

First Sunday of Advent



December 3rd, 2023

Portage Lake United Church

*We gather in the name of the Holy Trinity, one God, source of all goodness and mercy.
No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

Welcome to you who are joining us via Zoom. We remind you to please MUTE your mic when you do not want us to hear you, you are also invited to keep your camera on, so we can see you with us.

- Advent service at Portage Lake United Church, Wednesday, December 6th. Bread and soup at 5:15; Worship at 6:00.
- We will be “Greening the Church” today, following Worship. Join us as we prepare the church for the season
- On December 17th, we will further decorate the church with poinsettias. Poinsettias are \$23.00 this year and orders are due by December 10th.
- Cookie Sunday, December 10th.
- Fellowship Guild will be meeting at the home of Lou Ellyn Helman on December 11th @ 11:30 am for a salad luncheon and to put together Christmas baskets for our members and friends in assisted living facilities.
- We will be taking the Christmas Joy/Christmas Fund offering on December 17th.
- Today is Helping Hands Sunday. Your gifts are appreciated.



*Liturgical Color Purple
Proper 29
Lectionary Year B*

Are there any other announcements?

Presider: Rev. Peter Norland
Musician: Susie Byykkonen
Prayer Writer: Lois Jambekar
Reader: Christina Norland
Greeters: Jan Medlyn
Coffee: Louisa Kolch, Lou Ellyn Helman
Communion: Barb Brookhouse
Children's Church: Olivia Byykkonen

MEDITATION

Because we see such deception in our world, it is not unusual that we guard ourselves against the truth of the gospel story. We are afraid that it is indeed too good to be true. What if we believed and then found out it was only myth and hype?

(Rueben P. Job)

PRELUDE



GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

+ CALL TO WORSHIP

Advent means coming.

In this season of profound longings
and wild expectations—
when the world is at its darkest—
we light candles as a sign
of the coming light of Christ.



O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

120

In unison

1 O come, O come, Em-man-u-el, and ran-som cap-tive

Is-ra-el, that mourns in lone-ly ex-ile here, un-til the Son of

God ap-pear. Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-

man-u-el shall come to thee, O Is-ra-el!

WORDS: Latin, c. ninth century, tr. sts. 1, 2, John M. Neale, 1818-1866, sts. 3,4,
Henry S. Coffin, 1877-1954
MUSIC: Adapt. from plainsong by Thomas Helmore, 1811-1890;
arr. Roland Tabell, 1934, © 1992 Roland Tabell

L.M. with Refrain
VENI EMMANUEL

✦ Lighting of Advent Candles

Lighting a candle
is an act of defiance.

Lighting a candle
is a prayer for courage.

Lighting a candle
is a step toward God.

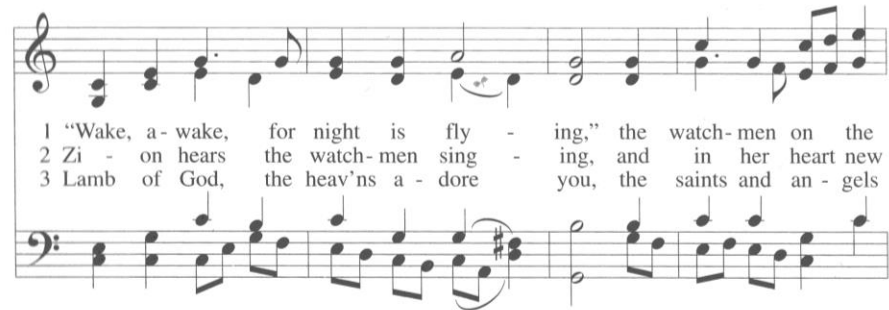
God of light,
out in the world,
where you are and we live,
help your people to shine as a candle of peace.

✚ HYMN “Wake, Awake, the Night is Flying” INSERT

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121

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying



1 “Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing,” the watch - men on the
2 Zi - on hears the watch - men sing - ing, and in her heart new
3 Lamb of God, the heav’ns a - dore you, the saints and an - gels



heights are cry - ing; “A - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, a - rise!”
joy is spring - ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom.
sing be - fore you with harp and cym - bals’ clear - est tone.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es and at the thrill - ing
For her Lord comes down all glo - rious and strong in grace, in
Of one pearl each shin - ing por - tal, where, join - ing with the



cry re - joic - es: “Where are the vir - gins pure and wise?
truth vic - to - rious. Her star is ris’n, her light is come!
choir im - mor - tal, we gath - er round your ra - dian - t throne.



