



PARISH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Advent
December 7th, 2025

Quote for reflection:

The Lord Jesus prepares the sinner's heart to be His temple, by the ministry of His word and the convictions of His Spirit, and He enters it as the Messenger of peace and consolation. No hypocrite or formalist can endure His doctrine, or stand before His tribunal. Christ came to distinguish men, to separate between the precious and the vile. He shall sit as a Refiner. Christ, by His gospel, shall purify and reform His church, and by His Spirit working with it, shall regenerate and cleanse souls.

—Matthew Henry

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

It is God Himself who calls His people to worship. We do not call ourselves: the King opens His gates and welcomes us into His courts.

Gospel Invitation—Hebrews 9:14

Good news. Glad tidings. Great joy. “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”

Sung Response—On Christmas Night All Christians Sing, Vs. 1



On Christ-mas night all Christ - ians sing, to hear the news the an - gels bring,



On Christ-mas night all Christ - ians sing, to hear the news the an-gels bring,



News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.

Text & Music: SUSSEX CAROL, Traditional English carol.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Call to Worship—Psalm 98:1-4, 8-9

Pastor: Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

All: His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

Reader 1: The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

Reader 2: He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

All: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

Pastor: Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together before the Lord, for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Congregational Hymn—All My Heart This Night Rejoices



All my heart this night re - joic - es
Forth to - day the Con - qu'ror go - eth,
 He be - comes the Lamb that tak - eth
Come, then, ban - ish all your sad - ness



As I hear, far and near, sweet - est an - gel voic - es
Who the foe, sin and woe, death and hell, o'er - throw - eth
 Sin a - way and for aye full a - tone - ment mak - eth.
One and all, great and small; come with songs of glad - ness.



"Christ is born," their choirs are sing - ing
Be - came man, man to de - liv - er;
 For our life His own He ten - ders;
Love Him who with love is glow - ing;



Till the air ev - 'ry - where now with joy is ring - ing.
The dear Son now is one with our blood for - ev - er.
 And our race, by His grace, meet for glo - ry ren - ders.
Hail the star, from a - far, light and joy be - stow - ing.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1653, tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1858, alt. 2018;
 Music: WARUM SOLLT' ICH MICH DENN GRAMEN, Johann Ebeling, 1666.

GOD SPEAKS TO HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

The Bible is the means by which God graciously reveals Himself to His people—so we listen, read, and study with expectant hearts.

Congregational Hymn—Gentle Mary Laid Her Child



Gen - tle Ma - ry laid her child low - ly in a man - ger
An - gels sang a - bout His birth, wise men sought and found Him,
Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger,



There He lay the un - de - filed, to the world a strang - er,
Hea - ven's star shone bright - ly forth, glo - ry all a - round Him.
He is still the un - de - filed, but no more a strang - er



Such a babe in such a place, can He be the Sav - ior?
Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, heard the an - gels sing - ing;
Son of God of hum - ble birth, beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race who have found His fa - vor.
All the plains were lit that night all the hills were ring - ing.
Praise His name in all the earth, hail the King of glo - ry!

Text: Joseph Simpson Cook, 1919; Music: TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM, *Piae Cantiones*, 1582,
arr. Ernest MacMillan, 1930.

Baptism of Luke Hambidge, son of Drew and Carin Hambidge

Scripture Reading—Luke 2:22-35

And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the Law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
according to Your word;
for my eyes have seen Your salvation
that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to Your people Israel.”

