FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Seeking the peace and well-being of the city

December 14, 2025 2:30 p.m.

PRELUDE

Echo Noël — L. D'Aquin / D. Bish

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus — R. Prichard / D. Archer

GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

ADVENT INTROIT

Come Now, O Prince of Peace — G. Lee, tr. M. Pope

CALL TO WORSHIP

***PROCESSIONAL CAROL**

Prepare the Way, O Zion — BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

Text: Frans Mikael Franzen (1772–1847); tr. composite; adapt. Charles P. Price (1920–) ©. 76 76 77 with refrain
Music: Melody *Then Swenska Psalmboken*, 1697; BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN
harm. *Koralbok för Svenska Kyrken*, 1939, alt.

1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - iour's rule em - brace.

Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.

Greet one who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voic - es will a - dore him.

Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.

***INVOCATION AND 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Elizabeth and Mary,
when was the last time
we had a soul-to-soul encounter
that warmed hearts and triggered deep joy?

We bypass people, offer casual greetings,
and miss the potential for sacred exchange.
Our dullness prevents us from recognizing
the wonder of the Spirit at work in the other.

Help us to slow down, to listen intently,
and to embrace the joy of holy companionship.

(Silence for personal confession and reflection)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

***GLORIA PATRI** R. Goodson

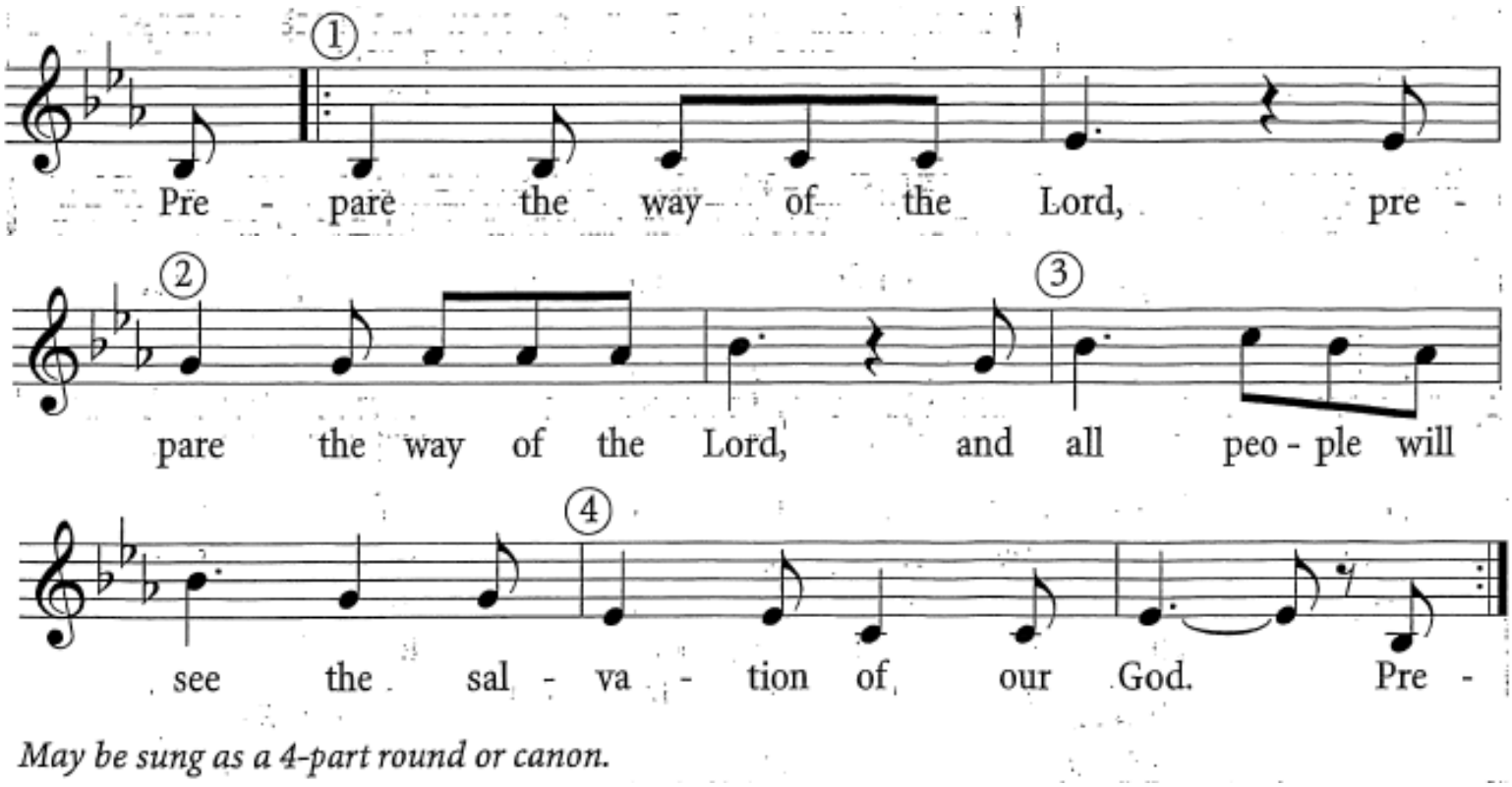
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and
Ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

