



The Fourth Sunday of
ADVENT

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR HOLY EUCHARIST

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21st, 2025

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Cn. Jonathan Myers, Rector: jonathan@ststephens-spokane.com | 509.448.1504

Rev. Elaine Pitzer, Parish Deacon: evpitzer@aol.com

Alayna Biersdorff, Lay Pastor for Formation and Administration: alayna@ststephens-spokane.com | 509.703.2851

St Stephen's is called, with God's help, to follow Jesus, and to be a source of transformation and Christian hope and inspiration to those within our community and those in our respective neighborhoods.



Welcome! If you are unfamiliar with the rituals of the Episcopal Church, simply let the congregation carry you in worship. The order of worship is found in this service booklet and the hymns are in the blue hymnal in your pew.

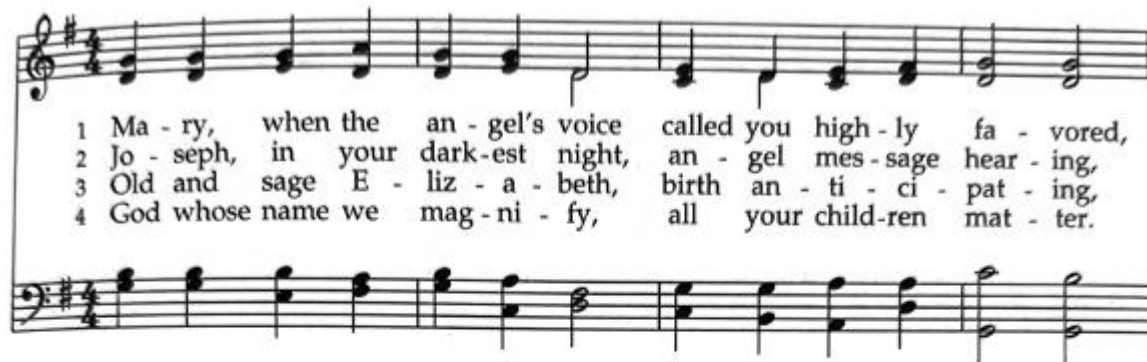
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Preceding the service, a singing bowl will be rung as we prepare ourselves interiorly for worship.