And His father and His mother marveled at what was said about Him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

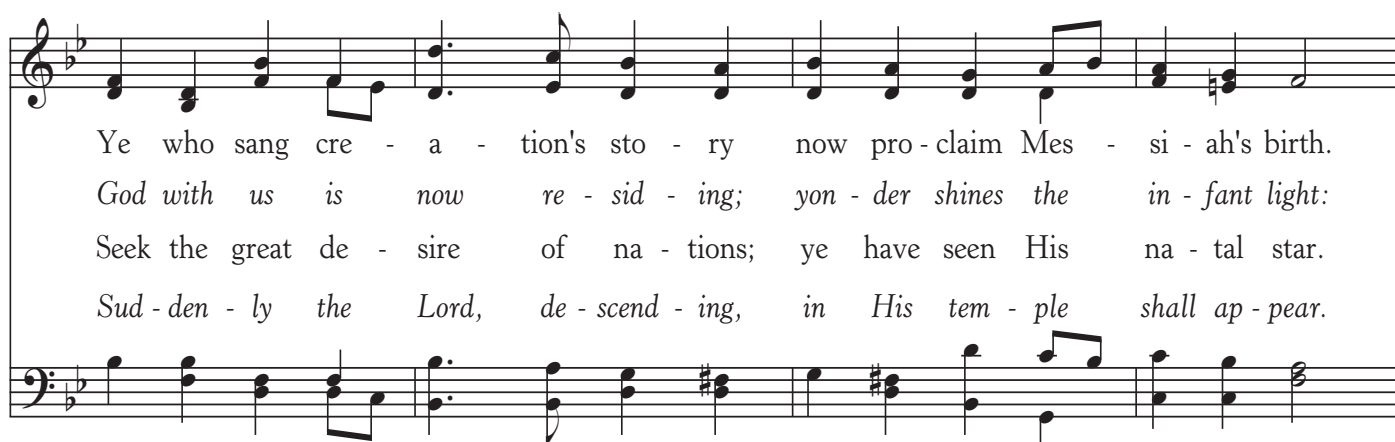
Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

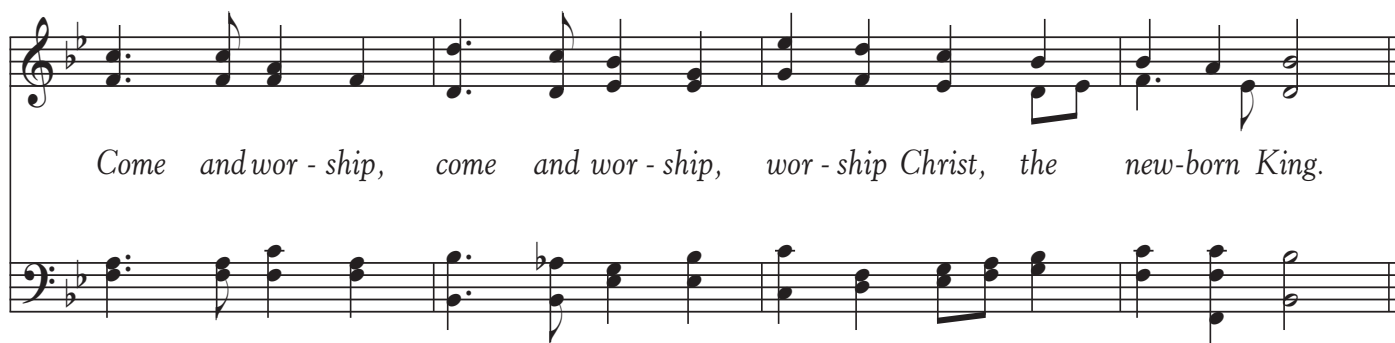
Congregational Hymn—Angels From The Realms Of Glory



An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Shep - herds, in the field a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and fear;



Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.
God with us is now re - sid - ing; yon - der shines the in - fant light:
Seek the great de - sire of na - tions; ye have seen His na - tal star.
Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, in His tem - ple shall ap - pear.



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new-born King.

Text: James Montgomery, 1816, 1825; Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry Smart, 1867.

Sermon Text—Malachi 3:1-3

Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—On Christmas Night All Christians Sing, Vs. 3



When sin de-parts be - fore His grace, then life and health come in its place,



When sin de-parts be - fore His grace, then life and health come in its place;



An - gels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the new - born King.