ANTHEM

Comfort, Comfort arr. S.K. Tucker

FIRST READING
Luke 1:39-45, 57-66 Read from the NRSV Bible
Response to the reading: **"Thanks be to God"**

***CAROL OF PRAISE**
Prepare the Way PREPARE THE WAY



Text: Luke 3.4, 6; para. Taizé Community (France).
Music: Jacques Berthier (1923–1994). *Para. and music © 1982, 1983, 1984, Les Presses de Taizé.*
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ADVENT CANDLE-LIGHTING (The Candle of Joy)
Prepare the Way J. Raney
(The third candle is lit)

LITANY

Leader:
Continuing our Advent journey, today, we light the third candle; the candle representing joy. We celebrate the coming of the one who brings great joy to the world.

Prepare the way of the Lord with joy.

In the midst of waiting, we remember that joy is found not in what we have, but in who we welcome – the Savior, our true joy.

Prepare the way of the Lord with joy.

When the world feels heavy, we choose to lift our hearts in joy, knowing that God's presence with us brings light into the darkest places.

Prepare the way of the Lord with joy.

We celebrate the good news that Christ is near, and with his coming, joy is made complete in our hearts and in our lives.

Prepare the way of the Lord with joy.

In times of sorrow, we cling to the joy that is rooted in the hope of Christ, a joy that cannot be taken away.

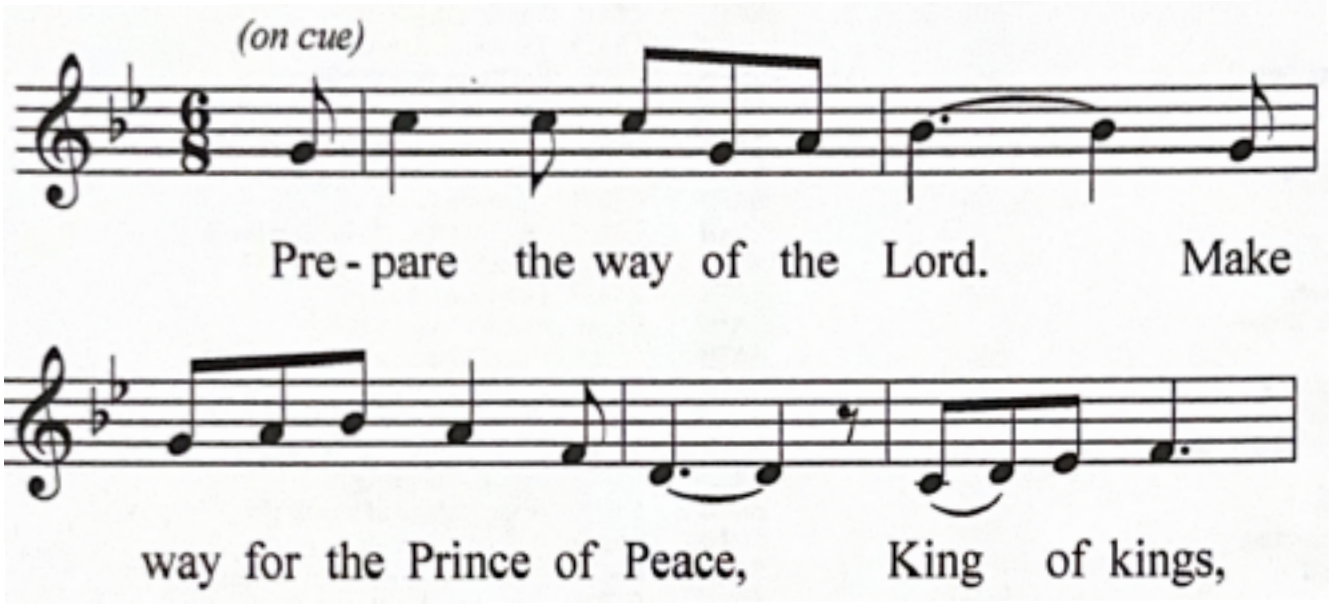
Prepare the way of the Lord with joy.