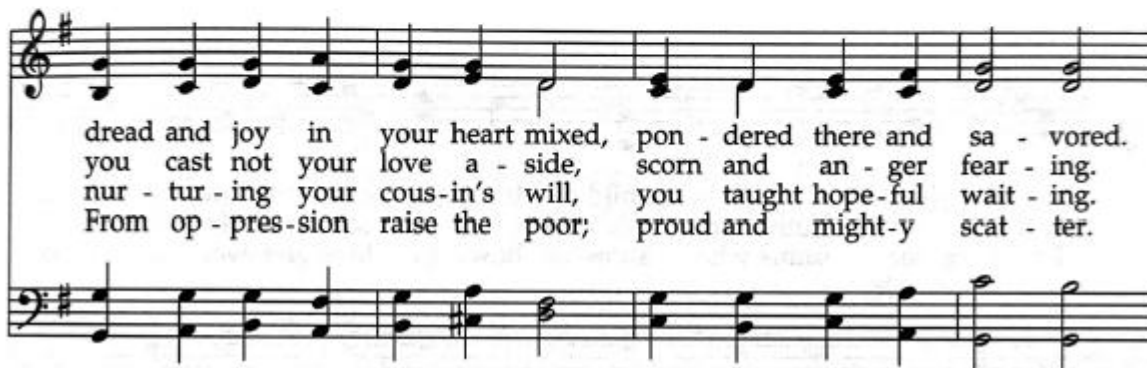


GATHERING HYMN

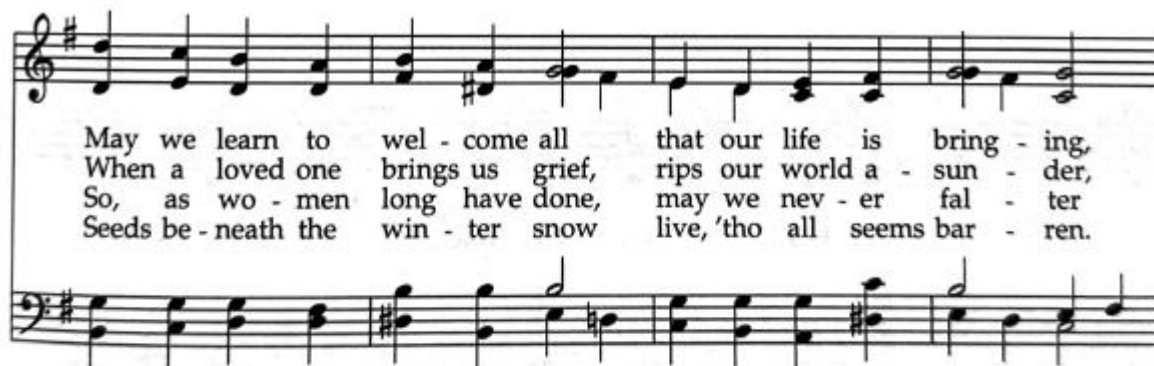
Mary When the Angel's Voice



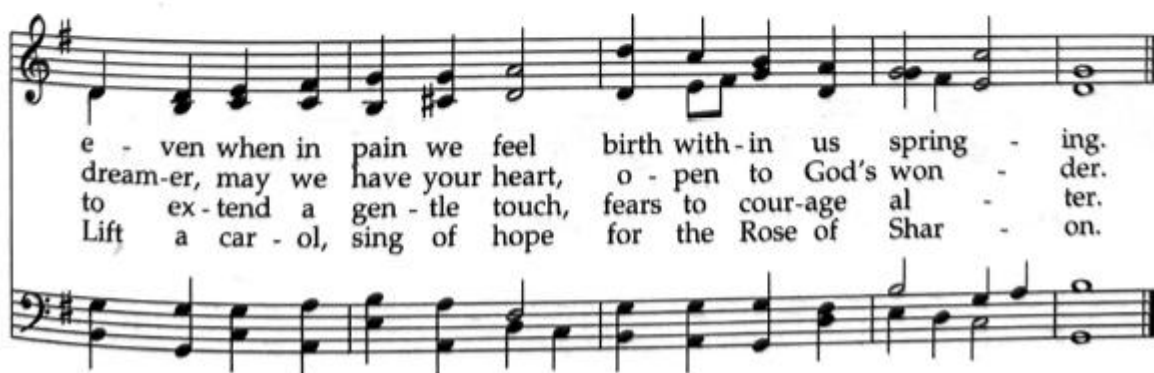
1 Ma - ry, when the an - gel's voice called you high - ly fa - vored,
 2 Jo - seph, in your dark - est night, an - gel mes - sage hear - ing,
 3 Old and sage E - liz - a - beth, birth an - ti - ci - pat - ing,
 4 God whose name we mag - ni - fy, all your child - ren mat - ter.



dread and joy in your heart mixed, pon - dered there and sa - vored.
 you cast not your love a - side, scorn and an - ger fear - ing.
 nur - tur - ing your cous - in's will, you taught hope - ful wait - ing.
 From op - pres - sion raise the poor; proud and might - y scat - ter.



May we learn to wel - come all that our life is bring - ing,
 When a loved one brings us grief, rips our world a - sun - der,
 So, as wo - men long have done, may we nev - er fal - ter
 Seeds be - neath the win - ter snow live, 'tho all seems bar - ren.



e - ven when in pain we feel birth with - in us spring - ing.
 dream - er, may we have your heart, o - pen to God's won - der.
 to ex - tend a gen - tle touch, fears to cour - age al - ter.
 Lift a car - ol, sing of hope for the Rose of Shar - on.

