



**Sunday, December 22, 2024**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in*

*no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."*

**WELCOME!** We are glad to have you join us in worship today. Here are a few notes to help you feel more at home participating in our worship.

**Worshipping.** Today's service is printed in this bulletin. Parts in **bold** indicate responses by everyone in which you are invited to participate.

**Communion:** *Lutheran Christians believe that the Lord Jesus Christ feeds us with his true body and blood "in, with, and under" the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. All baptized Christians who receive Communion in their own churches are welcome to receive the sacrament. Please note that the darker wine is non-alcoholic and is available from the Lector. Communion will be distributed continuously, in procession. Please come forward as directed by the ushers.*

ST. STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
270 South Broadway + Hicksville NY 11801  
Church Office: Monday through Friday, 8am - 2pm  
Church Office: 516-931-0710  
Rev. Dr. Joann Heaney-Hunter  
Christine Goetzger-Sedlak, President of the Congregation  
Mason Griffin, Minister of Music  
Michelle Burkhardt, Parish Administrator (*email [ststephenoffice@msn.com](mailto:ststephenoffice@msn.com)*)  
Church Website [www.ststephenshicksville.com](http://www.ststephenshicksville.com)  
Join us on Facebook: St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Hicksville, NY 11801

+GATHERING+

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Pause for silent reflection.*

P God of mercy, C we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P God of might, C we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

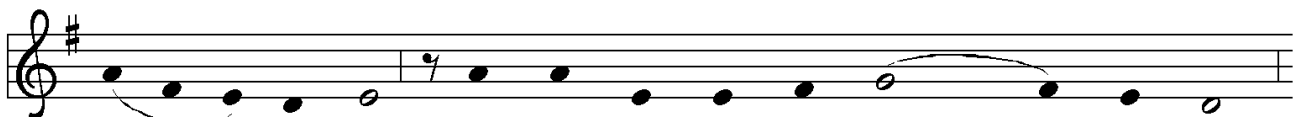
P God in our midst, C we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. C Amen.

**GATHERING SONG: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (ELW 257) vv. 1-2**



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  
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



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  
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.  
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



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

**GREETING**

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

**LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH**

P Blessed are you, faithful God, for you promised to send your Son Jesus to save us from our sin. As we light these four candles, turn our hearts to you, transform us so that we may live in harmony with each other, and help us draw close to your Son, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C Amen.**

**+WORD+**

**FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a**

A reading from Micah.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Therefore, he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Luke 1:46b-55**



You, LORD, have lift - ed up the low - ly.

My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior, for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant. From this day all

**generations will | call me blessed:**

you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me and holy | is your name.

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

You have shown strength | with your arm and scattered the proud in | their conceit,  
**casting down the mighty | from their thrones and lifting | up the lowly.**

You have filled the hungry | with good things and sent the rich | away empty.

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

the promise made | to our forebears, to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever. **R**

## **SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10**

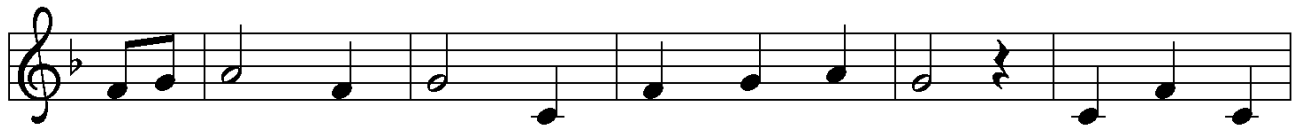
A reading from Hebrews.

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

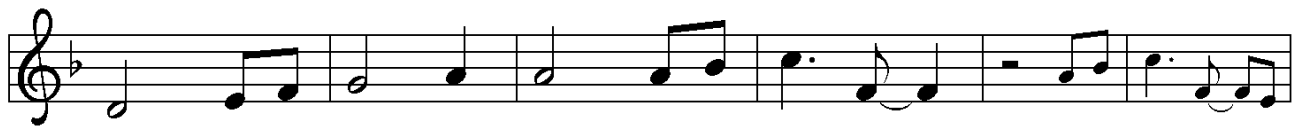
When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. The word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

**GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-55**

P The Lord be with you. C **And also with you.**

P The holy gospel according to Luke. C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The gospel of the Lord. C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: *People, Look East* (ELW 248)**



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.

**APOSTLES' CREED**

A With the whole church, we confess our faith. **C 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 the 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 OF INTERCESSION**

A The response to today's petitions is: receive our prayer.