The Bride - groom comes: a - wake! Your lamps with glad - ness take!
Now come, O bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God’s own Son.
No eye has seen that light, no ear the ech - oed might



Al - le - lu - ia! With brid - al care and faith’s bold pray’r,
Sing ho - san - na! We an - swer all in joy your call;
of your glo - ry; yet there shall we in vic - to - ry



to meet the Bride - groom, come, pre - pare!”
we fol - low to the wed - ding hall.
sing shouts of joy the e - ter - nal - ly!

WORDS: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608, tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878
MUSIC: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608; arr. J.S. Bach, 1685-1750

Irregular
WACHET AUF

The coming of Jesus is for us a new and living hope. He will not come too late. It is chilly in the world and the people of God are beleaguered, but he says, “Behold, I come quickly. Blessed are those servants whom the Master finds awake when he comes.”

A.E. Palmquist, 1870-1949
The Word Is Near You, © 1974 Covenant Publications

✚ PRAYER OF THE DAY

Eternal God,
we wait upon you at this time,
make us alert to your coming within ourselves and others,
and in the currents of history, the rivers of time that roll on,
generation after generation.

We come especially to give thanks that your Son Jesus
came among us to share our life so that we might share yours.
Your Spirit inspires our prayers, in the name of Jesus,
Emmanuel. Amen.

Amen.

✚ PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

**God-with-us,
even in Advent,
we confess that you can seem far away.
You are hidden when we need you near.
In our hurt, doubt, and fear,
we do not try to draw closer to you;
instead, we lash out—
against you, our neighbor, even those we love.
Forgive us, we pray, and co
Let your face shine until our tears are dried,
our sins are faded, and our hope is restored.
After all, we belong to you,
and in your hands, we can be made new.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**



✦ DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

The grace of God, given to us in Christ Jesus,
strengthens us to the end
so that we may be blameless
when Christ comes again.

Thanks be to God, who is faithful
and has called us into the fellowship of the Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord!



+ PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Greet each other with a sign of God's peace.

Children of God, we are the body of Christ.

By one spirit

we were baptized into one body.

Keep the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace.

Amen.

We are bound by the love of Christ.



WORD

God speaks to us in scripture, reading, preaching and song



Ice Cream for
Handicapped
Children

Burlhome Park
Philadelphia, PA

Isaiah 64:1-9 (versus 1-5 shown here)

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
2 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!
3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
4 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.
5 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.

Isaiah 64:1-9 (versus 6-9 shown here)

- 6** 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.
- 7** 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.
- 8** Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
- 9** Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Footnotes: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version. (1989). (Isaiah 64:1-9) Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, **5** for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— **6** just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— **7** so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. **8** He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Footnotes: The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version. (1989). (1 Corinthians 1:3-9) Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.



“O Promised One of Israel” INSERT

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ADVENT: COMING

124

O Promised One of Israel

1 O prom-ised one of Is - ra - el by proph-ets long fore -
2 In si - lent suf - f'ring some a - wait your reign of jus - tice
3 Cre - a - tion stands a - lert and tense to see your soy - 'reign

told, we wait in ur - gen - cy and hope to
here, while oth - ers, dulled by wealth and ease, can
pow'r. You choose to come a ti - ny child re -

see God's will un - fold. The dark of night and
not ex - plain their fear. When proph - ets spoke and
vealed this day and hour. O grant us pa - tience

cold pre - dawn a - rouse our anx - ious fears.
Ma - ry sang of ta - bles o - ver - turned,
to re - ceive with - out pre - tense or pride

Help us to see the light a - head through tri - als, doubts, and tears.
dare we ad - mit, in trem - bling awe, our hearts with - in us burned?
the gift of God's re - deem - ing grace: a Sav - ior by our side.

/ORDS: Jane Parker Huber, 1926-, © 1986 Jane Parker Huber
/USIC: English melody; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958, alt., © Oxford University Press
lower setting can be found at 473.

C.M.P.
FOREST GREEN

✚ GOSPEL READING Mark 13:24-37 (24-31 shown here)

24 “But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,

25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26 Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. **27** 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.

