

Welcome and Prelude Invocation and Greeting

The offering is collected at the baptismal font.

Advent 2023 WEEK 2

We gather tonight in the hope and promise of our God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, the
love of Christ that guards our hearts and minds, and
the joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

Opening Prayer

Stir up our hearts, O God, to prepare a pathway for your
Christ. By his coming speak peace to your people and
turn our hearts toward you, that your saving grace and
splendid glory may dwell in all the earth; through
Jesus Christ, whose day draws near.

Amen.

Silence beginning and ending with a bell.

Opening Song Comfort, Comfort Now my People ELW 256



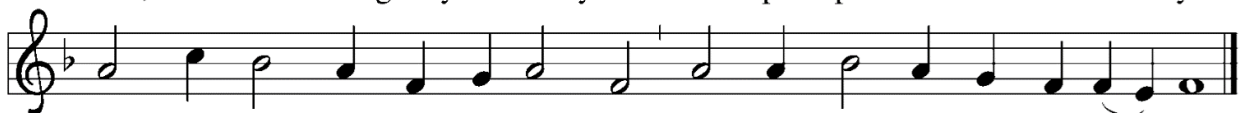
1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
2 For the her-ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for-ev - er.
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.

Week 2: Darkness Is Beautiful Song of Solomon 1:2-6

Reflection: The Song of Solomon is a love poem overflowing with rich imagery. It need not be explained as an allegory of Christ's love for the church but can simply stand as an expression of being overwhelmed by the beauty of another.

Silence beginning and ending with a bell.

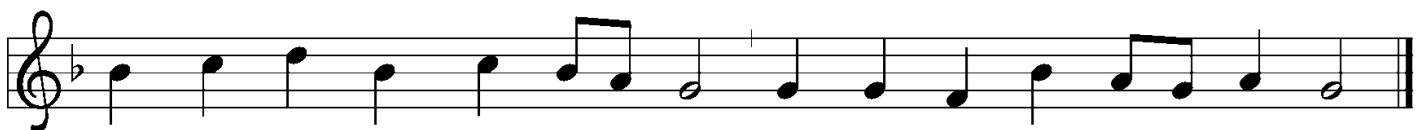
Hymn

Savior of the Nations Come

ELW 263



- 1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
- 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
- 3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child—from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
- 4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path-way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

The Offering is Received

Prayer

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need...

each petition concludes...

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Concluding Prayer

Into your wide embrace, O God, we place all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting that you will receive them into your heart of mercy, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior who taught us to pray:

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.

Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

ELW 257



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re-joice! Re-joice!
teach us your will and guide our way.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Blessing

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing
so that we may abound in hope by the power of the
Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

Amen.

Go in Peace, live with hope.

Thanks be to God!