



**! Opening Hymn 124**

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*  
*(Congregation, Orchestra, Choir)*

**Advent Candle Lighsting**

*The Fox Family*

*(Lighting of the First, Second, Third & Fourth Advent Candle)*

Reader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life."

**All: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.**

Reader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

—Isaiah 9:2, NRSV

I will lead the blind by a road they do not know,  
by the paths they have not known I will guide them.  
I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do and I will not forsake them.

—Isaiah 42:16, NRSV

The LORD says to his servant, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

—from Isaiah 49:6, NRSV

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

—Isaiah 58:8, NRSV

Come, Lord Jesus, our light and our salvation.  
**Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

**Confessing**

***God invites us to be honest with Him***

**Call to Confession**

*Susan Obenschain*

Prepare the way of the Lord! Let us make our confession to God.

**Prayer of Confession**

*Susan Obenschain*

While we ask, Lord, for the most meaningful Advent season ever, we sadly confess having done so little with so much. Forgive us Lord, for not bending the knee, for not reading your Word, for not searching our hearts, for not facing our sins. Forgive us according to your tender mercies, O God! Grant that when Christmas morning breaks for us this year, we may have a fresh sense of your presence and a renewed resolve to live to the praise of Christ's glory. **Amen.**

## Time for Silent Confession

**Assurance of Pardon** *(Responsively)*

*Susan Obenschain*

Jesus, the long-expected Savior, was born to set us free. He releases us from our fears and sins and helps us find our rest in him. Jesus delivers us from the way of sin and death. Yet he remains the desire of people in every nation, and he will direct us into the ways of his kingdom. And so, with hopeful hearts, we call to him:

**Come now, long-expected Jesus, come again to rule in our hearts. Amen.**

—inspired by Charles Wesley (1744)

*Leader: This is the Promise of the Lord*

**All: Thanks be to God!**

### Offering

***Thankful of the gifts God has given us, we offer ourselves to Him***

**Invitation** As we come before God with our tithes and offerings, let us remember the words of Micah 6: What does the Lord require of us? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. Thus we bring our money, gifts, and whole lives as an offering to our God.

**Offering**

**Offertory** *Angels From the Realms of Glory*  
*(Orchestra)*

### **Prayer of Dedication**

Ever-giving God, source of all goodness and charity, your ear is always open to our needs. When we cry to you, you are faithful and provide for us. With joy we bring our thanksgiving. For all your mercies, we return to you from our abundance. All that we give, we dedicate to your glory. All that we keep, we commit to your care, for we are only stewards of your bounty. Bless what we give and what we keep, for all is your creation. Amen.

### **Passing of the Peace**

*Leader: The Peace of the Lord be with You*

**All: And also with you**

### Proclaiming

***God speaks to us through His Word***

### **Prayer of Illumination**

Gracious God, sometimes we see your hand in little events, and sometimes we see it in the broad sweep of history. Stir our hearts, that we might be people of hope; help us seek you in your Word;

and keep us from growing weary as we wait—that we may not miss the glory of your appearing. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

**Scripture Reading**

*Isaiah 9:6-7*

<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Sermon**

*"What Child is This?"  
Rev. Ron DiNunzio*

**Cantata - Be Still ... for the Lord Reigns**

Still and Silent - Choir, Orchestra, and Congregation

O Little Town of Bethlehem - Choir, Orchestra, and Congregation

Break Forth, O Beauteous Light - Choir

Joy to the World with Hallelujah Choir, Orchestra, and Congregation

**Responding**

***We respond to God's Word***

**! Profession of Faith (In Unison)**

**We believe that Jesus Christ,  
according to his divine nature,  
is the only Son of God—  
eternally begotten,  
not made or created,  
for then he would be a creature.  
He is one in essence with the Father; coeternal;  
the exact image of the person of the Father  
and the "reflection of God's glory,"  
being like the Father in all things.  
Jesus Christ is the Son of God  
not only from the time he assumed our nature  
but from all eternity,  
as the following testimonies teach us**

when they are taken together.  
**Moses says that God created the world;  
 and John says that all things were created through the Word,  
 which he calls God.**  
**The apostle says that God created the world through the Son.  
 He also says that God created all things through Jesus Christ.  
 And so it must follow  
 that the one who is called God, the Word, the Son, and Jesus  
 Christ already existed before creating all things.**  
**Therefore the prophet Micah says  
 that Christ's origin is "from ancient days."  
 And the apostle says that the Son has "neither beginning of days nor end of life."  
 So then, he is the true eternal God, the Almighty,  
 whom we invoke, worship, and serve.**

—Belgic Confession, Art. 10

## Prayers of the People

Incarnate God,  
 with the angels we sing and glorify your name,  
 thankful for all that you have given us:  
 for your presence in the world . . .  
 for our nation . . .  
 for our community and its leaders . . .  
 for the witness of your church celebrating around the world . . .  
 But today we are especially grateful for the gift of your Son, who gave up his heavenly  
 home for a manger and a cross so that we might experience redemption, a gift  
 that neither spoils nor fades.  
 With the angels we also desire peace on earth, a peace that is broader and deeper  
 than the end of war. We pray for the restoration of this world, for the growth of  
 your kingdom, for reconciliation, healing, and renewal. We bring before you our  
 prayers for  
 the nations of the world, especially . . .  
 our nation and those in authority . . .  
 our community and those who govern it . . .  
 the church universal, its mission, and those who minister . . .  
 the local congregation and its ministry, especially . . .  
 those with particular needs on this holy day . . .  
 Make your incarnate presence known in each situation, and may we as your servants  
 be vessels of your peace.  
 We pray this in the name of the one who became flesh and dwelt among us, Jesus  
 Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

### Commissioning

***God sends us out into the world as His witnesses***

## **Benediction & Blessing**

God the Father, who loved the world  
 so much that he sent his only Son,  
 give you grace to prepare for eternal life.  
 God the Son, who comes to us as Redeemer and Judge,  
 reveal to you the path from darkness to light.  
 God the Holy Spirit, by whose working

the virgin Mary conceived the Christ,  
help you bear the fruits of holiness. **Amen.**

**(Ron – Can you add something here that would be an appropriate prayer before a meal....**

**Everyone will be heading down to Fellowship Hall for the Christmas Dinner)**

 **Postlude**

*Merry Christmas*  
*(Orchestra)*

*Story*