28 “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. **29** So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. **30** Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. **31** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

✚ GOSPEL READING Mark 13:24-37 (32-37 shown here)

32 “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. **33** Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. **34** 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. **35** 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, **36** or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. **37** And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Sermon



Offering and Prayer of Dedication



To make a gift to the ministry of PLUC [click here.](#)

✚ OFFERING HYMN "In the Bleak Midwinter" #36 BLUE

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In the Bleak Midwinter

36

CRANHAM Irregular

Christina Rossetti, c. 1872; alt.

Gustav Theodore Holst, 1906

4. What can I give Him, Poor as I am?

If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man, I would do my part;

Yet what I can I give Him: Give my heart.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is primarily in the treble staff, with the piano accompaniment in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The score is divided into four systems, each with two staves. The first system begins with a 4. indicating a fourth ending. The second system has a repeat sign at the end. The third system has a repeat sign at the end. The fourth system ends with a double bar line. There are dashed circles around some notes in the treble staff, likely indicating phrasing or breath marks. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes, providing a harmonic foundation for the voice.

OFFERING PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Faithful God,
we thank you that Christ is being
revealed in every time and place until
he comes again in the fullness of glory.
Strengthen our testimony,
grow our spiritual gifts,
and increase generosity in us,
we pray, as we wait for the day
of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.



Aging Grace Fe Langdon
Rio Grande State Park, Albuquerque, NM

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION



Solar Eclipse from Mount Santa Lucia -- Carleton Watkins, Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA

MEAL

GOD FEEDS US WITH THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

....

Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three!

We await your coming.

....

And so we cry, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the church shouts, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the earth pleads, Come, Holy Spirit:



MEAL

GOD FEEDS US WITH THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST

....

And so we cry, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the church shouts, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the earth pleads, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

....

And so we cry, Amen.

Amen!



MEAL

GOD FEEDS US WITH THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (ECUMENICAL)

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 Best Supper © Jan Richardson janrichardsonimages.com

MEAL


GOD FEEDS US WITH THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

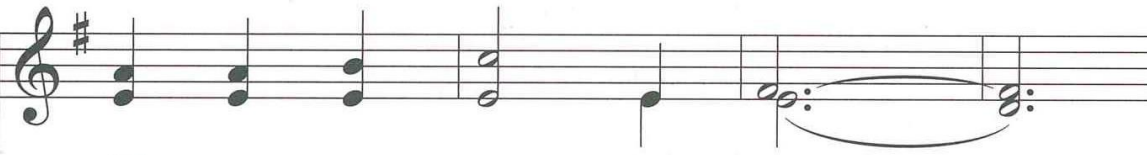


JESUS CHRIST: ADVENT


92 While We Are Waiting, Come



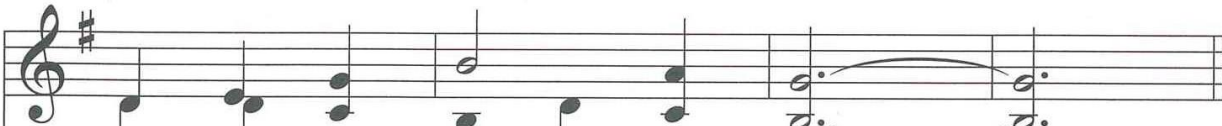
1 While we are wait - ing, come;
2 With power and glo - ry, come;
3 Come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come;



while we are wait - ing, come.
with power and glo - ry, come.
come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come.



Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,



while we are wait - ing, come.

This simple and meditative Advent hymn is so uncomplicated in both text and tune that it can be learned quickly and sung without reference to a book, which might make it effective as a prayer response. It would also lend itself to improvised stanzas on appropriate occasions.