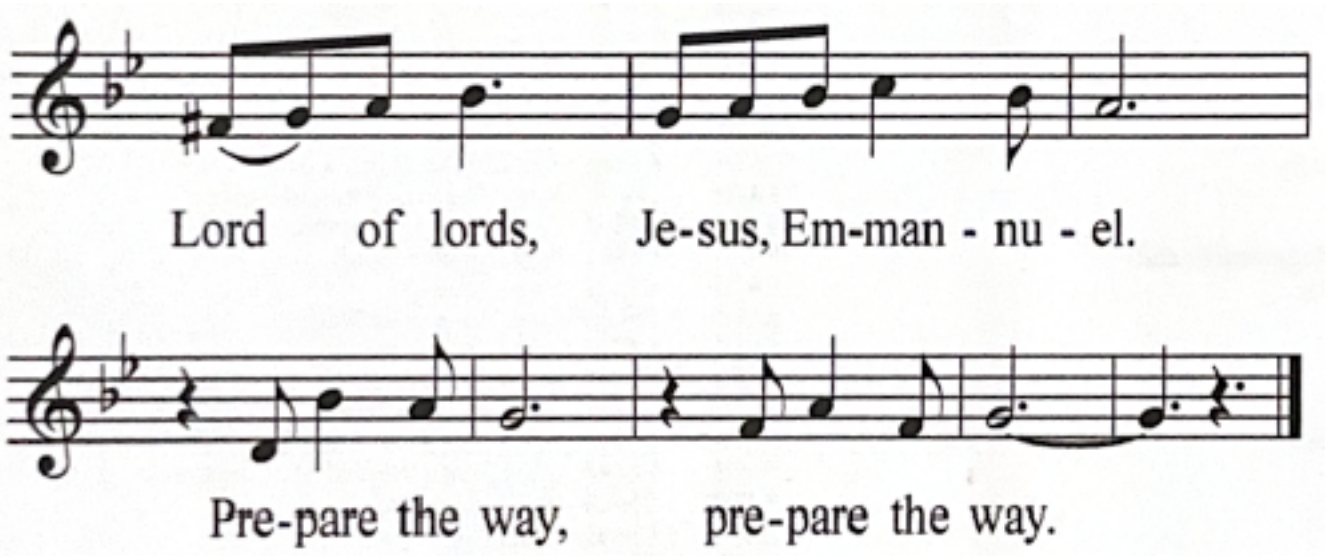
O God, we open our hearts to the joy of your presence and prepare to welcome Christ, the greatest gift of all. May the joy of Christ fill our homes, our communities, and our world as we await his coming in glory.

Prepare the way of the Lord with joy.

Prepare the Way J. Raney
Congregational Part

(Repeat this chorus after the candle lighting and litany)



