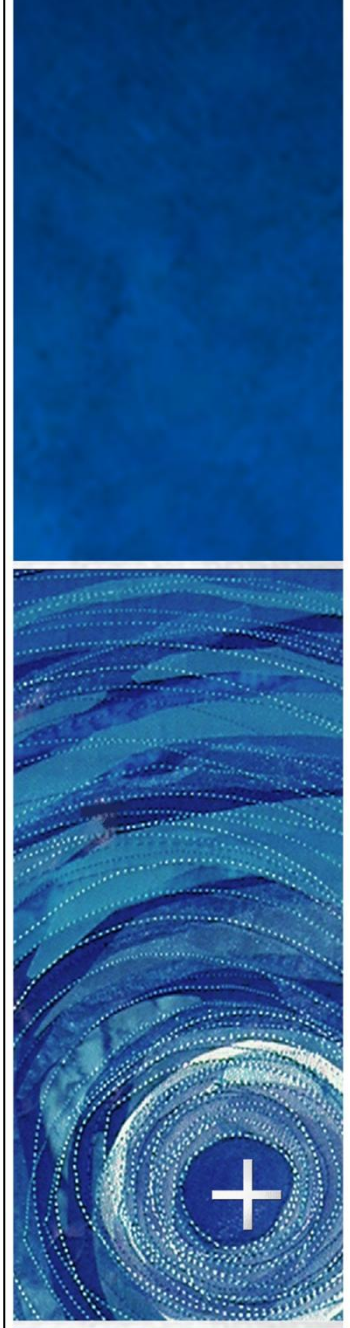


THE FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2025

St. Martin's Lutheran Church
203 South Defiance Street + Archbold, Ohio
www.the-welcome-place.org

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT — DECEMBER 21, 2025

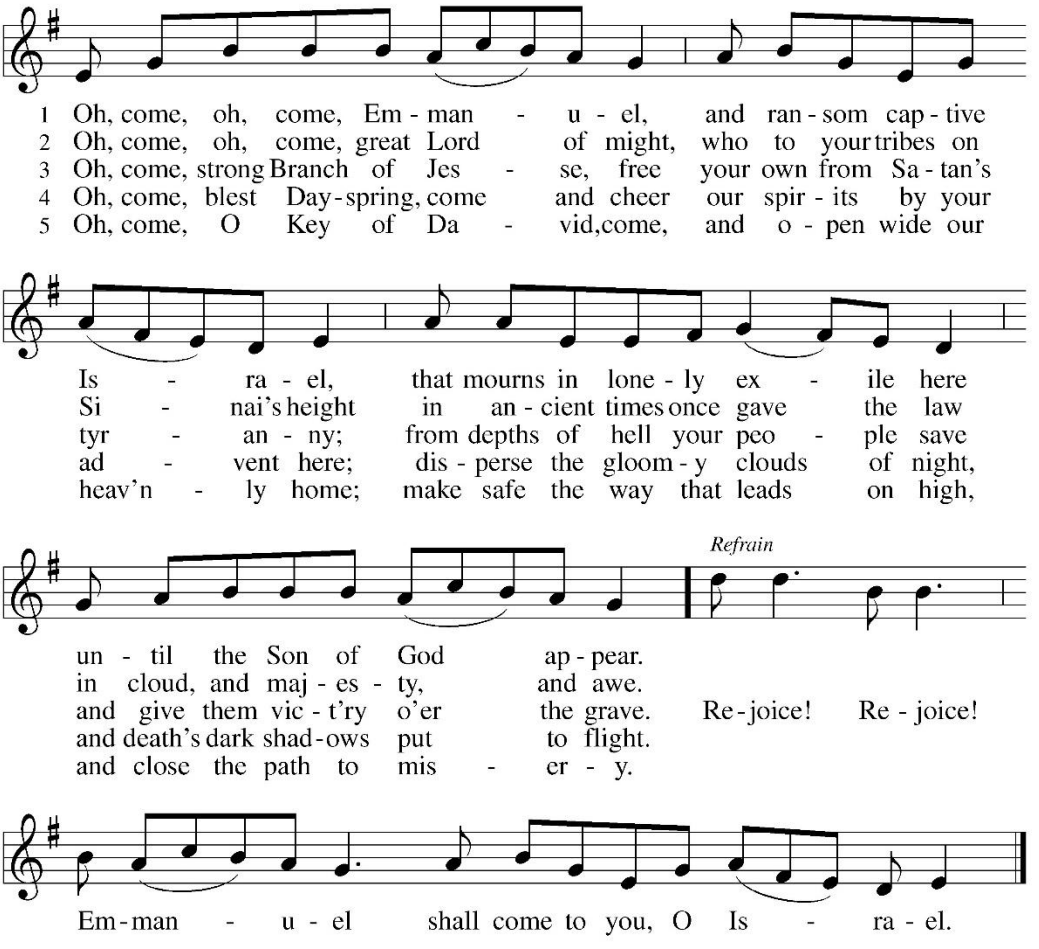
Stir up our hearts, O Lord, and come. Today's worship prepares us for the coming celebration of Christmas with readings, anthems and carols. A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. The Word (when used with a capital "W") refers to Jesus…coming down…to us! He comes…the prisoners to release…He comes…the broken heart to bind.

