

Peace



hope

DECEMBER 7, 2025
+ THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT +

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PRELUDE

Prepare the Way, O Zion
Hymnal Selection 128, arr. Lani Smith
Brian Ward, Organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jeff Hunter and Libby Piotrowski



* OPENING HYMN 133

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Confirmation Students

The prophet Isaiah tells us:

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

And he shall be our peace!

And on that day, the prophet Isaiah says:

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

We long for that kind of peace, O God! We long for your coming, and we await the peace you will bring!

As we light this candle of peace, we are reminded of the deep peace that Christ offers to us. The days are surely coming when all of creation will know that peace.

The second candle is lit.

Prayer: God of peace, where there is fighting and deep woundedness, anger and violence, help us to be people of your shalom; offering wholeness and well being to all whom we encounter. We say come Lord, Jesus, come. Amen.

We sing together verse 2 of Hymn 136, Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers!

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

Old Testament Reading

New Testament Reading

* Gospel Reading

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Krista Dawson, Reader

Isaiah 11:1-10

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

CHORAL ANTHEM

Prepare the Way

Hymnal Selection 128, arr. Morten J. Luvaas

MESSAGE

Libby Piotrowski

* CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Lord, I Need You

Christy Nockels, Daniel Carson, Jesse Reeves,

Kristian Stanfill, Matt Maher

Led by the Youth Band

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

*All who believe in Christ and desire to live a life directed by the Holy Spirit are invited
to come forward to participate in this sacrament. Gluten-free elements are available.*

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

Communion Music

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying

Hymnal Selection 121, arr. J.S. Bach

Sam Parnin, Organ

Prayer of Thanksgiving

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Invitation to Generosity

The Trustees will come around at this time to receive physical offerings.

Giving online at any time is also an option at www.npcovenant.org/give.

Offertory

O Promised One of Israel

Hymnal Selection 124, arr. Vidas Pinkevicius

Come, Lord Jesus

* Song of Presentation 141

* Prayer of Dedication

* CLOSING HYMN 134

Long Ago, Prophets Knew

CHORAL BENEDICTION

The Peace of God
John Rutter

The peace of God that passeth all understanding,
keep your hearts and mind in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord:
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost
be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates
Hymnal Selection 126, arr. Wilbur Held

*Please remain seated for the postlude, pausing as the light of Christ is carried out
and imagining how you might carry that light into the world this week.*

** Please rise, in body or in spirit.*

*Prayer is offered in the south chapel after the service.
In addition, if you have prayer requests to be shared confidentially with the pastors,
there is a prayer box located in the narthex, as well as slips of paper and a pen
in the box's drawer for your use.*

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry 133

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
 2 Let ev - 'ry heart be cleansed from sin, make straight the
 3 For you are our sal - va - tion, Lord, our ref - uge
 4 To heal the sick, stretch out your hand, and make the
 5 To you, O Christ, all prais - es be, whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh: a - wake and lis - ten
 way for God with - in, and so pre - pare to
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 fall - en sin - ner stand; shine out, and let your
 sets your peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
 be the home where such a might - y guest may come.
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 light re - store earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more!

WORDS: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749, tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, alt.
 MUSIC: Trier manuscript, fifteenth century; adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621;
 arr. George R. Woodward, 1848-1934

L.M.
 PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

An alternate harmonization can be found at 105, 241.

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers!

1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers! and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 See that your lamps are burn - ning, re - plen - ish them with oil;
 3 All you who wait his com - ing, re - hearse the joy - ful song,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing and dark - er night is near.
 look now for your sal - va - tion, the end of sin and toil.
 which we shall sing in glo - ry with all the an - gel throng.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, a - bove this dark - ened sphere!

The Lord is now a - ris - ing, and soon he will draw nigh.
 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the Lord is near.
 The ho - ly feast is wait - ing, the gates wide o - pen stand.
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, watch in ex - pec - ta - tion! At mid - night comes the cry.
 Go meet him as he comes now with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 Rise up, you heirs of glo - ry! The Mas - ter is at hand.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free.



