



DECEMBER 22, 2024
+ THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT +

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PRELUDE

The Magnificat
Calvin Hampton
Ann Boyd, Soprano
Sam Parnin, Organ

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden.

For behold from henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

For He that is mighty hath done for me great things, and Holy is his name.

And His mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation.

He hath shown strength with his arm;

He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy,

as He spake to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jeff Hunter and Libby Piotrowski

CHORAL INTROIT

People, Look East (138)
Chancel Choir, Brian Ward, Director

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Confirmation Class

When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, “But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day.” (Micah 5:2) But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, “But you, O people of North Park Covenant Church, from you shall come forth for me...” what? What might God be calling forth from us?

God invites us to receive the promise of God’s salvation and the sustenance of God’s mercy and grace, enabling us to live into the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God’s invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God’s promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God’s love for all creation.

The fourth candle is lit.

We sing together verse 4 of hymn 122, O Zion, Acclaim Your Redeemer!

Let us pray: **Lord Jesus, you came into this world to show us how to love You and one another well. As we await Your coming again, make us bearers of Your love to the world. May we share your grace and mercy and promise of salvation with friend and stranger alike. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

* OPENING HYMN 139

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

Abbie Smith, Reader

Old Testament Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

* Gospel Reading and Psalm for the Day

Luke 1:39-55

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

CHORAL ANTHEM

Song of Mary
Richard Shephard

My Lord and Savior is my song, he fills my spirit with delight.
To raise me up his arm is strong, the lowly precious in his sight.

Refrain:

Magnificat anima mea Dominum. (My soul magnifies the Lord.)

My name shall live from age to age, and ev'ry tongue his servant bless,
for mercy is their heritage whose hearts the Holy One confess. *Refrain*

The proud beguil'd by dreams of pow'r divided and degraded lie:
He casts them down from throne and tow'r and stoops to life the humble high. *Refrain*

He feeds the hungry at his board and sends the rich unfill's away,
and mindful of his promis'd word has answer'd Israel's prayer today. *Refrain*

With all the elders of our race, and those unborn who seek this birth,
I sing the glory of his grace who brings eternity to earth. *Refrain*

MESSAGE

Jeff Hunter

* CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Desert Song

Brooke Fraser

2008 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

Led by Jeanette Mottl, Sam Parnin, and Brian Ward

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Invitation to Generosity

The Trustees will come around at this time to receive physical offerings.

Giving online at any time is also an option at www.npcovenant.org/give.

Offertory

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers! (136)

arr. Paul Manz

* Doxology 48

* Prayer of Dedication

* CLOSING HYMN 135

Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus

* BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Hark, a Thrilling Voice

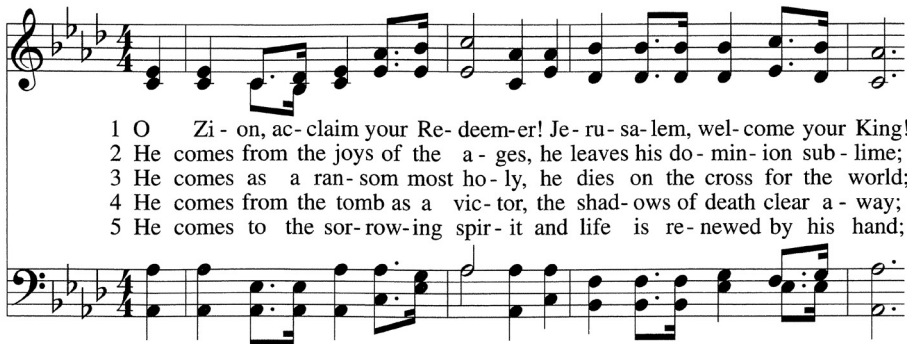
Malcolm Archer

** Please rise, in body or in spirit.*

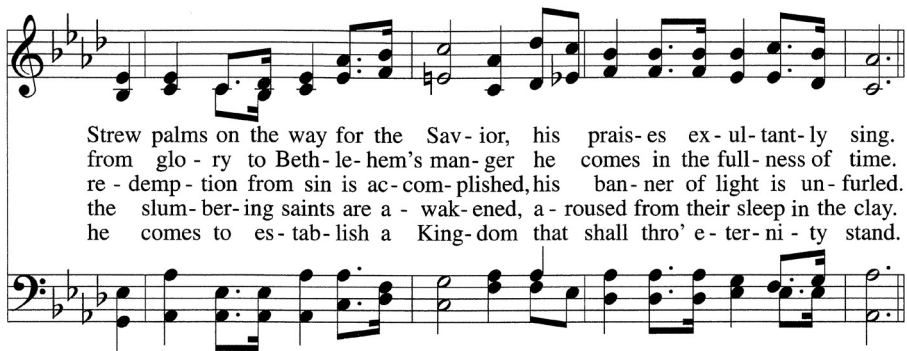
Prayer is offered in the south chapel after the service.