Text & Music: SUSSEX CAROL, Traditional English carol.

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CONFESSION, REPENTANCE, AND RECONCILIATION

The people of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God's favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.

Confession of Sin—based on Psalm 66:10; 130:1-4, 7

Pastor: Lord, we come confessing. For You, O God, have tested us; You have tried us as silver is tried.

All: Out of the depths we cry to You, O Lord! Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of our pleas for mercy!

Pastor: If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities, who could stand?

All: But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared.

Pastor: For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with Him is plentiful redemption.

(Silent prayers of confession)

Sung Response—Agnus Dei

UNISON



O Lamb of God, that takes a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. ____



O Lamb of__ God, that takes a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. ____



O Lamb of__ God, that takes a - way the sins of the world,

Slightly Faster

WOMEN



Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy, Grant us Thy peace.

MEN



Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy_ peace.

Text: Traditional, based on John 1:29; Music: CLOVERCROFT AGNUS DEI,
Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

Assurance of Pardon—1 John 1:7-9; Revelation 15:3-4

If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

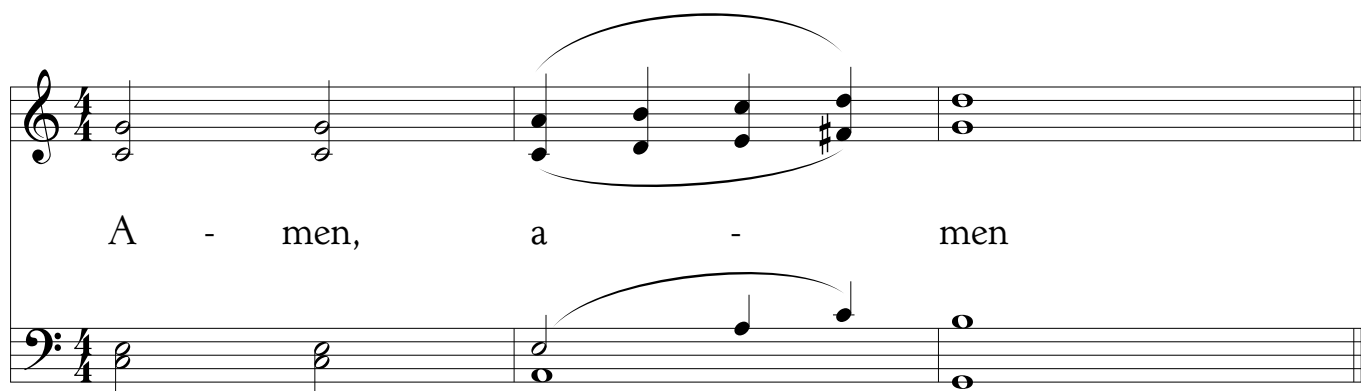
All: This is the Word of the Lord.

Pastor: Great and marvelous are Your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Your ways, King of the nations.

All: Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?

Pastor: For You alone are holy. Amen.

Sung Response—Twofold Amen



Text: Traditional; Music: DRESDEN, Johann Naumann, 18th century.

GOD INVITES HIS PEOPLE TO FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

God feeds the faith of His people by giving them a meal. As God fellowships with them in faith, His people pledge their obedience to God and their love for one another.

Profession of Faith—The Apostles' Creed

We believe in God:

The Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: who was conceived of 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 from the dead.

He ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,

From whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit; the one holy church—both visible and invisible;

The communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;

The resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Sursum Corda

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

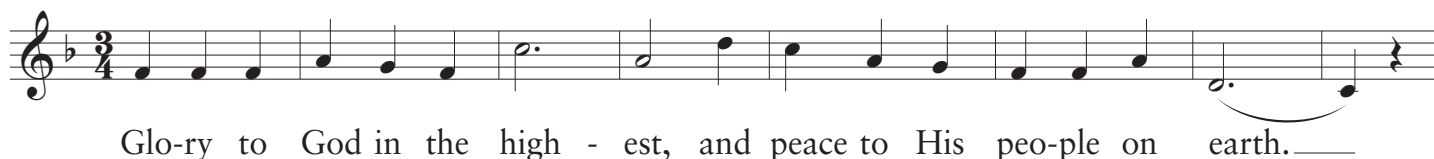
People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

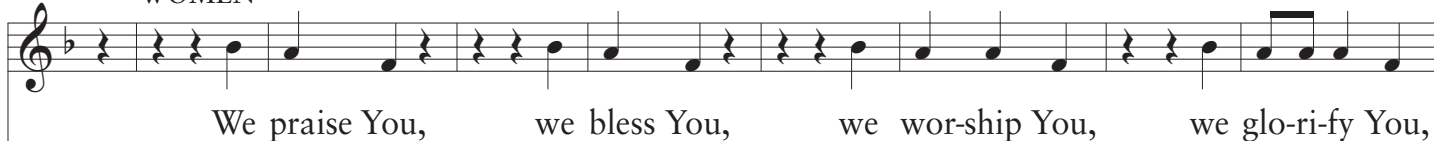
People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, we praise You, Triune God, and we join our voices with the angels, the archangels, and the whole company of Heaven in this hymn of eternal praise:

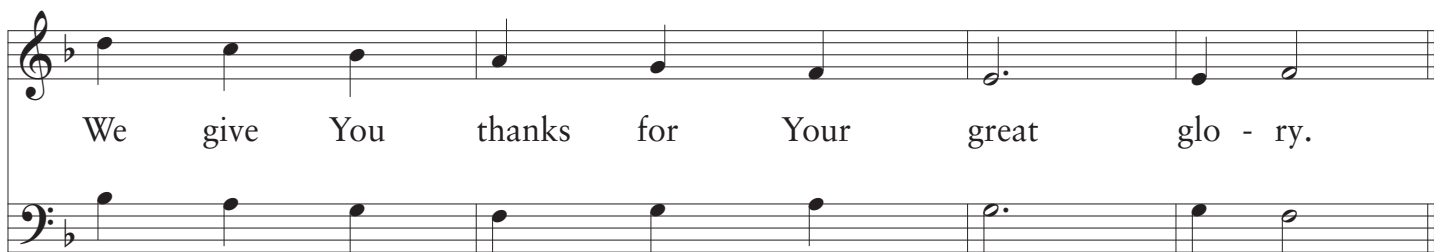
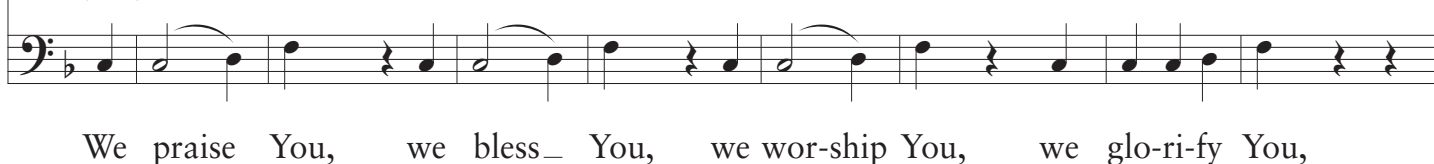
UNISON



WOMEN



MEN



We give You thanks for Your great glo - ry.

Text: Traditional, based on Luke 2:14; Music: CLOVERCROFT GLORIA,
Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND THE LORD'S TABLE

This table is open to all baptized Christians who have made a profession of faith. You may come forward to receive the bread and wine or grape juice.

