

# THE WORSHIP OF GOD

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT | DECEMBER 14, 2025

## GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

*The prelude provides an opportunity to prepare our hearts and minds to worship God by being still and quiet.*

<b>Prelude</b>	<i>Jubilate Noel</i> Covenant Ringers	Malcolm C. Wilson
<b>Welcome</b>		Erica Cooper
<b>Choral Introit</b>	<i>O Come, O Come Immanuel</i> Covenant Youth Choir	Sleeth/Marshall
<b>Processional Hymn No. 96</b>	<i>On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry</i> <a href="#">Hymn sheet on page 4</a>	WINCHESTER OLD
<b>Lighting the Candle of Joy</b>		Caroline, Nora, Henry, & Emma Jansen
One:	Have you ever seen candlelight flicker or firelight dance?	
<b>All:</b>	<b>It moves. It warms. It feels alive.</b>	
One:	God's joy is like that, burning in our hearts, even when things are hard.	
<b>All:</b>	<b>Joy welcomes, transforms, and sends us out with courage.</b>	
One:	Let us worship with joy that cannot be silenced.	
<b>All:</b>	<b>Come, Light of Joy, fill us with your flame!</b>	
<b>Prayer of Invocation</b>		Karen Gilbert
<b>Hymn No. 129</b>	<i>Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming</i> <a href="#">Hymn sheet on page 5</a>	ES IST EIN' ROS'

## PROCLAIMING THE WORD

<b>Sermon on the Steps</b>		Michael Brogan
<b>Hymn No. 134</b>	<i>Joy to the World</i> <a href="#">Hymn sheet on page 6</a> Stanza 1 – Congregation Stanzas 2 & 3 – Choir Stanza 4 – Congregation	ANTIOCH
<b>Gospel Readings</b>	Luke 3:10-14 John 1:10-13	Michael Finn
One:	For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,	
<b>All:</b>	<b>Thanks be to God.</b>	

<b>Choral Call to Prayer</b>	<i>Come Down, O Love Divine</i>	DOWN AMPNEY
<b>Prayers of the People &amp; Lord's Prayer</b>		Eric Clark

**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.**

**Anthem**

*Of a Rose, a lovely Rose*  
Covenant Choir

John Rutter

*Of a Rose, a lovely Rose,  
Of a Rose is all my song:  
Of a Rose, a lovely Rose,  
Of a Rose is all my song.  
Hearken to me, both old and young,  
How this Rose began to spring;  
A fairer rose to mine liking  
In all this world ne know I none.  
Of a Rose, a lovely Rose,  
Of a Rose is all my song.  
Five branches of that rose there benn,  
The which be both fair and sheen;  
The rose is called Mary, heaven's queen.  
Out of her bosom a blossom sprang.  
The first branch was of great honour:*

*That blest Marie should bear the flow'r;  
There came an angel from heaven's tower  
To break the devil's bond.  
The second branch was great of might,  
That sprang upon Christmas night;  
The star shone over Bethlem bright,  
That man should see it both day and night.  
Of a Rose, a lovely Rose,  
Of a Rose is all my song.  
The third branch did spring and spread;  
Three kinges then the branch gan led  
Unto Our Lady in her child-bed;  
Into Bethlehem that branch sprang right.  
The fourth branch it sprang to hell,*

*The devil's power for to fell:  
That no soul therein should dwell,  
The branch so blessed fully sprang.  
The fifth branch it was so sweet,  
It sprang to heav'n, both crop and root,  
Therein to dwell and be our bote:  
So blessedly, so blessedly,  
So blessedly it sprang.  
Of a Rose, a lovely Rose,  
Of a Rose is all my song.  
Pray we to her with great honour,  
She that bare the blessed flow'r,  
To be our help and our succour,  
And shield us from the fiendes bond.*

**Sermon***Dancing Light*

Erica Cooper

*RESPONDING TO THE WORD***Invitation to Christian Commitment**

Erica Cooper

**Hymn of Response No. 192**

*Lord, the Light of Your Love Is Shining*  
[Hymn sheet on page 7](#)

SHINE, JESUS SHINE

**Welcoming New Members**

Aaron and Rachel Ashcraft; Evan and Krystal Folkestad

Nathan Rankin

**Personal and Corporate Commitments**

One: We commit that we will:

**All: Embrace in membership all persons who desire to follow the Way of Jesus.**

One: Embody the love of Christ in our relationships, caring for the full well-being of one another.

**All: Proclaim a responsible and free Christian faith that is relevant, socially concerned, and deeply committed to the good news of Jesus.**

One: Minister with our community in a free, creative, and flexible manner.

**All: Provide programs for Christian Education and Spiritual Formation that are inclusive and responsible.**

One: Personally, I commit that I will:

**All: Seek a deepening relationship with Christ through spiritual practices.**

One: Live in a way that demonstrates my response to the values of our church.

**All: Worship God regularly with our church.**

One: Engage in education and ministry activities of our church.