Advent
by Gerda Smelik

Lord, I Need You

Christy Nockels, Daniel Carson, Jesse Reeves, Kristian Stanfill, Matt Maher

2011 sixsteps Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
Sweater Weather Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
Thankyou Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
Valley of Songs Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
worshipotogether.com songs (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)



Lord I come I con-fess. Bow-ing here I find my



rest. With-out you, I fall a part. You're the one that guides my heart.



Lord I need you, oh I need you. E-very hour I need You: My



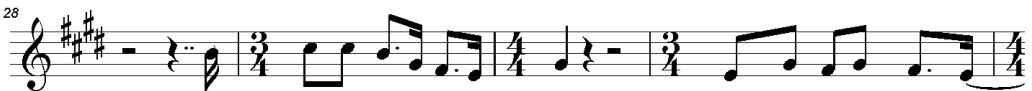
one de-fense, my right-eous-ness. Oh God, how I need You.



Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more. Where grace is found is where You



are, and where You are, Lord, I am free. Ho-li-ness is Christ in me.



So, teach my song to rise to You when temp-ta-tion comes my



way. When I can-not stand I'll fall on You. Je-sus, You're my hope and stay.

CCLI # 5925687

Come, Lord Jesus

141

In unison

1 Come, Lord Je - sus; come, Lord Je - sus;
2 Come, O Prince of Peace; come, O Prince of Peace;
3 Come, Em - man - u - el; come, Em - man - u - el;

come, Lord Je - sus; come and be born in our hearts.
come, O Prince of Peace; come, and be born in our hearts.
come, Em - man - u - el; come, and be born in our hearts.

WORDS: Carey Landry, twentieth century, © 1976 North American Liturgy Resources, 1955-

MUSIC: Carey Landry, twentieth century, © 1976 North American Liturgy Resources; arr. Jonathan D. Larson, 1955-
© 1989 Jonathan Larson

Long Ago, Prophets Knew

♩ = 76

1 Long a - go, proph-ets knew Christ would come,
 2 God in time, God in man, this is God's
 3 Mar - y, hail! Though a - fraid, she be - lieved,
 4 Jour - ney ends! Where a - far Beth-l'hem shines,

born a Jew, come to make all things new, bear his Peo - ple's bur - den,
 time - less plan: he will come, as a man, born him - self of wom - an,
 she o - beyed. In her womb, God is laid till the time ex - pect - ed,
 like a star, sta - ble door stands a - jar: un - born Son of Ma - ry,

8vb — — — — — *8vb* — — — — —

Refrain

free - ly love and par - don. Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing, choirs, sing,
 God di - vine - ly hu - man. nur - tured and pro - tect - ed.
 Sav - ior, do not tar - ry! *R.H.*
R.H. L.H.

8vb — — — — —

musical score for a hymn titled "ADVENT: COMING". The score is written for a voice part and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef and consists of a single melodic line. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are: "sing, sing! 1-3 When he comes, when he comes, who will make him wel- come? 4 Je - sus comes, Je- sus comes, we will make him wel- come!". The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first two lines of the vocal melody and the first two lines of the piano accompaniment. The second system contains the next two lines of the vocal melody and the next two lines of the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a steady harmonic accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score ends with a double bar line.

sing, sing! 1-3 When he comes, when he comes, who will make him wel- come?
4 Je - sus comes, Je- sus comes, we will make him wel- come!

Welcome to North Park Covenant Church online!

We're glad you're here.

If you're new here today, we invite you to email the co-pastors at copastors@npcovenant.org to learn more about us and, perhaps, get a little more connected.

Childcare is available in the toddler room (lower level, off the hallway south of the parlors) during the worship service for any wee ones ages 0 through 5 needing a place to wiggle and play. We always happily welcome children in the service but recognize that sometimes parents need a break so they can focus on worship.