*In addition, if you have prayer requests to be shared confidentially with the pastors,
there is a prayer box located in the narthex, as well as slips of paper and a pen
in the box's drawer for your use.*

122 O Zion, Acclaim Your Redeemer!

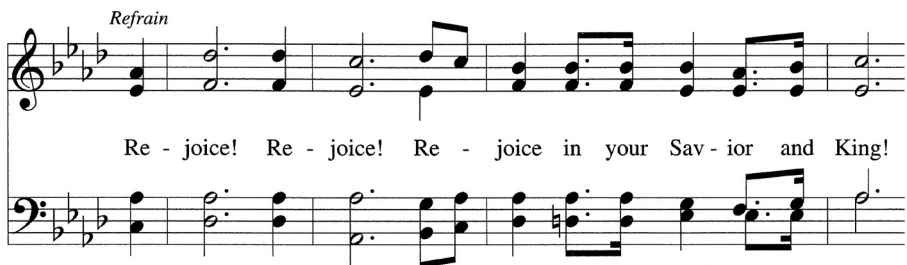


1 O Zi - on, ac - claim your Re - deem - er! Je - ru - sa - lem, wel - come your King!
 2 He comes from the joys of the a - ges, he leaves his do - min - ion sub - lime;
 3 He comes as a ran - som most ho - ly, he dies on the cross for the world;
 4 He comes from the tomb as a vic - tor, the shad - ows of death clear a - way;
 5 He comes to the sor - row - ing spir - it and life is re - newed by his hand;

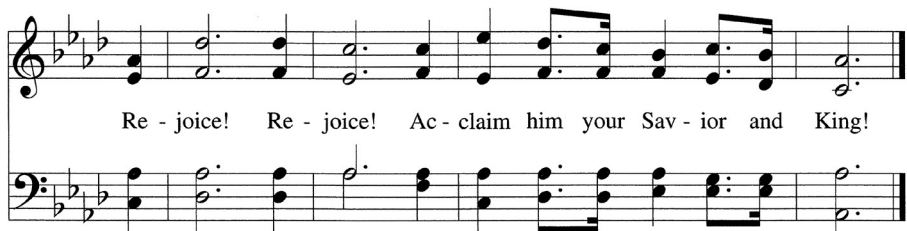


Strew palms on the way for the Sav - ior, his prais - es ex - ul - tant - ly sing.
 from glo - ry to Beth - le - hem's man - ger he comes in the full - ness of time.
 re - demp - tion from sin is ac - com - plished, his ban - ner of light is un - furled.
 the slum - ber - ing saints are a - wak - ened, a - roused from their sleep in the clay.
 he comes to es - tab - lish a King - dom that shall thro' e - ter - ni - ty stand.

Refrain



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice in your Sav - ior and King!



Re - joice! Re - joice! Ac - claim him your Sav - ior and King!

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came 139

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came, his
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er you shall be, all
 3 Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head. "To
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born in

wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame. "All
 gen - er - a - tions praise con - tin - ual - ly, your
 me - be as it pleas - es God," she said. "My
 Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn, and

hail," said he, "O low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,"
 Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told." Most
 soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:

high - ly fa - vored Ma - ry, glo - ri - a!

Desert Song

Brook Fraser



This is my prayer in the des-ert when all that's with-in me feels



dry. This is my prayer in my hun-ger and need my



God is the God who pro-vides This is my prayer in the
This is my prayer in the



fi-re in weak-ness or tri-al or pain.
bat-tle when tri-umph is still on its way.



There is a faith proved of more worth than gold, so re-fine me, Lord, through the
I am a con-queror and co-heir with Christ, so firm on His pro-mise I'll

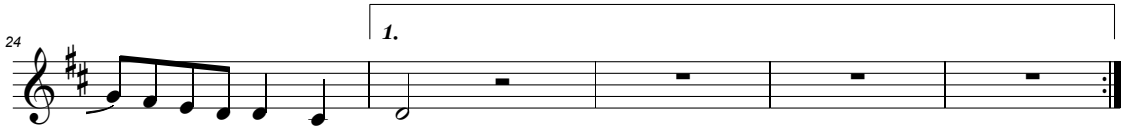


flame. I will bring praise. I will bring praise No weap-on formed
stand.



a-against me shall re main I will re-joice I will de-clare God is my vic-

24 1.



to - ry and He is here.