LITANY OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT

Voice 1: *We wait in the darkness, expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully.*

Voice 2: *The darkness is our friend. In the darkness of the womb, we have all been nurtured and protected. In the darkness of the womb, the Christ-child was made ready for the journey into light.*

R. You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Voice 1: *It is only in the darkness that we can see the splendor of the universe—blankets of stars, the solitary glowing of distant planets.*

Voice 2: *It was the darkness that allowed the magi to find the star that guided them to where the Christ-child lay.*

R. You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Voice 1: *In the darkness of the night, desert people find relief from the cruel relentless heat of the sun.*

Voice 2: *In the blessed darkness, Mary and Joseph were able to flee with the infant Jesus to safety in Egypt.*

R. You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Voice 1: *In the darkness of sleep, we are soothed and restored healed and renewed.*

Voice 2: *In the darkness of sleep, dreams rise up. God spoke to Jacob and Joseph through dreams. God is speaking still.*

R. You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Voice 1: *In the solitude of darkness, we sometimes remember those who need God's presence in a special way—the sick, the unemployed, the bereaved, the persecuted, the homeless; those who are demoralized and discouraged, those whose fear has turned to cynicism, those whose vulnerability has become bitterness.*

Voice 2: *Sometimes in the darkness, we remember those who are near to our hearts—colleagues, partners, parents, children, neighbors, friends. We thank God for their presence and ask God to bless and protect them in all that they do—at home, at school, as they travel, as they work, as they play.*

R. You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Voice 1: *Sometimes, in the solitude of darkness, our fears and concerns, our hopes and our visions rise to the surface. We come face to face with ourselves and with the road that lies ahead of us. And in that same darkness, we find companionship for the journey.*

Voice 2: *In that same darkness, we sometimes allow ourselves to wonder and worry whether the human race is going to make it at all.*

R. We know you are with us, O God, yet we still await your coming. In the darkness that contains both our hopelessness and our expectancy, we watch for a sign of God's Hope. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



OPENING BLESSING

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Creator, Liberator, and Sustainer.

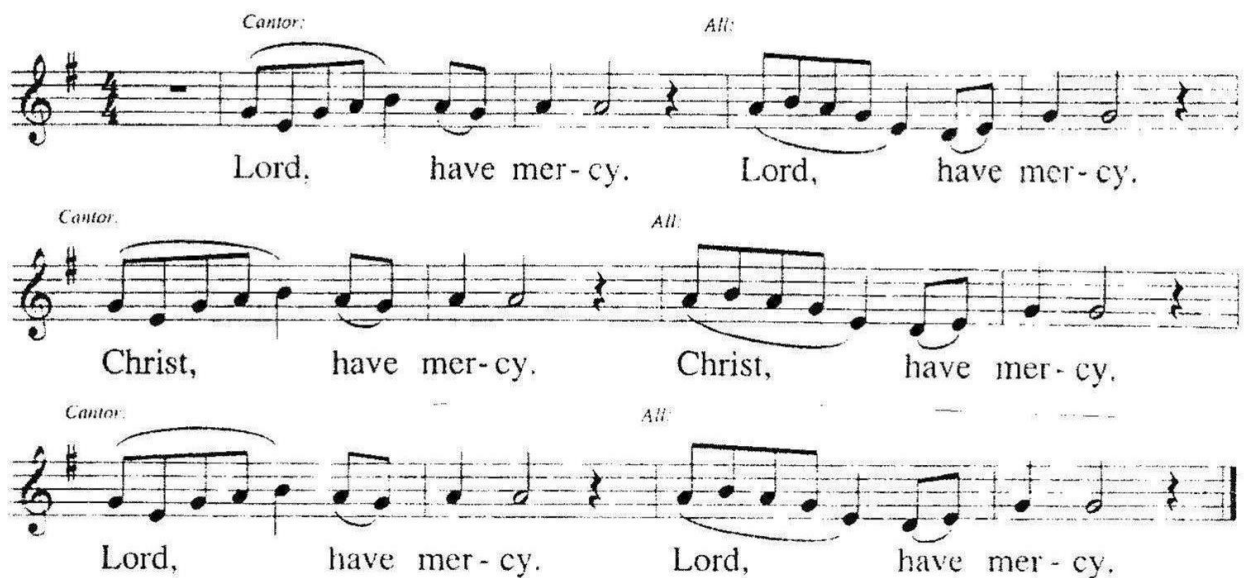
People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