Regular text is spoken by the Pastor or Worship Leader
Bold text is spoken by the Congregation

PRELUDE — *"Veni, Veni Emmanuel"*

arr. by Gerald Near

BELL & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*OPENING HYMN — *"OH COME, OH COME, EMMANUEL"*

*Confession & Forgiveness

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, and come.
Make all things new.

For past wrongs that prevent us from moving forward:
Stir up our hearts, Lord, and make all things new.

For any lingering bitterness that scratches our soul:
Stir up our hearts, Lord, and make all things new.

For any action that has wounded us or by which we have wounded others:
Give us the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.

In this season of hope and expectation, let us confess our sins in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for personal reflection

God of advent,
restore our hearts with your loving presence. In this season of decreasing daylight, we confess the shadows of sin in our lives. We cling to the worldly things around us and we put ourselves above all. We often fail to serve you when we do not serve others. Free us from the power of sin and lead us to live as your holy people, in the light of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Hear the Good News: God's Son, the light of the world, was sent to free us from sin, to show God's infinite love and forgiveness for all. Jesus Christ has come into the world, has led the way through death that we may have life, and is coming again to make all things new.
Amen. Thanks be to God.

*Greeting

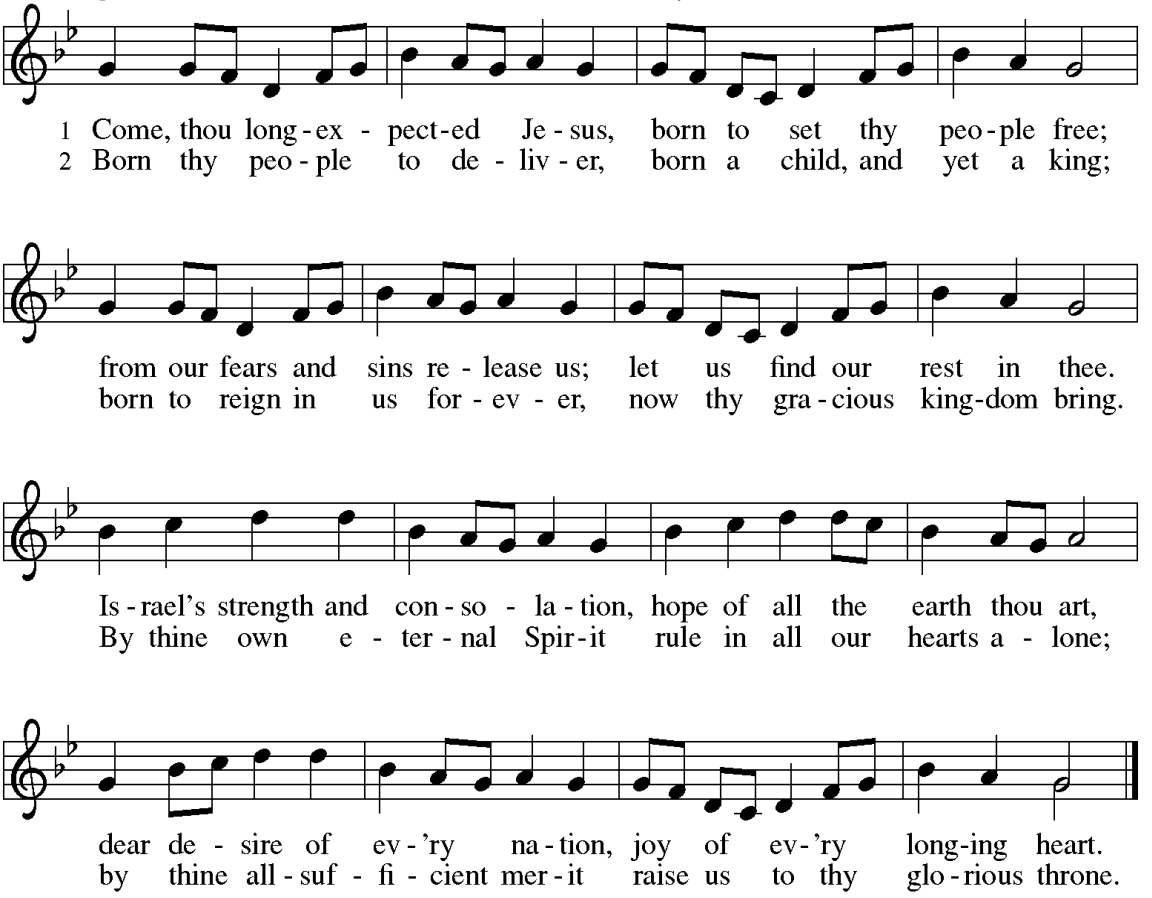
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

*Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord, and come. Stir our hearts to recognize the Word of God, coming down to us. Make our hearts leap with joy, and fill our mouths with songs of praise, that we may announce glad tidings of peace, and welcome Christ in our midst. Stir our souls to receive the one who came to show us how to love.
Amen

REFLECTION – "The Song of Expectation" from *The Song* *by Susan Cherwien*

HYMN – *please remain seated* ***"COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS"***



OLD TESTAMENT READING – Isaiah 7:10-16

10 The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, 11 "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as
Sheol or high as heaven." 12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the
test." 13 Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals
that you weary my God also? 14 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. 15 He shall
eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 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."

Word of God, come down to us.
Thanks be to God

NEW TESTAMENT READING – Romans 1:1-7

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of
God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, 3 the
gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 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, 5 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, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 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.

Word of God, come down to us.
Thanks be to God

INSTRUMENTAL ANTHEM – "Manger Carols" *arr. Dale Wood*

GOSPEL READING – Matthew 1:18-25

18 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 with child
from the Holy Spirit. 19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose
her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20 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. 21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people
from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the
prophet:

23 "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"
which means, "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of
the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 25 but had no marital relations with her
until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Word of God, come down to us.
Thanks be to God

ANTHEM – *"O Come, Little Children"* arr. by David Cherwien

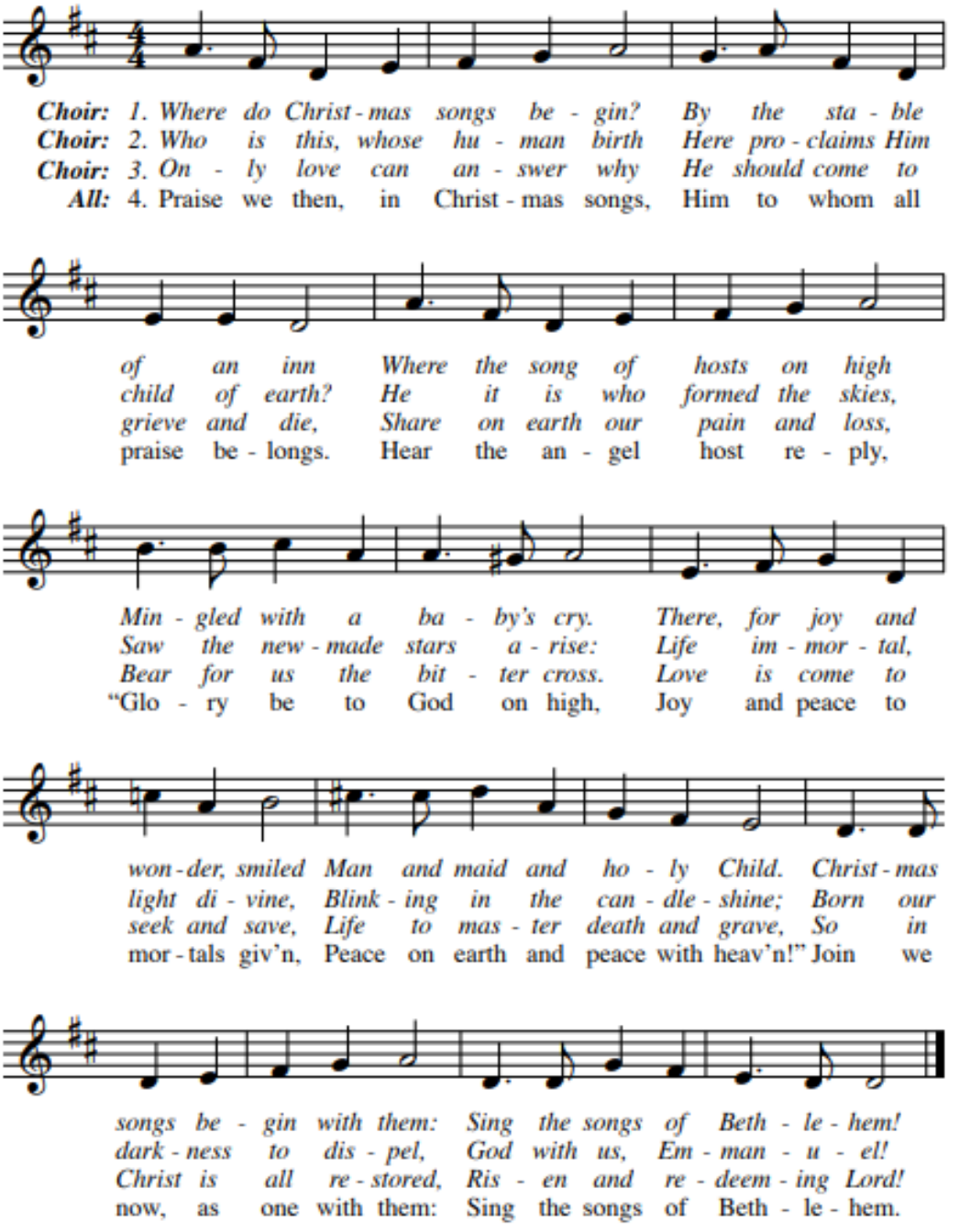
Oh, come, little children, Oh come, one and all,