MEAL

GOD FEEDS US WITH THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION



PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (ECUMENICAL)

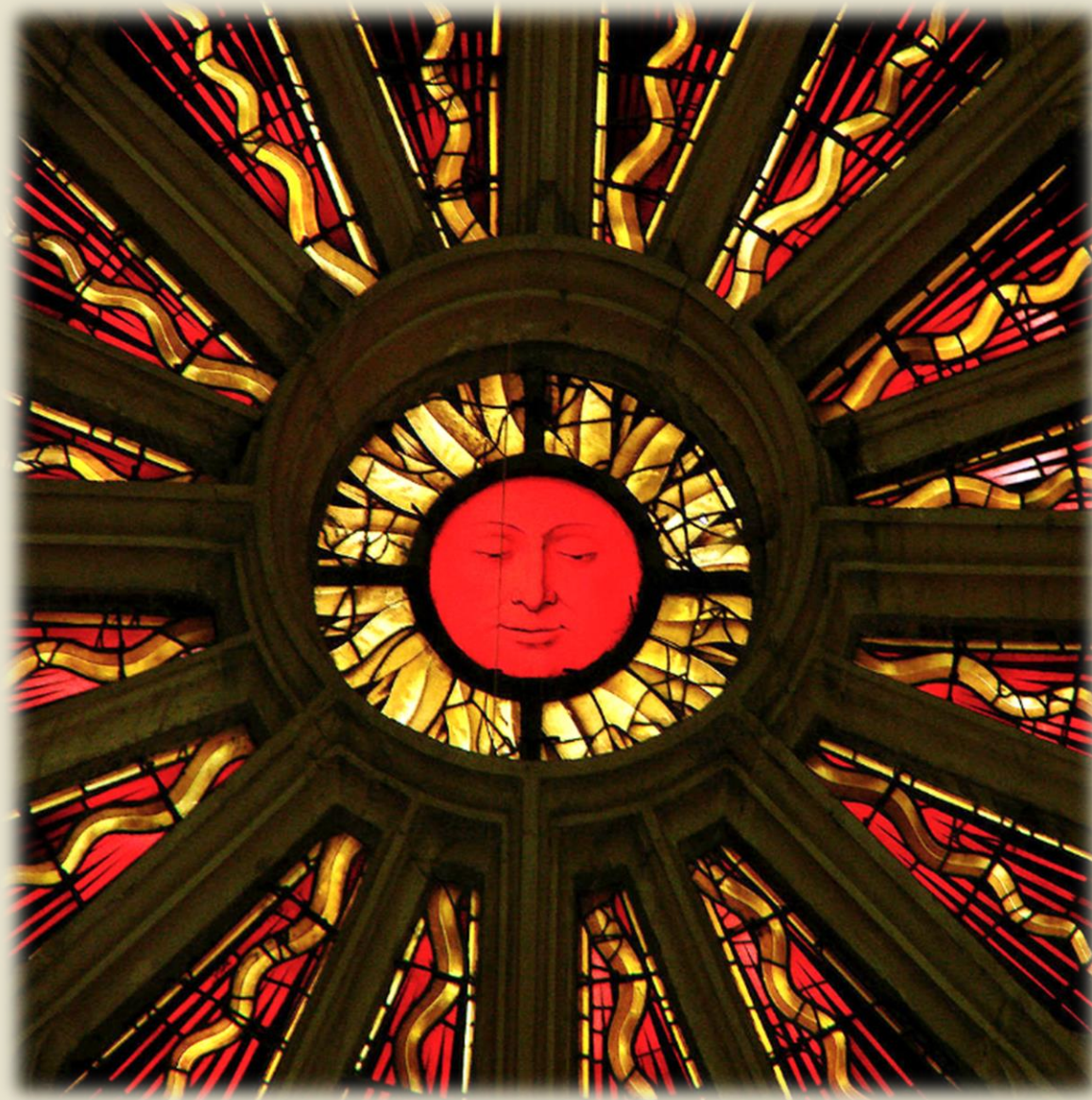
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.



Eucharist Door with the Lord's Prayer
Sagrada Família, Barcelona, Spain

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.