29



here. All of my life in e - very sea - son You

33



are still God I have a rea - son to sing I have a rea - son to wor -

37



ship. and I will bring praise, I will bring praise No wea - pon formed

41



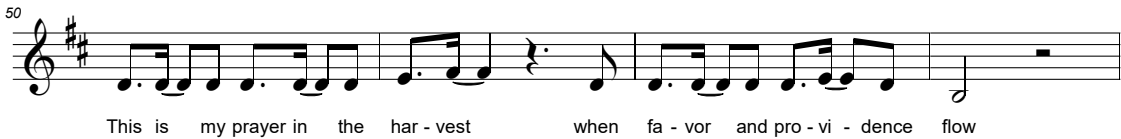
a - gainst me shall re - main I will re - joice I will de - clare God is my vic -

45



to - ry and He is here.

50



This is my prayer in the har - vest when fa - vor and pro - vi - dence flow

54



I know I'm filled to be emp - tied a - gain the seed I've re - ceived I will sow.

2

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Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow 48

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. It contains a series of chords and single notes. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

here be - low; praise him a - bove ye heav'n - ly host;

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment. The upper staff features a mix of chords and moving lines. The lower staff continues the harmonic support with chords and single notes.

praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

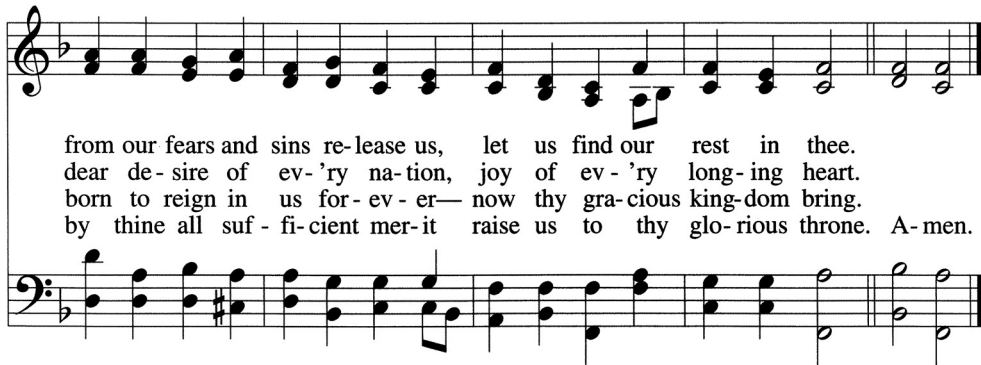
The third system concludes the piece. The upper staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The lower staff also concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

135



1 Come, thou long - ex - spect - 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 Spir - it 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 - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry 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. A - men.

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

MUSIC: Attrib. to Christian F. Witt, 1660-1716; adapt. by Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805-1876

8.7.8.7.
STUTTGART

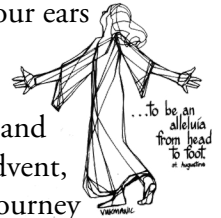
Welcome to North Park Covenant Church online! *We're glad you're here.*

For your prayers this week:

- **Sharon Johnson**, Anders Johnson's mom, recuperating after fall in which she broke her pelvis
- **Sandy Edstrom**, experiencing severe sciatica and pain in her knees
- **Greg Mesimore**, retired Covenant pastor, home again after being hospitalized for surgery to relieve headaches and pain related to the brain tumor he has been fighting
- **Kevin Wendt**, Ryan's dad, undergoing chemotherapy treatments for multiple myeloma and processing a new diagnosis of congestive heart failure
- Marti Hindaileh's godson, **Brandon Baglayan**, undergoing six weeks of chemotherapy
- Rosemary Slaughter's cousin, **Larry Mykesell**, diagnosed with COVID, and his wife, **Joanie Mykesell**, anticipating having a pacemaker inserted in the near future
- **Peter Joly**, Rosemary Slaughter's building manager, anticipating three weeks of chemo therapy treatments in Wisconsin
- **Sophia and Eli**, a couple from Ukraine who have been in Chicago for a couple of months and are in need of housing

Neighborhood Prayer in 2024

As we come to the end of both the calendar year and the church year, we are encouraged to pray with our eyes and our ears for our neighborhoods and communities. As we are bombarded with the sights and sounds of Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas; and as we journey to the stable, may we also live with eyes wide open and ears attuned to the cares and needs of our neighbors, that they, too, would come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior of their lives.