A As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **C Amen.**

**PEACE**

P The peace of Christ be with you always. **C And also with you.**

P Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

**ADDITIONAL PRAYERS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS**

Laureen Aiello 12/27

## BIRTHDAY SONG

*He who began a good work in you 2x*

*Will be faithful to complete it (Clap 3x)*

*Will be faithful to complete it (Clap 3x)*

*He who started the work will be faithful to complete it in you!*

+MEAL+

## OFFERING: *Waiting In Silence*



1-5. Wait-ing in si - lence, wait-ing in hope; we are your



1. peo-ple, we long for you, Lord. God ev - er with us, Em - man - u -  
2. peo-ple, we trust in your love. O Sun of Jus - tice, true Prince of  
3. peo-ple, Lord, we seek your truth. Wis - dom In - car - nate, teach us your  
4. peo-ple, we long for new life. O Key of Da - vid, o - pen our  
5. peo-ple, our hearts thirst for you. Flow - er of Jes - se, bloom in our



1. el, Come, Lord Je - sus,  
2. Peace, Come with your jus - tice, Lord,  
3. way; Show us the path of life, } Ma - ra - na - tha!  
4. hearts. Give us new vi - sion, Lord,  
5. midst. Make us your gar - den, Lord,

## OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray. Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.

Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

### DIALOGUE

P The Lord be with you. **C And also with you.**


P Lift up your hearts. **C We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho-  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -  
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P ...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P ...We look with hope for his coming. **C Come, Lord Jesus.**

P ...Bring the gift of peace on earth. **C Come, Holy Spirit.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

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

**C Our Father, who art in heaven...**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the banquet, for all is now ready. **C Thanks be to God**

## LAMB OF GOD

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.**

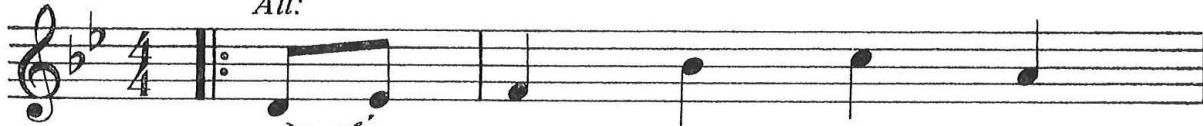


SONG DURING COMMUNION: -- Magnificat

The Magnificat

Luke 1: 46-55

*All:*



1.3. My ——— soul pro - claims your  
2. You have cast the might - y



great-ness, O God, and my spir - it re-joic - es in  
down from their thrones, and up lift - ed the hum - ble of



you, You have looked with love on your  
heart, You have filled the hun - gry with



ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.  
won - drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.



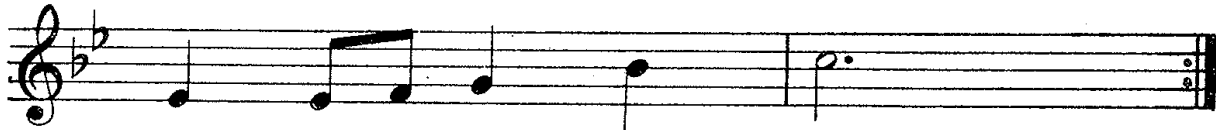
Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One,  
Great and might - y are you, O Faith - ful One,



strong is your kind - ness ev - er - more.  
strong is your jus - tice strong your love,



How you fa - vor the weak \_\_\_ and low - ly one,  
As you prom - ised to Sar - ah \_\_\_ and A - bra - ham,



hum - bling the proud of heart.  
kind - ness for - ev - er - more.

**SONG DURING COMMUNION: *All Earth Is Hopeful: Toda la tierra* (ELW 266)**



*To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor*  
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!  
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:  
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;  
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



*y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el*  
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the  
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -  
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most  
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



*mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -*  
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how  
ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -  
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All  
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Let us pray. Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. C **Amen.**

+SENDING+

**BLESSING**

P God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, + bless and keep you now and forever. C Amen.

**SENDING SONG: *Soon and Very Soon* (ELW 439)**



1 Soon and ver - y soon  
2 No more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
3 No more dy - in' there,  
4 Soon and ver - y soon



soon and ver - y soon  
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
no more dy - in' there,  
soon and ver - y soon

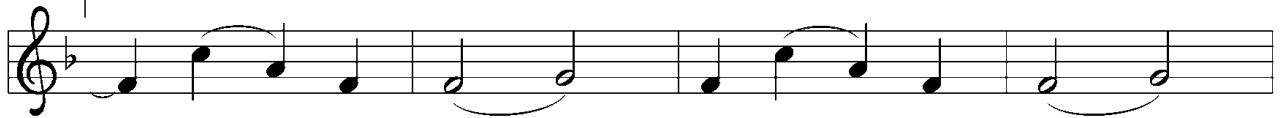


soon and ver - y soon  
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King.  
no more dy - in' there,  
soon and ver - y soon



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!

