

**St. John's Reformed Church
December 8, 2024
Second Day of Advent**

(Please join responsively by speaking aloud the bolded sections)

Pre-Prelude

Announcements and Hospitality

Our Approach to God

Prelude

Votum A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

*Call to Worship

In a world that is lonely, **we will save a seat for you.**

In a world that is anxious, **we will light candles against the gloom.**

In a world that is weary, **we will sing songs of joy and truth.**

I am not alone. **We are not alone.**

For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

Light the candles! Sing with joy!

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

*Hymn *O Shepherd, Hear and Lead Your Flock* #64 v. 1-3

Salutation & Prayer of Invocation

Advent Wreath Lighting

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

Let us begin together. Let us begin arm in arm. Let us begin by holding each other up, instead of tearing each other down. Let us begin with words of peace.

Yes, let us begin with peace. Today we light the candles of hope and peace.

May these lights remind us of what could be.

May these lights mark a new beginning.

May peace flow like a river, and may it start with us.

Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side. May we begin again. Amen.

*Hymn *All Earth Is Waiting* #57 v. 1-2

Time of Confession

We have tried to make our own way. We have tried to lace my own shoes, to build my own house, to kindle my own faith. We have said a thousand times, "turn back," as if we are fine on our own. But the days are long and we are forgetful. We need help. We need reminders.

Help us to remember when we forget that we are not alone.

Help us to remember that where we go, God you are with us.

Help us remember that we are held in grace and that is good news.

Kyrie Eleison *"Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us."*

Assurance of Pardon

Summary of the Law:

Response **May the Spirit guide us to be obedient to this Word. Amen.**

*Gloria Patri

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning
is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

Children's Message

Musical Meditation

The Word of God in Proclamation

Prayer of Illumination

Lesson from the Old Testament: **Ruth 1** (pp. 241-242)

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Hymn *"To Be Known"*- bulletin insert

*Lesson from the Old Testament: **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** (pp. 616-617)

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Prayer for Blessing

Our Response to God's Grace

Affirmation of Faith:

We believe in a with-us God: a God who walks with us in the valley, dances with us on the mountaintop, sings with us through the night and rejoices in the morning.

We believe that this with-us God wired us for relationship, saying to creation on the very first week, "Humans should not be alone."

Therefore, in an effort to be who God called us to be, we strive to live like the Trinity—connected, united, and centered.

We believe in the power of community. We commit to learning each other's names. We choose to journey with each other, like Ruth with Naomi. And we remember that no one can go through life alone.

Thanks be to God, for lighting our way.

*The Peace The peace of Christ be with you. **And also, with you.**

The Offering

Offertory by Joey Breslau

*Doxology *Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen*

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

**In the name and in the spirit of Jesus, we bring our gifts to you,
O God. Help us to give with them a ready mind, a willing spirit,
and a joyful heart. Amen.**

Prayers for the People of God

The Lord's Prayer (use 'trespasses')

**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. Amen**

Prayer Response *Threefold Amen* ***Amen, Amen, Amen***

*Hymn *Lord, You Have Lavished on Your Land* #65 v. 1-4

Benediction

*Congregational Amen **"Go Now in Peace"**

*Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with us each hour of every day.
Go now in faith steadfast strong and true.
Know he will guide us in all we do.
Go now in love, and show we believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.*

*Postlude

*Indicates congregation to stand if able.