Congregational Hymn—Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence



Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth He stood,
Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard on the way,
At His feet the six - winged ser - aph; cher - u - bim, with sleep - less eye,



Pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in His hand,
Lord of lords, in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
As the Light of light de - scend - eth from the realms of end - less day,
Veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry,



Christ our Lord to earth de - scend - eth, our full hom-age to de - mand.
He will give to all the faith - ful His own self for heav'n - ly food.
That the pow'rs of hell may van - ish as the dark-ness clears a - way.
"Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James, 5th century, alt. Gerard Moultrie, 1864;
Music: PICARDY, French melody, 17th century.

Congregational Hymn—Silent Night

Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright
Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! *Shep - herds quake at the sight!*
Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light
Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! *Won - drous star, lend thy light;*

Round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child, ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild,
Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav'n - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia;
Ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,
With the an - gels let us sing al - le - lu - ia to our King;

Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior is born!

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1818; Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1818.

GOD’S PEOPLE GRATEFULLY RESPOND WITH THEIR PETITIONS, TITHES & OFFERINGS, AND PRAISE

Praying, serving, and giving are essential aspects of worship, moving our faith from our heads and hearts into our lives and callings. Offering boxes for both tithes and alms are located in the foyer.

Pastoral Prayer

Corporate Prayer—*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 debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

Congregational Hymn—O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant,
 God of God, Light of Light;
 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this hap - py morn - ing:

O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Lo, He ab - hors not the vir - gin's womb:
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of Heav'n a - bove;
 Je - sus, to Thee be all glo - ry giv'n;

Come and be - hold Him born the King of an - gels;
 Ver - y God, be - got - ten, not cre - a - ted;
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est;
 Word of the Fa - ther, late in flesh ap - pear - ing;

O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,

O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord.

Text: Latin hymn, tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841;
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, *Cantus Diversi*, 1751.

GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT

After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and providing a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, God sends His people into the world to show His light in the darkness.

Benediction—1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

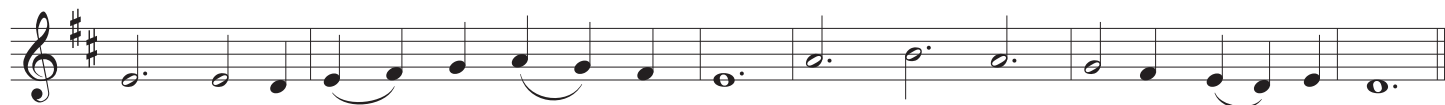
Sung Response—On Christmas Night All Christians Sing, Vs. 4



All out of dark-ness we have light, which made the an - gels sing this night,



All out of dark-ness we have light, which made the an - gels sing this night:



"Glo-ry to God and peace to men, Now and for ev - er - more. A - men."

Text and Music: SUSSEX CAROL, Traditional English carol.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

Today's sermon text from the prophet Malachi describes a scene of the Lord suddenly coming to His temple in person to cleanse His people and purify their worship. This language is used frequently in some of our most beloved Advent and Christmas hymns. Most directly, the hymn *Angels From The Realms Of Glory* nearly quotes Malachi 3:1 in its fourth verse: "...suddenly the Lord, descending, in His temple shall appear." *All My Heart This Night Rejoices* pictures Christ coming to render us "meet for glory" by purifying us from sin, while *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child* remarks on Jesus' own purity, calling Him "the undefiled." "Light" is an image used frequently in hymns like *Silent Night*, *On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*, and *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*, both as a cleansing agent ("Love's pure light") and as a contrast with the darkness of sin ("out of darkness we have light"; "the darkness clears away"). *O Come All Ye Faithful*, which closes our service, combines many of these themes: Jesus is called the "Light of light" (quoting the Nicene Creed!), while we are commanded to greet and adore the "Word of the Father late in flesh appearing."

—Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Lord, Messenger, Prepare, Day, Refiner, Purifier, Offering, Righteousness, Levi

Keystone Verses: Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:1)



PARISH

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Steve Nelson, Elder Emeritus; Jimmy Allen, Tim Simmons, Deacons Emeritus

All Biblical quotes taken from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.