to Bethlehem's stable, in Bethlehem's stall,
and see with rejoicing this glorious sight,
our God in heaven has sent us this night.

Oh, see in the Manger, In hallowed light
a star throws its beam on this holiest site.
In clean, swaddling clothes lies the heavenly child,
more lovely than angels, this baby so mild.

Oh, there lies the Christ child, on hay and on straw;
The shepherds are kneeling before him with awe.
And Mary and Joseph smile on him with love,
while angels are singing sweet songs from above.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH
MACKENNA WHITACRE

MESSAGE ***"Dreams and Promises Made Real"***

HYMN "Sing the Songs of Bethlehem"

*Profession of Faith – *Apostles' Creed*

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 into hell.
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 the Church

May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry us into new and abundant life.
Word of God, come down to us!
May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold us with love and strength.
Word of God, come down to us!
May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.
Word of God, come down to us!
Silence for personal reflection, concluding with additional petitions.

May the joy of the shepherds, the determination of the magi and the peace of the Christ child dwell in us as we join with all creation, praising and serving God the Father, Spirit and Son.
Amen.

*Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always
And also with you. *(We greet one another with the words "Peace be with you.")*

OFFERING OF GIFTS

"CLAIR DE NOEL"
arr. David Ice

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Lord of Love, God of Light, Prince of Peace, Spirit of Joy,
you are the giver of every good gift. Strengthen our hearts and build the harmony around us so that our faith may shine ever new and our lives reveal your light as we share the story through service in your name. Amen

*THE THANKSGIVING

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.

*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, King of glory. You sent your only Son, Jesus Christ, into the darkness of our world to be a light among us.

In weakness, he took on our flesh in the form of a child to live and grow as one of us. In weakness and strength, he showed forth your love and followed your call, even to death upon a cross for the sake of our sins. Then you raised him from the dead to reign with you in glory, and promised his return to us in power to bring us into your everlasting kingdom.