**All: Give of myself and my resources in loving concern for our church, its members, and my community.****Words of Dedication**

Lily Berthiaume

**Reception of the Offering**

Ushers

Giving sacrificially of our money is one tangible expression of a wholehearted self-giving stewardship of all of life. Monetary offerings may be given online at [baptistchurchofthecovenant.org/giving](http://baptistchurchofthecovenant.org/giving).

**Offertory**

*Still, Still, Still*  
Jackson Vaughan, Trombone

C. Hochwartner

**Offertory Response**

*Doxology*

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures high and low.  
Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Praise God in Jesus fully known:  
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Life of the Church**

Paxton Vaughn

**Benediction**

Erica Cooper

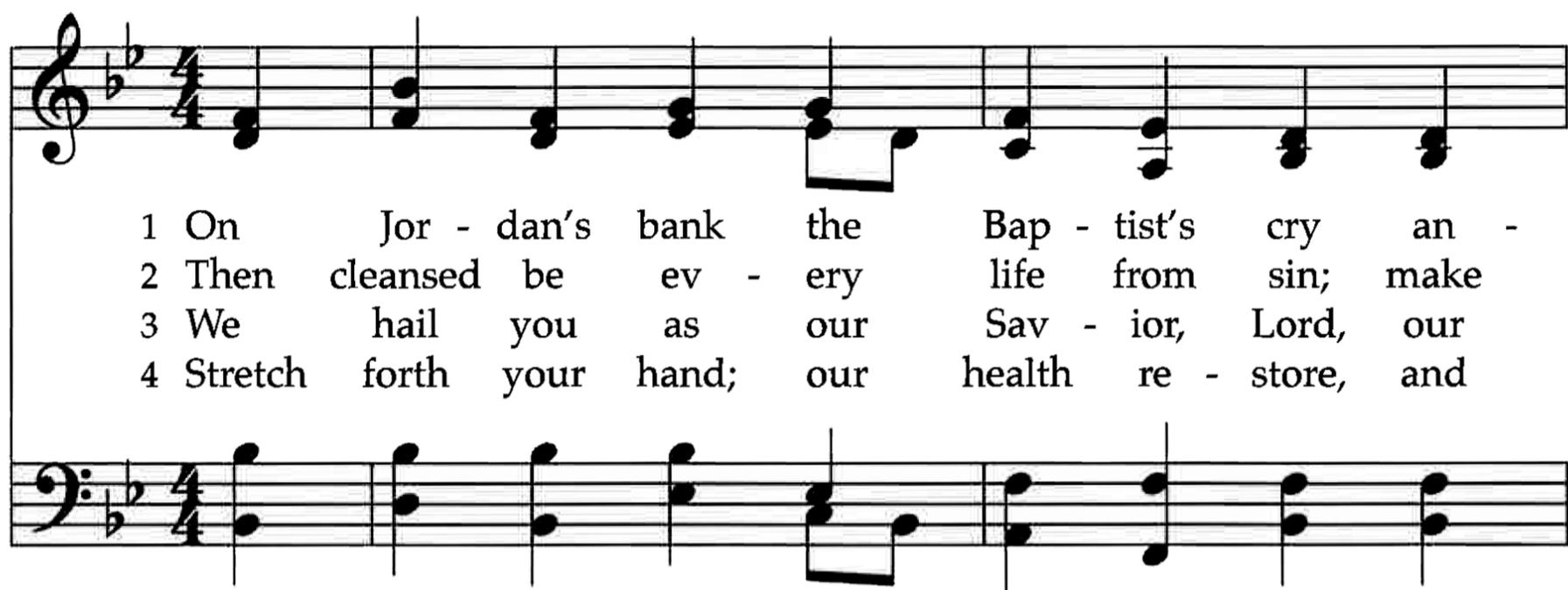
**Postlude**

*He Is Born*  
Covenant Ringers

Arnold B. Sherman

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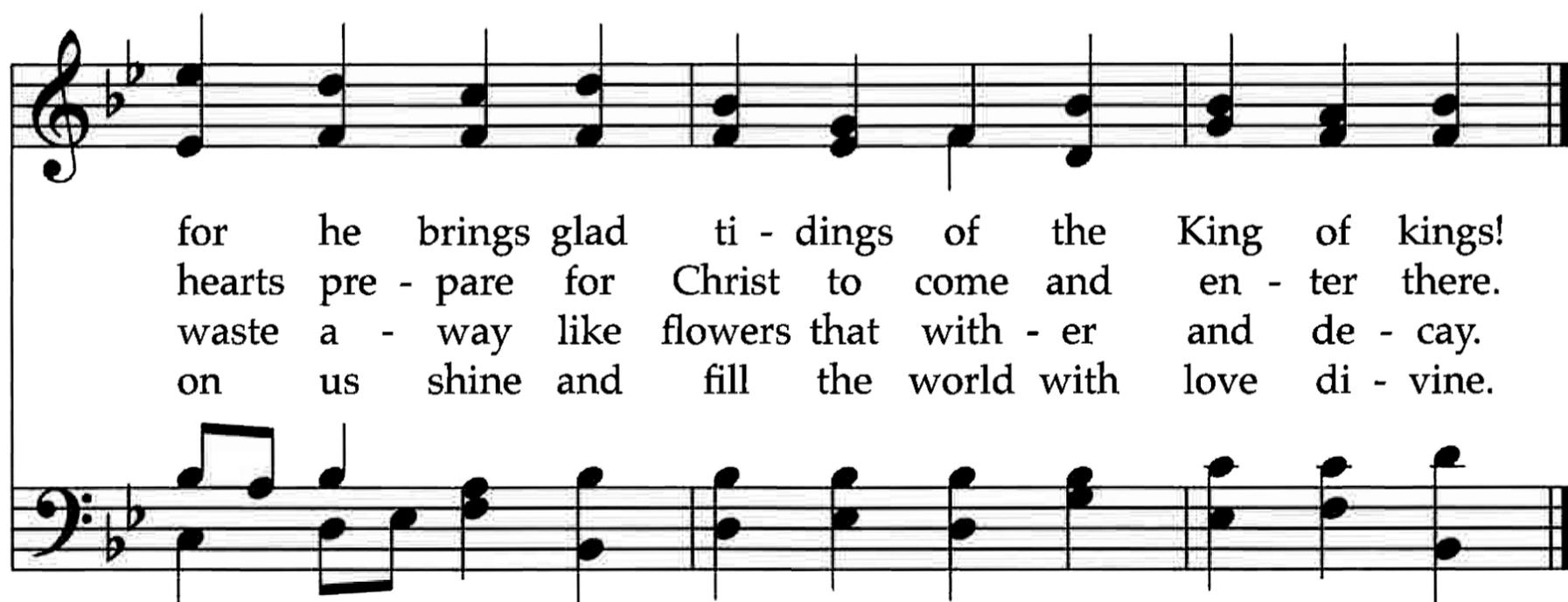
# 96 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -  
2 Then cleansed be ev - ery life from sin; make  
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our  
4 Stretch forth your hand; our health re - store, and



nounc - es that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
straight the way for God with - in, and let us all our  
ref - uge and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
make us rise to fall no more. O let your face up -



for he brings glad ti - dings of the King of kings!  
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.  
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.

# Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,  
2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;  
3 This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the air,



of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, by faith - ful proph - ets sung.  
with Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind.  
dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark - ness ev - ery - where.



It came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of  
To show God's love a - right she bore for us a  
En - fleshed, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he



win - ter, when half spent was the night.  
Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.  
saves us and light - ens ev - ery load.



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# Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

# We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding

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1 We have come at Christ's own bid - ding to this high and  
2 Light breaks through our clouds and shad - ows; splen - dor bathes the  