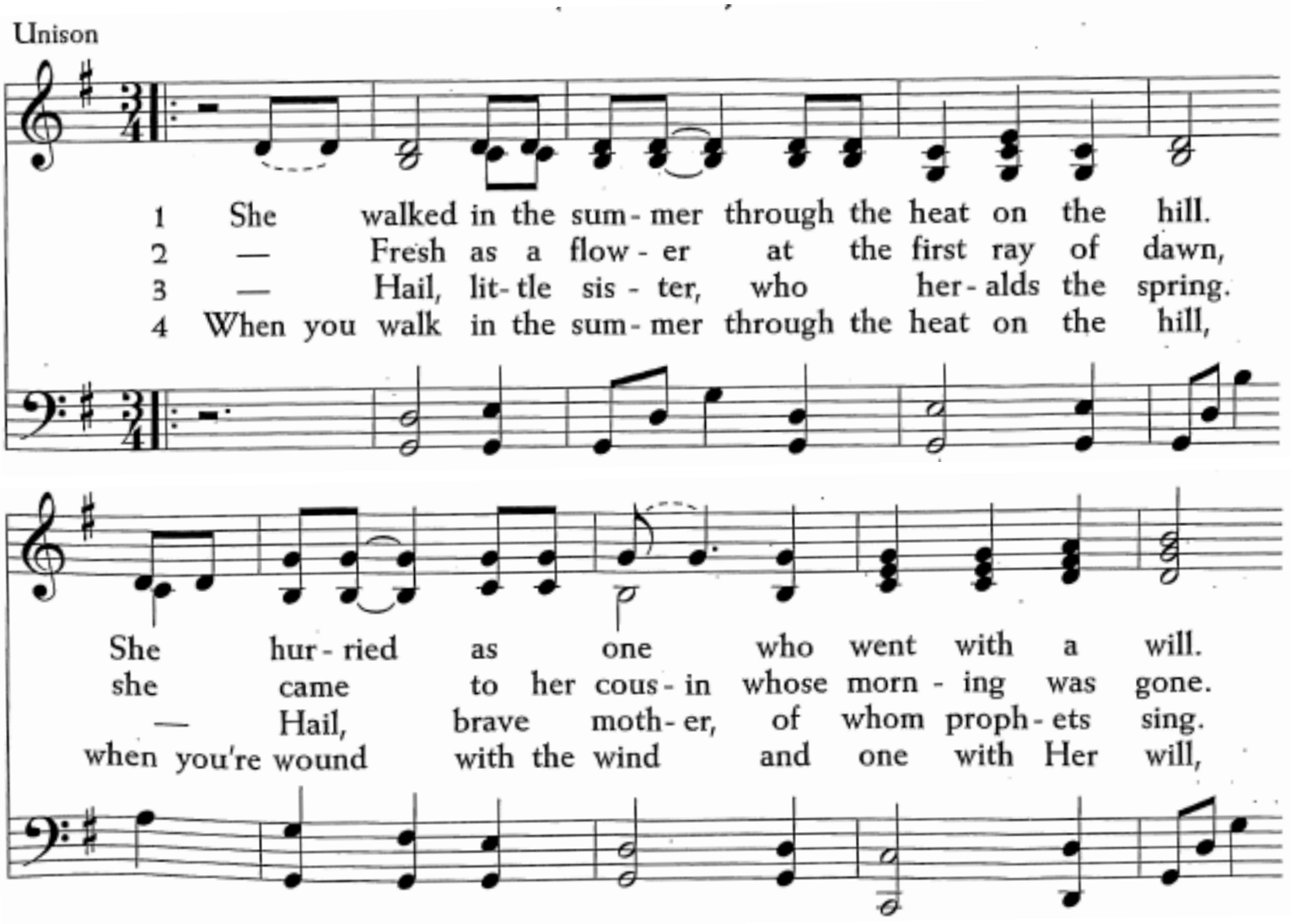


CHILDREN'S BLESSING

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

***CAROL OF MEDITATION**

She Walked in the Summer THE VISIT



She danced in the sun - light when the day was done.
There leaped a lit - tle child in the an - cient womb,
— Hail to the mo - ment be - neath your breast.
be brave with the bur - den you are blessed to bear,

(v. 2 ♩. ♪ ♪ ♪ 1–3 ♩)

Her heart knew no even - ing who car - ried the sun.
and there leaped a lit - tle hope — in ev - ery an - cient tomb.
May all gen - er - a - tions — call you blessed.
for it's Christ that you car - ry ev - ery–

Final

where, ev - ery - where, ev - ery - where.

