREET THE NEW MORN

ELW 242

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DISMISSAL

As you leave this place...

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

**Thanks be to God!**

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