For all this, we thank you, O God. We live in that hope and await his coming again, raising our voices in prayer.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Be with us at our table, O God, in our eating and in our drinking, that the Spirit of hope is kindled in our hearts and in our lives, uniting us in him who came and will come again, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

* THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

***"Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn"* – WOV 633** (Blue Hymnal)

*BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

*PRAYER

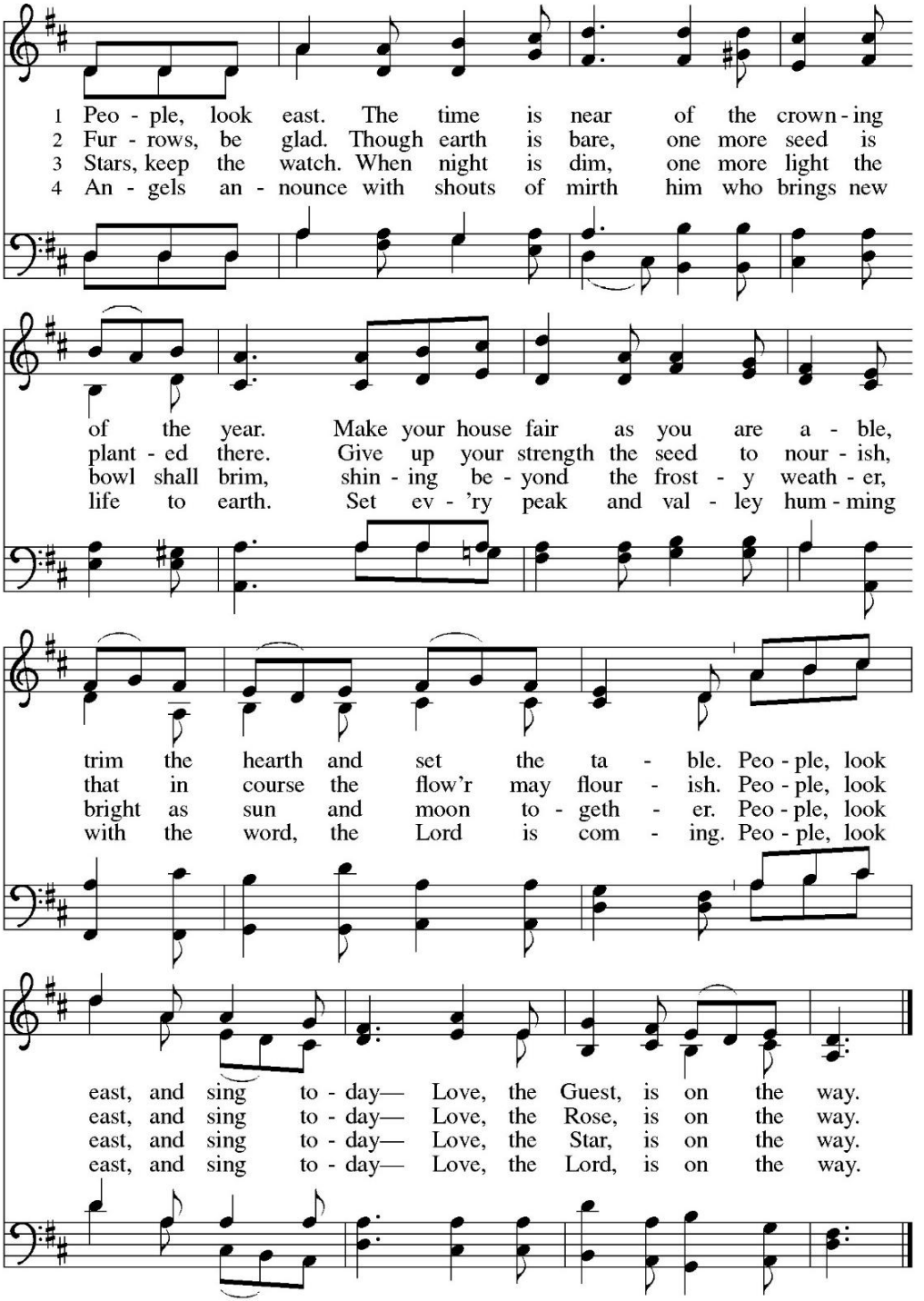
Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

*BENEDICTION

In all your Advent preparations, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ,
whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory.
And may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit
be with you now and forever.