SECOND READING
Matthew 11:2-11 Read from the NRSV Bible
Response to the reading: **"Thanks be to God"**

SERMON Rev. Amanda Strain

(Silence for personal reflection)

CELEBRATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory

First Snow / O Come, O Come Emmanuel — N. Birkenstock

***Offertory Response**

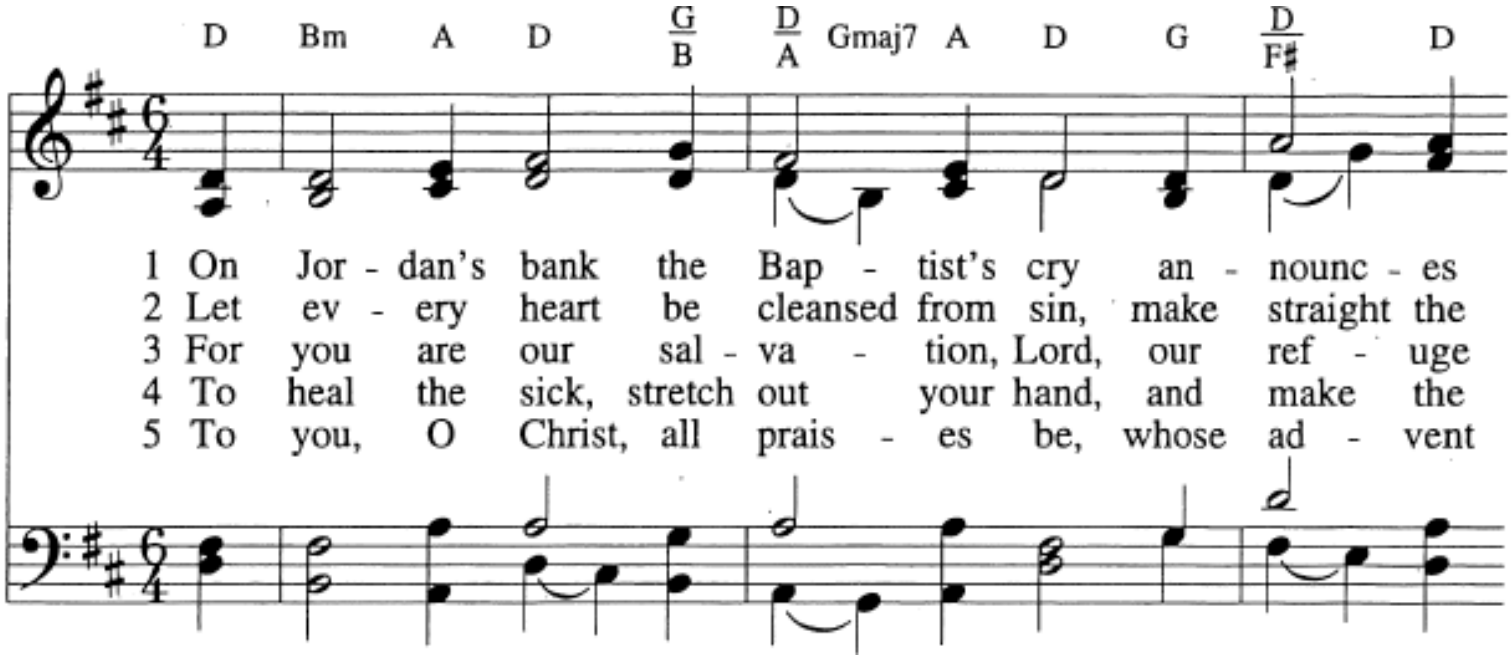
So, bring him incense, gold and myrrh,
come peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