Coda after stanza 4



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu -



jah, hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah.

## **DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. **C Thanks be to God.**

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### **Comments from the Cloud of Witnesses**

Our Lord God showed me our Lady, Saint Mary. The greatness and nobility she saw in God filled her full of reverent dread, and with it she saw herself so little, so low, so simple, so poor in comparison to her Lord God that her reverent dread filled her full of meekness. And thus she was filled full of grace and of all manner of virtues. And thus it is between our Lord Jesus and us the greatest joy possible that he who is highest and mightiest, noblest and worthiest, becomes lowest and meekest, friendliest and most courteous. And our Lord wills that we believe, choose and trust him, enjoy and delight in him, comforting and solacing ourselves as best we can with his grace and his help until the time we see it in reality. The marvelous courtesy and unassuming friendliness no one may experience in this present life unless doing so through the great fullness of grace given inwardly by the Holy Spirit.—*Julian of Norwich*

### **Upcoming Commemorations**

#### **Stephen, Deacon and Martyr ~ Thursday, December 26, 2024**

Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

#### **The Holy Innocents, Martyrs ~ Saturday, December 28, 2024**

This day commemorates the young children killed by Herod in Bethlehem in his jealous attempt to murder the baby Jesus, a sobering reminder of the evil that led Christ to be born for our salvation.

**Announcements for the week of  
December 22, 2024**

*The Sanctuary Candle for December  
is given to the glory of God and in loving memory of **Frank O'Brien** by his daughter  
**Maureen O'Brien.***

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~Please join us in **decorating the Christmas Tree** after service **TODAY**. The tree has been donated by the Shurman Family and Janet Muller.

~ **A Farewell Breakfast for Pastor Joann** ~ On January 5<sup>th</sup> we will be holding a breakfast in the Pastor's lounge following worship where we can gather to say our goodbyes to Pastor Joann and Greg. We're hoping you'll join us as we express our thanks for all they've done for St. Stephen's and wish them Godspeed as they start on a new path in their lives.

~ A chart on the lobby bulletin board allows us to designate weekly Sunday service altar flowers or the monthly sanctuary lamp candle as special memorial/in honor of gifts. Use the envelopes provided to forward the gift (\$25.00 for flowers; \$15.00 for candle). Be sure to include information concerning who is being honored/memorialized by your gift as well as your name, address and telephone number. You may also contact the church office at (516) 931-0710.

**PARISH CALENDAR THIS WEEK (December 23<sup>rd</sup> - December 29<sup>th</sup>)**

<b>Today</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>
	9:30 am Holy Communion
	10:30 am Decorate our Christmas Tree
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	9:00 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>Christmas Day</b>	9:30 am Holy Communion

**SERVING AT WORSHIP TODAY**

Sunday, 9:30 AM

ASSISTING MINISTER:	Barbara Engert
LECTOR:	Mark Hammaren
ACOLYTE:	Carmine Barone
USHERS:	Tyler LaVorgna & Tyler Musi
ACCOMPANIST	Mason Griffin & Gregory Hunter
GREETER:	Lynn Browning
AUDIO/VISUAL:	Tyler LaVorgna
ALTAR GUILD:	Jane Ebersberger & Beth Feeney

## **PARISH PRAYER LIST**

*If you would like to have your name or your friend or family member's name added to the Prayer List, please call the office. Please remember to keep the office updated.*

### **PRAY FOR OUR CONGREGATION**

Bill Artus  
Dottie Eberhardt  
Roger Engert  
Ilona Riggers

### **PRAY FOR OUR FAMILIES**

Erin Burkhardt (daughter of Michelle Burkhardt)  
Joe DiSalvo (cousin of Maureen O'Brien)  
James Ebersberger (brother of Jane Ebersberger)  
Jim Fritz (cousin of Lauren Artus and John Langbehn)  
Tricia Lenzer (sister of Pr. Joann)  
William Stanton (cousin of Kellie Barone)

### **PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS**

Rich Carlstrom (friend of the Staton family)  
Cheryl Glasini (friend of the Ahlers-Pendas family)  
John Judge (friend of Jane Ebersberger)  
Ellen Motoi (friend of Maureen O'Brien)  
Sarah Motyka (friend of the Maurer family)  
Megan Mudd ( friend of the Staton family)  
Betty, John & Mary Beth Ott (friends of Jane Ebersberger)  
John Sheridan (friend of Bob and Nan Maurer)