Amen

*CLOSING HYMN *"PEOPLE, LOOK EAST"*

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE ***"SUSSEX CAROL"***

arr. by Dale Wood

THANK YOU to the musicians and readers leading today's worship

Director: Matthew Wachtman
Accompanist: Rick Breier
Organist: Matthew Wachtman
Harp: Julie Buzzeli
Readers: Susan Dominique, Aden McCarty

Choir Members:

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Jen Basselman	Susan Short	Caleb Wyse	Steve Basselman
Kris Jemmott	Deb Schmidt	Adam Grisier	Phil Hoverman
Deb Schnitkey	Jo Ann Liechty	Jeff Benecke	Stan Schmidt
Linda Bernath	Jo Ann Benecke	Melanie Nagel	Dana Bjorlin
Cristie Sevey	Carla Hoverman	Jalen Thompson	Ross Miller
MacKenna Whitacre	Gwen Grisier	Aaron Schmidt	Josh Voll
Yanira Reyes	Robin Trudel		
	Andrea Avers		

+*+*+*+*+*+*+*+*+*+*+

Reflections: from *Glory into Glory* by Susan Cherwien, ©2009 Morning Star Music Publishers.

The ancient O ANTIPHONS are in the verses of the Advent hymn *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."* An antiphon is a short sung scripture response within a worship service. Each antiphon begins with the plea "O Come…"

The O Antiphons were being used in worship over 1,200 years ago. There was a focus on one of them for each of the days leading to Christmas beginning on December 17 and continuing through December 23.

These antiphons have been a part of Advent preparations for centuries. They link us to the ancient worshippers of the past and will continue to provide a bridge to the Christian Church of the future every time we sing *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."*

O come, O Wisdom from on high…	*Proverbs chapters 1, 8 & 9; 1st Corinthians 1:30*
O come, O come, O Lord of might…	*Exodus 3; Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:6*
O come, O Branch of Jesse, free…	*Isaiah 11:10; Romans15:12; Revelation 5:5*
O come, O Key of David, come…	*Isaiah 22:22; Revelation 3:7*
O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer…	*Malachi 4:2; Luke 1:78-79*
O come, O King of nations, come…	*Revelation 15:3; Ps.118:3; Isaiah 28:16; Matthew 21:42*
O come, O come, Emmanuel…	*Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23*

St. Martin's Worship Servants . . .

Acolyte	- Emi Pinter
Organist/Pianist	-Matthew Wachtman
Percussion	-Mike Short
Usher Team Leader	-Mark Weaver
Sound System	-Cameron Thompson
Altar Guild	-Janet Wyse & Jan Delaney
Offering Counters	-Jo Ann Benecke & Jo Ann Liechty

The St. Martin's Webstore is open! If you would like to order some apparel you can go to https://stmartinsarchbold.itemorder.com, click the link in your Friday email, or scan the QR code provided.

We are looking for people who would like to **provide the Wednesday Night meals**. Erinn Thompson is organizing this, so you can contact her if you would like to help. You can also scan the QR code provided or click the link in your Friday email to sign up!

NEW MINISTRY CONVERSATION! Jake and Pastor Steve have been having conversations with the Archbold Elementary Principal since the end of last school year. If anyone is interested in being part of developing and implementing an after-school program to provide possible tutoring assistance for students, please reach out to Jake or Steve.

The Church Directory has been up and running for a year and a half now! We are noticing it as a helpful tool for our congregation as it gets a lot of traffic week to week. We'd like to remind you that you can go online and make any changes for you and your family or contact the church office to do it for you. Any changes of address, please send to the church office so the directory and database can be updated. At the beginning of every year, the church office will update anything that we notice needs refreshed. Thank you all for your help and participation making the directory a helpful tool for our congregation.

The Annual Report is approaching! If you are someone who usually submits something to the office for that report, please do so at your earliest convenience. The deadline is typically December 31, but this year any report that can be submitted a little earlier is appreciated by the 19th! Thank you for your help with this project.

Monday Night Bible Study will continue on Zoom resuming on January 5. We finished a series on the 10 Commandments. Next will be the Apostles Creed as we continue exploring Luther's Small Catechism. Join us anytime. This is an informal discussion-based format! No previous experience required. Send Steve an email if you'd like to join.

On December 29th the carpets are being cleaned in the fellowship hall and entryway. We ask that a group of people help clear the chairs from the hall after cookies and coffee on the 28th to prepare for this. That week following there will be no Wednesday night events on the 31st.

OUR MISSION TEAM IS READY!