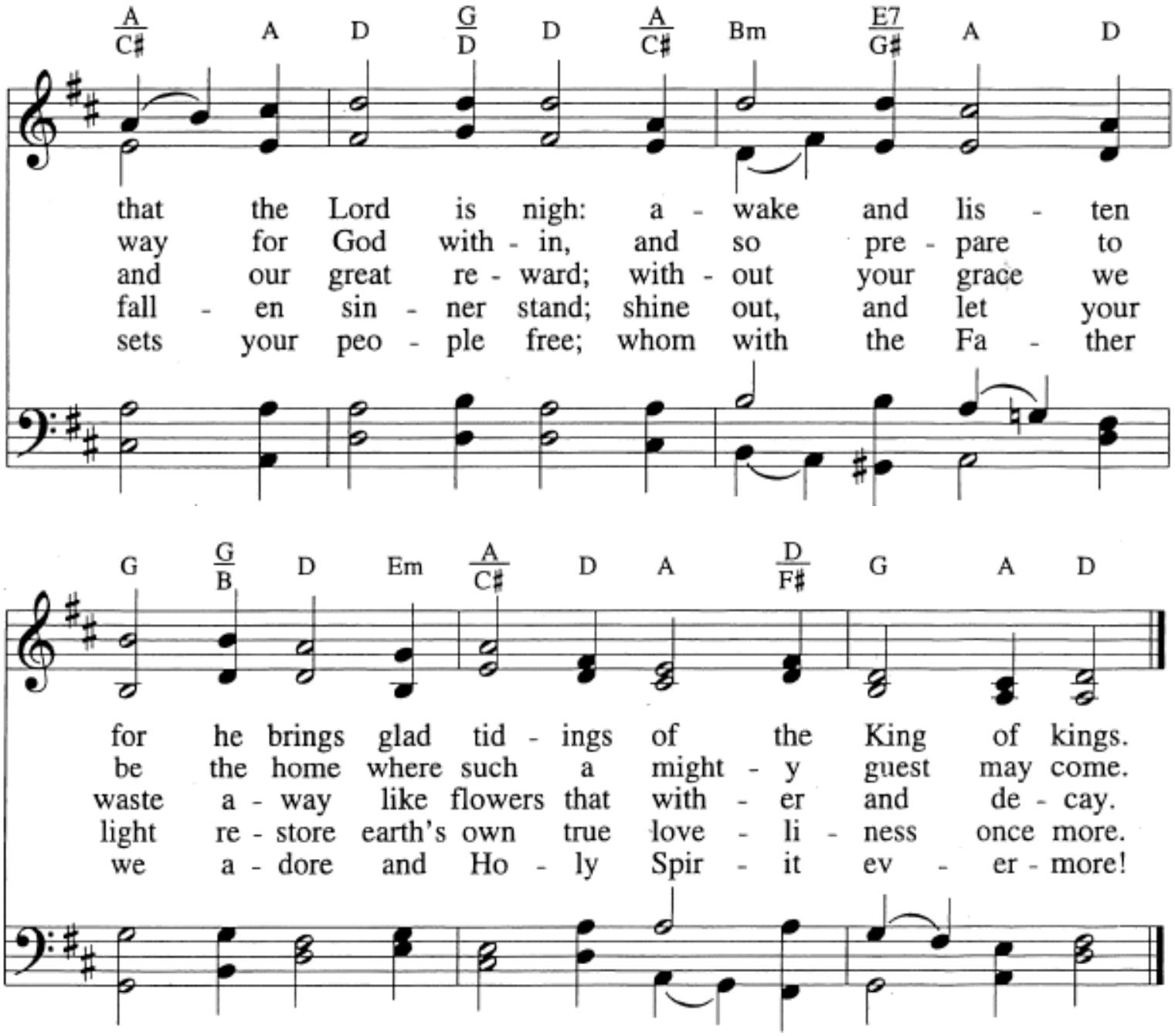
***Prayer of Gratitude**

*CAROL FOR THE JOURNEY

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry — PUER NOBIS

WORDS: Charles Coffin (1676-1749); tr. John Chandler (1806-1876)
MUSIC: Trier manuscript, 15th c.; adapt. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621); harm. George R. Woodward (1848-1934)





***THE BLESSING OF THE COMMUNITY**
Leader: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.
People: And also with you.

***Choral Benediction**
Comfort, Comfort GENEVAN 42

***The Sending of the Community**
***Congregational Amen**
The service of the church into the world -- begins again this week

POSTLUDE
Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts C. Saint-Saens

***Please stand, as you are able**

We are grateful for those who serve with us today:
Leading Worship, Prayers of the People - Cheryl Krueger;
Confession Prayer - Rev. Allan Effa;
Scripture Reading - Pam Beavan, Nick Bargeman;
Guest Organist - Jane Fagnan;
Video & Sound Technician - Evan Adnams.

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FBC Ministry Team:
Rev. Jeremy Keay, Minister of Youth, Young Adults, Outreach
Dawn Stiles, Minister of Children and Families
Dr. Evelyn Grieger, Minister of Music
Jerrold Eilander, Organist / Choir Accompanist

As we attempt to provide comfortable spaces for all and we have some members who have severe scent sensitivities, we ask that people refrain from wearing perfumes and colognes on Sunday morning to church. Thank you for helping us care for one another.
— FBC Council