3 Strength - ened by this glimpse of glo - ry, fear - ful lest our



ho - ly place, where we wait with hope and long - ing  
flesh - joined Word; Mo - ses and E - li - jah mar - vel  
faith de - cline, we like Pe - ter find it tempt - ing



for some to - ken of God's grace. Here we pray for new as -  
as the heaven - ly voice is heard. Eyes and hearts be - hold with  
to re - main and build a shrine. But true wor - ship gives us



sur - ance that our faith is not in vain, search - ing like those  
won - der how the law and proph - ets meet: Christ, with gar - ments  
cour - age to pro - claim what we pro - fess, that our dai - ly



first dis - ci - ples for a sign both clear and plain.  
drenched in bright - ness, stands trans - fig - ured and com - plete.  
lives may prove us peo - ple of the God we bless.



Blaze, Spir - it, blaze; set our hearts on fire.



Flow, riv - er, flow; flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy.



Send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.



Cover art: Detail of *Starry Night* (1889) by Vincent Van Gogh

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### JOHN RUTTER'S *MAGNIFICAT* Tonight at 5:00 pm

Join us for a performance of John Rutter's *Magnificat* by our Covenant Choir! The performance will feature a chamber orchestra and soloist, Sherrie Lawhon. The Magnificat, or Song of Mary, is one of the three New Testament canticles. Mary sings the song on the occasion of her visit to Elizabeth, as narrated in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:39-56). Rutter includes the poem "Of a Rose, a lovely Rose" along with the traditional Latin text.

### REINDEER GAMES Wednesday, December 17

We will celebrate the last Wednesday night gathering of the year with our tradition of the Reindeer Games. This intergenerational night will include games, snacks, hot chocolate, and fun for all ages. We hope you can join us.

### CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP Today at 3:30 pm

The monthly meeting of our Caregivers Support Group is today from 3:30 to 5:00 pm. The group facilitated by TJ Hunt-Felke will be gathering in the Bock Mayse center to explore aspects of caring for a family member. TJ Hunt-Felke, Ph.D., M.Div., is a clinical psychologist at Cahaba Psychology in Hoover. If you have any questions, please reach out to TJ Hunt-Felke.

### CHRISTMAS EVE: CANDLELIGHT AND COMMUNION December 24 at 4:00 pm

The night is still and full of glory. Angels blaze into the sky. Shepherds tremble. A baby cries. Light has come in the most unexpected, earthy, vulnerable way. The eternal Word is now held in human arms. In this sacred night, we are invited into the wonder of incarnation, the holy mystery of heaven touching earth.