COLLECT FOR 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.

KYRIE

Psallite Mass



COLLECT FOR THE DAY—

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God with us, borne by Mary's flesh beyond all convention: give us the faith of Joseph to see the Spirit's work where the world sees only shame; to listen to the promise and waken to the cry of life renewed and love reborn; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people

People: Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM

Psalm 80



Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a **flock**;

shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the **cherubim**.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,

stir up your strength and come to **help us**.*

Restore us, O God of **hosts**;

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be **saved**.

O God of hosts, how long will you be **angered**

despite the prayers of your **people**?*

You have fed them with the bread of **tears**;

you have given them bowls of tears to **drink**.

You have made us the derision of our **neighbors**,

and our enemies laugh us to **scorn**.*

Restore us, O God of **hosts**;

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be **saved**.

Let your hand be upon the one at your **right hand**,

the one you have made so strong for **yourself**.*

And so will we never turn away from **you**,
give us life, that we may call upon your **Name**.

Restore us, O God of **hosts**;

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be **saved**.*

THE SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

People: Thanks be to God.

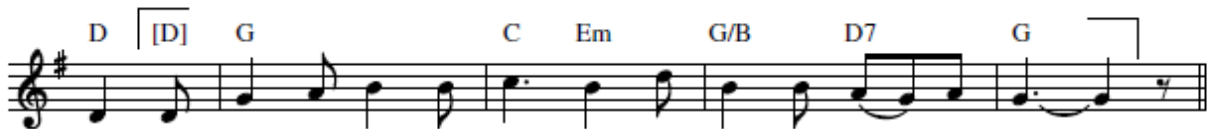
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

O Come Divine Messiah

VERSES

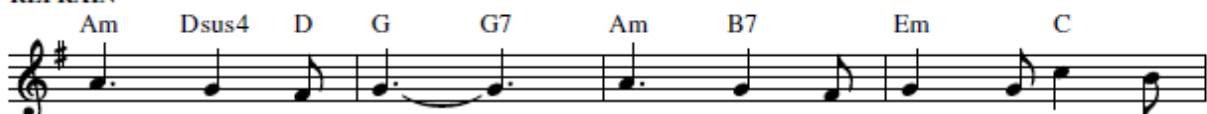


1. O come, di - vine Mes - si - ah; The world in si - lence waits ____ the
2. O Christ, whom na - tions sigh for, Whom priest and proph - et long ____ fore -
3. You come in peace and meek - ness And low - ly will your cra - dle



1. day When hope shall sing its tri - umph And sad - ness flee ____ a - way. ____
2. told, Come, break the cap - tive's fet - ters, Re - deem the long - lost fold. ____
3. be; All clothed in hu - man weak - ness Shall we your God - head see. ____

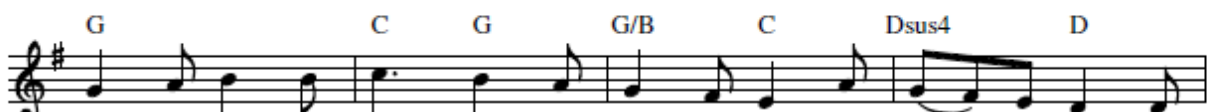
REFRAIN



Dear Sav - ior, haste! ____ Come, come to earth. Dis - pel the



night and show your face, and bid us hail the dawn of grace. ____ O



come, di - vine Mes - si - ah; the world in si - lence waits ____ the day when



hope shall sing its tri - umph and sad - ness flee ____ a - way. ____

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

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Clergy: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE HOMILY

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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin
Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate;

Enriching Our Worship

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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped
and glorified,
who 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

V. We long for you O God, R. Come Emmanuel

CONFESSION

Enriching Our Worship

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor

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 PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be always with you

And also with you

WELCOME SONG

God Welcomes All

God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;

God's love is strong and it nev - er ends.