God's Shining Face

Church of St. Nicolas Saint-
Nicolas-de-Port
France

ADVENT

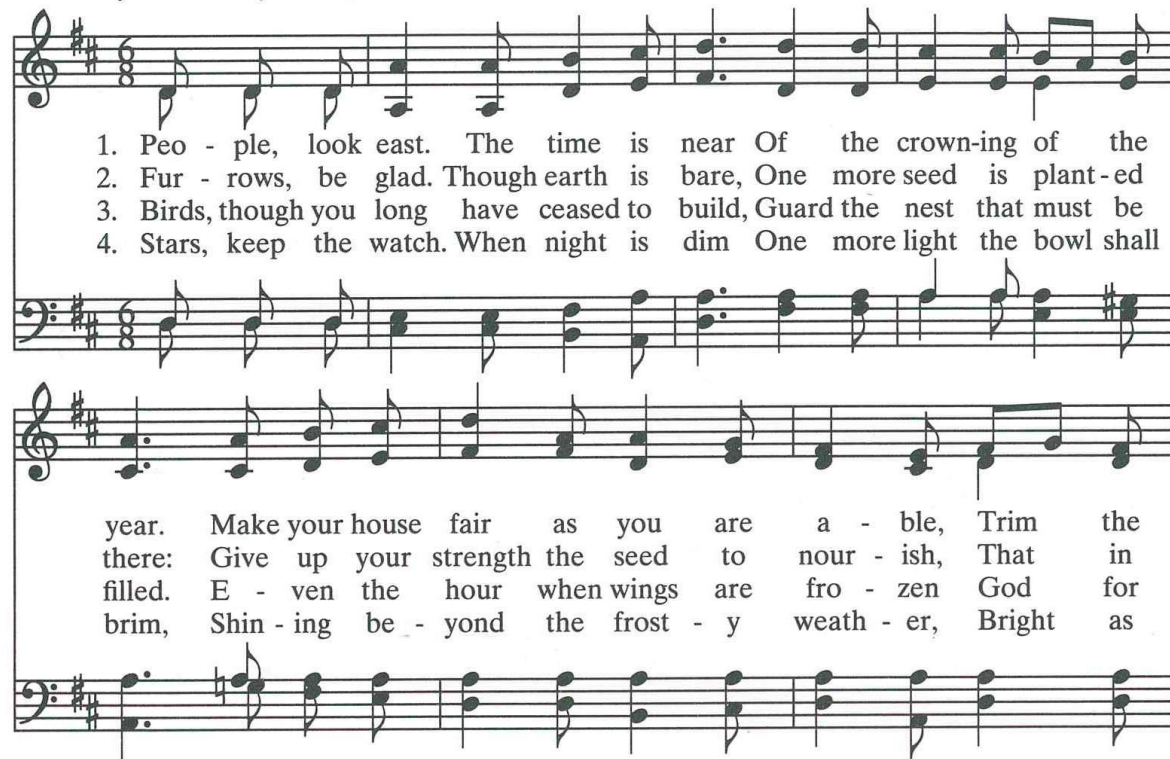
People, Look East

12

Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965)
As in *Oxford Book of Carols*, 1964