But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. - Matthew 13:16-17



Welcome to North Park Covenant Church! If you're new here today, we invite you to scan the QR code to learn more about us and, perhaps, get a little more connected.

Childcare is available in the toddler room (lower level, off the hallway south of the parlors) for the full duration of the worship service for any wee ones ages 0 through 5 needing a place to wiggle and play. We always happily welcome children in the service but recognize that sometimes parents need a break so they can focus on worship.

Staff Away: Pastor Libby will be away from December 26 through January 1. The church office will be closed from December 25 through January 2, but Pastor Jeff and Ann-Marie will be around and available via text or phone, if any needs arise.

All are invited to join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Tuesday, December 24, at 5 pm. This whole-family celebration of Christmas will center on singing Christmas carols together and reading a Christmas story with all the children, and we'll close with a candlelit singing of Silent Night. The livestream of this service will be projected in the parlors, should extra seating be required.

And you're invited to return on Christmas morning, Wednesday, December 25, at 6:30 am for our traditional Julotta service. It's early, we know. But you'll be glad you came—trust us! We invite you to join us for worship (which will take place mostly in English, but with a little Swedish thrown in for good measure), and those who have registered may join us in the parlors afterward for coffee and a Swedish fika.

**Lectionary texts for
Sunday, December 29:**

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

From the family of Ken Johnson (father of NPCC member Elizabeth Johnson & long-time member of Trinity Evangelical Covenant Church), following our notice of his passing in August: A celebration of his life will take place on Saturday, January 18, 2025, at First Baptist Church (1900 Gandy Blvd N, St. Petersburg, FL 33702), at 1 pm CT/2 pm ET. For those who would like to attend virtually, the service will be [available via livestream here](#).

It's time to clear out the Lost & Found! If you think you may have misplaced something here at the church, please feel free to reach out to me to ask if that item is in our lost and found. Anything not claimed by Wednesday, January 15, will be donated or tossed.

Gifts for our Missionaries: Throughout the year, we as a church support missionaries in five areas of the world via a percentage of General Fund donations. Now it's time to remember these missionary servants with a special Christmas gift. To make a special donation, write "missionary gift" in the memo line on your check or select "Missionary Gift" from the drop-down menu at www.npcovenant.org/give. The deadline for these gifts is Tuesday, December 31. Thank you!

From the Treasurer: As of November 30, 2024, offering totals \$545,810 compared to the year-to-date budget of \$599,500 and compared to \$547,747 as of November 30, 2023. To meet the budget, we need \$107,105 of offering in December. Total income through November is \$637,224 (compared to \$620,468 last year) with total expenses of \$647,989 resulting in a \$10,765 shortfall. The shortfall is being funded from undesignated reserves.

Dear Church Family,

It is with very grateful hearts that we thank you for your generosity to us this Christmas! It is a blessing to serve alongside all of you, and we give thanks to God for each of you.

Merry Christmas, dear Church. We look forward to what God has in store for NPCC in 2025.

-Your Church Staff

The Church Calendar This Week

The calendar is available online at www.npcovenant.org/calendar and is updated as changes occur.

Monday, December 23

- 10:30 am Staff Meeting (Staff Conference Room)
- 6:30 pm Geezerball (Gym)
- 7:30 pm Centering Prayer (Staff Conference Room)

Tuesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

- 5 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Sanctuary)

Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day - Office Closed

- 6:30 am Julotta Service (Sanctuary)
- 7:30 am Julotta Fika (Parlors)

Saturday, December 28

- 8 am Geezerball (Gym)
- 10 am Cudahy Basketball (Gym)

Sunday, December 29

- 10:30 am Worship (Sanctuary)
- 1:30 pm Vida Plena Covenant Church Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 7 pm AA Meeting (Parlors)

**North Park Covenant
Church Staff**

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Sam Parnin, Organist
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Linnea Olfelt, Chancel Handbell Choir Director

Joline Paska, Treasurer
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Ann-Marie Olson Frisk, Church Administrator
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Missionaries We Support

Letha Kerl,
Regional Co-coordinator for Europe

Peter and Anna Kim, Taiwan

James and Rachel Ventress, Alaska

Paul and Sheryl Noren, Congo

Eugenio and Pia Restrepo,
Latin America

Welcome Statement

We welcome all people to begin or deepen their relationship with Christ through worship and study. We invite all believers to fully participate in the life and ministry of our church as members, leaders, and lay staff. We celebrate the gifts and presence of diverse Christians among us—whether those differences be race, ethnicity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, or socioeconomic status. We are blessed by our diversity and are unified in Christ.