

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 7, 2025

Second Sunday of Advent

We Gather in God's Name . . .

PRELUDE

PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

(for silent prayer during the prelude)

Spirit of God rest on our community, embracing the poor, welcoming the meek, turning away all that is evil. Come into this congregation to enliven our worship, to immerse us in righteousness, to prompt our faithfulness. Rain on us your hope, peace and joy, filling the whole earth with your love. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GREETING

THE LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Choir Members

\*OPENING HYMN “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #9

\*CALL TO CONFESSION

Our vision is so easily drawn away from God. We look at the world and want to give in or give up. We allow our daily concerns and larger fascinations and anxieties to distract us. For deeds large and small, we repent. Let us be fully present to God’s forgiveness as we open our hearts to God in silent confession.

\*SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

\*RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (v. 4) #44

Singing: O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!

\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus the Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

. . . to Proclaim God’s Word

FIRST READING Isaiah 11: 1-10 p. 640

SECOND READING Romans 15: 4-13 p. 163

ANTHEM “All is Well” Choir

GOSPEL READING Matthew 3: 1-12 p. 2

One: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON “There Can Be Peace” Pastor Judy Sibley

\*HYMN OF RESPONSE “Song of Hope” #432

. . . to Give Thanks to God . . .

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD

THE OFFERTORY

\*OFFERING RESPONSE

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” #592

Singing: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

What a joy to give! What a delight to join our efforts to your purposes, amazing God! May our offerings spread the

knowledge of your ways across this earth, embracing all your children. Receive our gifts of time, talents, and money as we offer them to you and to our community. Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER

One: Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our 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.

\*COMMUNION HYMN “We Remember You” Lt. Blue Songbook #132

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S SUPPER

GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

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

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise

One: . . . Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (Lt. Blue Book #124)

One: . . . Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this wine from the gifts you have given us and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the one crucified and risen. Great is the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

One: ... Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

One: The gifts of God for the people of God.

All: Let us keep the feast.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

. . . and to Be Sent in God’s Name

\*CLOSING HYMN “Jesus, Name Above All Names”  
Lt. Blue Songbook #39

BENEDICTION

\*RESPONSE TO THE BENEDICTION “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”  
#29

**Singing:** Go, tell it on the mountain  
Over the hills and everywhere;  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born!

POSTLUDE

The Upper Room

“2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent”

Sunday, December 7, 2025

Read Isaiah 61: 1-7

*“[The LORD] has sent me to ... provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”*

---Isaiah 61:1, 3 (NIV)

A beloved Christmas tradition in the Dominican Republic is the exchange of gifts, called Angelitos (little angels). Names are written on pieces of paper that are placed in a container so people can randomly draw the name of the person to whom they will give a gift. Angelitos is a beautiful tradition shared within families, church communities, and among colleagues. It fosters the generosity characteristic of the Christmas season.

In Isaiah 61, we read of God’s promise to human-kind – the brokenhearted, those in prison, those who mourn, the afflicted. It’s a promise that offers the good news of an exchange: “a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.” All this is available not only at Christmastime but all year round through faith in Jesus Christ. No wonder that when Jesus was born, the heavenly host appeared in Bethlehem, proclaiming peace and goodwill to all (see Lk. 2:8-15).

I accepted Jesus as my Savior in 2006, and this has been the best exchange of all – my former self for new life in Christ; my sins for God’s forgiveness; my darkness for Christ’s light.

**Prayer:** “God of good news, thank you for the gift of your Son who offers us salvation. All glory be to you!” Amen.

--Julianis Baez de Pichardo (Dominican Republic)

Thought for the Day:

“Christ’s birth was the greatest gift of all.”

(If you would like to read **The Upper Room** each day, you may pick up a copy in the narthex.)

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