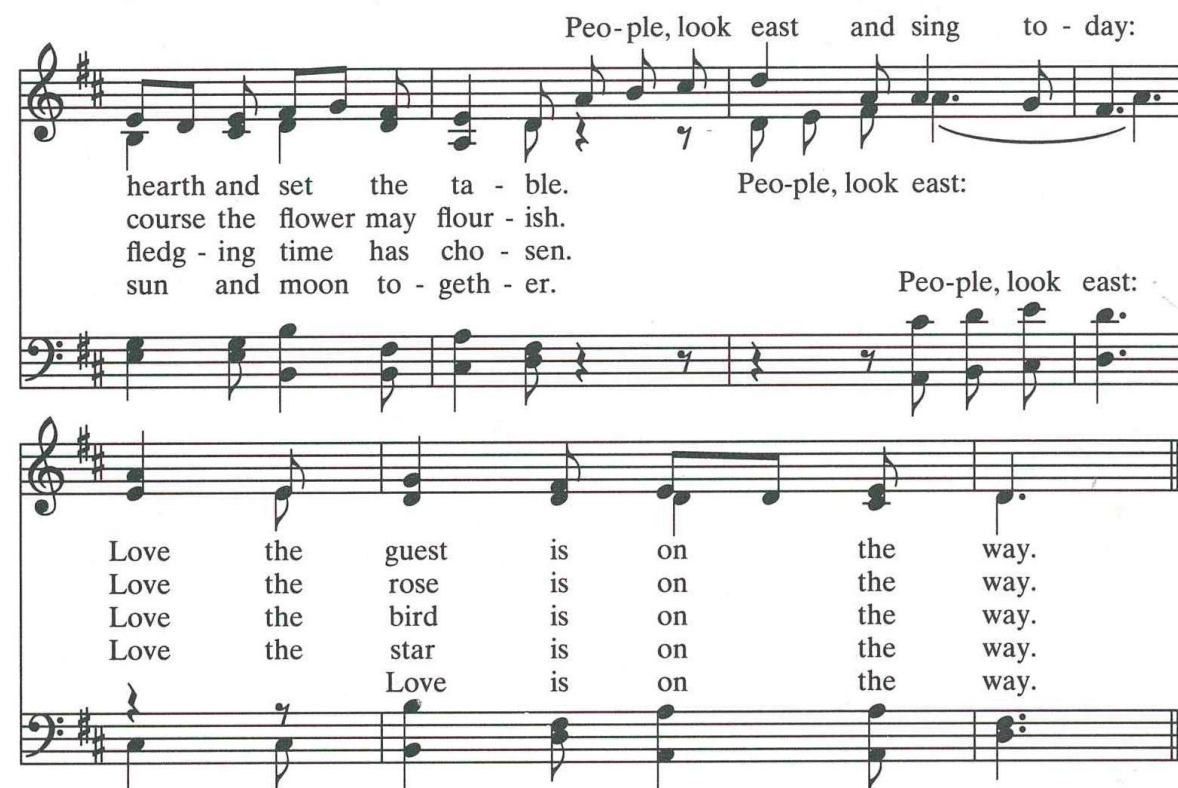
BESANÇON 8.7.9.8.8.7

French folk melody
Harm. Martin Shaw (1875–1958)



1. Peo - ple, look east. The time is near Of the crown-ing of the
2. Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, One more seed is plant-ed
3. Birds, though you long have ceased to build, Guard the nest that must be
4. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim One more light the bowl shall

year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble, Trim the
there: Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish, That in
filled. E - ven the hour when wings are fro - zen God for
brim, Shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er, Bright as



Peo-ple, look east and sing to - day:
hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo-ple, look east:
course the flower may flour - ish.
fledg - ing time has cho - sen.
sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo-ple, look east:

Love the guest is on the way.
Love the rose is on the way.
Love the bird is on the way.
Love the star is on the way.
Love is on the way.

5. Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming

With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the Lord is on the way.

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+ CHARGE AND BLESSING

Beware.

Keep alert.

Keep awake.

God is doing awesome things we do not expect.

And Christ is coming near
with great power and glory,
and with tenderness.

May God strengthen us to the end;
Christ draw near to our very gates;
and the Holy Spirit awaken our spirits;
until, with eager longing,
we greet the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.



Potter's Wheel
Else Berg prior to 1942

Questions for Reflection:

The weeks leading to Christmas are often filled with much activity. Along with work, school, and church responsibilities, there are special holiday festivities to which we will attend. Staying “awake,” as Mark 13:24–37 stresses, may not be the problem—in fact, we may feel there are not enough hours in the day! Yet, this reading from Mark counsels us to be awake to, to pay attention to, what is most needful for our well-being and the well-being of the world: God’s presence, God’s appearing among us. Here at the beginning of Advent, how will you “keep alert” for God in the midst of so many responsibilities and distractions?

... we are the clay, and you are our potter;

Isaiah 64:8b

Thanks to:

Presider: Rev. Peter Norland

Musician: Susie Bykkonen

Prayer Writer: Lois Jambekar

Reader: Christina Norland

Greeters: Jan Medlyn

Coffee: Louisa Kolch, Lou Ellyn Helman

Communion: Barb Brookhouse

Children's Church: Olivia Bykkonen



Portage Lake United Church

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) & UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1400 East Houghton Avenue, Houghton Michigan 49931
www.PLUC.org office@pluc.org (906)482-5224

Rooted in the Trinity. Growing in God's Word.
Branching out to those in need. Nourished by many waters.

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<https://www.michigannutphotography.com/about> John McCormick

Fall colors at Middle Hungarian Falls in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula. Photo credit: Kevin Pihlaja

Serving next Sunday December 10th

Presider: Rev. Peter Norland

Greeters: Nancy Byers Sprague, Dianne Sprague

Reader: Lou Ellyn Helman

Prayer Writer: Greg Campbell

Coffee: Biruta Lowther

Children's Church: TBD

Next Sunday's Scriptures:

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2' 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a,
Mark 1:1-8