The image shows a musical score for a two-part setting of the hymn 'God Welcomes All'. It is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first system covers the first line of lyrics, and the second system covers the second line. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a clear bass line. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

OFFERTORY

To give online, please see the QR code on the back of the bulletin

OFFERTORY HYMN

#81 Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming

DOXOLOGY

What Child Is This?

E Minor: Em D G D B⁷ Em Am/C

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow. — Praise God, all crea - tures

B Em D G D B⁷

here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. — Praise

Em Am B Em Bm G

Fa - ther, Son, — and Ho - ly Ghost. This, this — is

D B⁷ Em Am/C B

Christ the King, — whom shep - herds guard — and an - gels sing;

Bm G D B⁷ Em Am B Em (or E Major)

haste, haste — to bring him laud, — the babe, — the son — of Ma - ry.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE PREFACE

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.**

SANCTUS

Missa Emmanuel

Cantor, then all:
Ho-ly, Ho-ly, Ho - ly Lord, Ho-ly Lord God of hosts.

Cantor:
Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

All:
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

Cantor:
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

All:
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,

your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

THE FRACTION

Celebrant: Alleluia, Emmanuel, God is with us.

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

AGNUS DEI

H-273

S
A
T
B

3

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world:

8

3

have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the

13

world: grant us, grant us peace.

HOLY COMMUNION

Christ is the Host of this Holy Feast: All are welcome to receive God's blessing. You may choose to receive wine from the little cups or from the common chalice. To receive from the chalice, please help guide the cup by grasping the bottom of the cup. Please do not dip your bread (intinct) into the cup. Gluten-free hosts are available—please mention your need for a gluten-free host to the clergy distributing the Body of Christ when you approach to receive Holy Communion.

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Maria Walks Amid the Thorn

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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 forever. Amen.

PARISH PRAYER CENTER

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN: *See last page*

SENDING

Thanks to all those who serve in St. Stephen's liturgical ministries!

St. Stephen's Choir

Sopranos: Esther Matuku | Cassie Roeder | Grace Rowe* | Alyssa Selby
Altos: Suzanne Capstick | Zenny Chen | Scarlett Hepworth* | Taylor Reed
Tenors: Trevor Bushnell* | Kelson Johansing | Dan Roeder
Basses: Marc Anthony | Chuck Harris | Mike Henneberry | Nathan Hoyt* | Don Lamp
Logan Shevalier, Choral Director | Christian Skok, Music Director
*Section Leaders

St. Martha's Altar Guild

Pam Bernardo | Karen Bushnell | Vanita Davis | Lyla Henderson | The Henry Family | Suzy Jefferies
Lisa Johnston, President | Meg Jones | Laura Lindsey | Paula Oty | Mary Lou Redmond | Lolita Sutton
Pam Strickland | Karen Williams

Bulletin Cover Art: Plummer, Lauren. Advent Candle, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

Give Online:



1 Peo - ple, look east! The time is near of the
 2 Fur - rows, be glad! Though earth is bare, one more
 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the
 4 Stars, keep the watch: when night is dim one more
 5 An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who

crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
 seed is plant - ed there: give up your strength the seed to
 nest that must be filled; e - ven the hour when wings are
 light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y
 brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley

a - ble, trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 fro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen. Peo - ple, look
 weath - er, bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 humm - ing 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 bird, 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.