We are excited to share that a team of **13 volunteers from St. Martin** will be traveling to **Puerto Rico from February 22–March 1** to help repair a home whose roof was destroyed by hurricanes. This project is coordinated through **Techos Pa' Mi Gente** ("Roofs for My People"), a local organization dedicated to restoring safe housing for families in need.

All our travel arrangements are complete, **airfare, housing, and van rentals** are reserved. We even have photos of the home we'll be repairing.

Thanks so much for supporting us at the brunch after the kids Christmas program on December 14th. It was very successful, and we feel that most of our travel expenses should be covered.

The team is hosting a Coffee hour after service February 1st. Please make plans to stay and support our mission trip. Come, visit, and wish our team good luck.

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and generosity as we prepare to serve our neighbors in Puerto Rico.

TECHOS PA' MI GENTE

https://www.facebook.com/techospamigente.pr/
https://www.tpmgcorp.org/

Darren Sonnenberg
Evangelism/Outreach Network

The Nominating Team intends to submit the following candidates to Council for approval and ensuing vote at the January Congregational Annual Meeting. As per our bylaws, members may submit write-in candidates for consideration by the Nominating Team for possible ballot inclusion. Write-in names must be submitted no later than *January 4th, 2026*. *Requirements for elected office include voting membership, regular worship attendance and reception of Holy Communion, and active participation in at least one team or ministry.*

President - Darren Sonnenberg
Secretary- Jane Trudel
Council-at-Large- Mark Weaver
Endowment Team- Chris Ziegler
Write-In Candidates Name(s):_____
Position(s):_____

This Week at St. Martin's

Sunday – December 21- Christmas with the Chancel Choir
Worship, 9am
Sunday School, 10:20am
Adult Sunday School, 10:30am
High School Youth, 10:30pm

Tuesday – December 23
Men's Breakfast, 7am @ McDonald's
Sewing, 9am
Community Meal, 5pm @ St. John's Christian

Wednesday – December 24-Christmas Eve
Christmas Eve Service of Song & Story, 4pm
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7pm

Thursday – December 25-Christmas Day
Christmas Day Service, 9am

Next Sunday – December 28
Worship, 9am
No Sunday School

Christmas at St. Martin's

December 21 – 4th Sunday of Advent

9:00 am - Worship with the Chancel Choir
10:20 am - Sunday School

December 24 – Christmas Eve

4:00 pm – Song & Story, Communion & Candle lighting
7:00 pm - Festival Worship with Communion & Candle lighting

December 25 – Christmas Day

9:00 am – Worship with Communion

St. Martin's Lutheran Church
203 S. Defiance Street Archbold OH 43502
Phone Number: 419-445-4656
Web Site: www.the-welcome-place.org
Email: stmartin@the-welcome-place.org

Office Hours:

Pastor Steve Basselman
steveb@the-welcome-place.org
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri. morning
Tues, Wed, Thurs, afternoon
Cell Phone: 419-572-6091

Matthew Wachtman, Music & Worship
matthew@the-welcome-place.org
Tues, All Day
Wed. PM
Thurs, & Fri, AM

Jake Keil, **Youth**
jakek@the-welcome-place.org
Sun, Tues, Thurs. morning
Mon, Tues, Wed. afternoon & Sunday PM

Whitney Wyse, Office Manager
stmartin@the-welcome-place.org
Tues. 8:30-12:00 & Fri. 8:30-12

Worship Services: 9:00 am each Sunday, live broadcast on Facebook
6:00 pm each Wednesday, Informal Service

We welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. – Romans 15:7

Online Giving - Mobile Access

Mobile users can now access the giving page to set up recurring donations or make one-time donations directly from phones using this QR code.
To change or delete recurring donations you will still need to go to: **https://givingtools.com** and sign in to your account.

Last Week at St. Martin's. . .
Week of 12/14/2025, Budget and Year to Date

Operating Contributions	$7,329.00	Budgeted Weekly Operating Need	$7,329.00
Benevolence Received	$156.00	Budgeted Weekly Benevolence Need	$713.00
Other Designated Income	$425.00	**AS OF 11/30/2025**	
Total Income	$7,910.00	YTD Operating Received	$313,624.77
Worship: Sunday/Wed/Total	198/22/220	YTD Operating Expenses	($331,734.96)
		Net Income/(Deficit)	($18,110.19)