For your prayers this week:

- **our neighborhood**, specifically North Park Theological Seminary, its professors, staff, students, and families; and our neighbors south of Foster; *"We pray that God would unveil within our neighbors and ourselves the unlimited riches of his glory and favor until supernatural strength floods their and our innermost beings with his divine might and explosive power."* (Ephesians 3:16)
- **our immigrant brothers and sisters**, as ICE activity continues in the area
- Michael Shawn Sanders' friend **John C.**, on hospice after being diagnosed with an untreatable tumor
- **Lori Johnson and family**, mourning the passing of her niece Shannon
- **Lynn Pearson**, home after a brief time in the hospital with an ulcer
- **Bruce Strom**, dealing with sciatica and awaiting next steps
- **Donn Engebretson**, recuperating after knee-replacement surgery on December 3
- **Elizabeth Petersen and family**, mourning the passing of her nephew Robert Ramos on November 13
- **Andrea Feijoo**, Janice Kelly's niece, diagnosed with an aggressive liver cancer
- Joline and Steve Paska's friend **Maggie**, diagnosed with stage 3 endometrial cancer
- **Kurt Peterson**, recovering at home after open heart surgery
- **Melanie Jones**, for strength to live with chronic pain
- **Steve Brown**, who has been dealing with pancreatic cancer
- **Zeynab and her two sons**, awaiting word about their asylum case; and for Zeynab's daughter, **Soofia**, who remains in a detention center in California

Today is a Benevolence Sunday. Members of the Deacon Board will be at the doors after the service to receive any donations to our benevolence fund, which is used to help those in need in our community.

Join us after worship for a town hall meeting to continue the conversation begun at the November 16 town hall, around community connections and how we can better engage with the people around us. A light lunch will be served. *Please note that you need not be a member of NPCC to be part of this conversation.*

Vida Plena, a Spanish-speaking Covenant church plant that meets here, invites you to worship every Sunday at 1:30 pm. For more information, contact Pastor Dany Flores at 872-357-9080.

Staff away: Ann-Marie will be out of the office on Tuesday, December 9, and on Thursday, December 11, the staff will be working remotely from Pastor Libby's home. Please feel free to reach out to us via text if any needs arise that day.

Members and friends are invited to be a part of a Saturday-morning trash brigade, working to clean up the block mentioned in today's neighborhood prayer. Please reach out to Janette and Roderick Smith at rjonberber@sbcglobal.net for more details.

Join in an Advent Spiritual Practice: In the midst of Christmas busyness, you're invited to join our Advent spiritual practice group. Emily Cody, our pastoral intern, will lead us in spiritual practices to help us rest and listen during this Advent season. This group will meet on Wednesdays, December 3, 10, and 17 after Gather dinner from 6:30-7:15 pm. All are welcome to join for as many or as few nights as you are able. Our goal is to rest together and listen for God in the waiting of Advent!

**Lectionary texts for
Sunday, December 14:**

Isaiah 35
Luke 1:47-55
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

It's Christmas Greetings Time! You are invited to extend Christmas greetings to the NPCC family by donating an amount of your choice, which will go toward camping scholarships. You are also welcome to share your own Christmas letter with the church family by bringing a copy to the church office for display in the parlors. A paper form is included in the bulletin today, or you can fill out the [Realm form found here](#). The deadline to submit forms is Wednesday, December 10.

From the Stewardship Committee: None of the good work we do here at NPCC, for God's glory and neighbors' good, is possible without the faith and generosity of the whole church body. One way we express that generosity is via pledges. The task of maintaining our church becomes easier when we have many people pledging for the year. Whether you wish to give once a month, once a year, or whenever you can, please consider making a pledge for 2026. Pledge cards can be found in the pews, and [there is a pledge page on Realm](#). Thank you for joining us in mission for 2026!

A Christmas gift for the Ventress family in Alaska: This year, instead of sending individual gifts to the members of the Ventress family, NPCC will send them an Amazon gift card, which will allow them select gifts or meet needs that may arise due to Silas' and Mercedes' medical care. To make a donation, you may write a check with "Ventress Gift Card" in the memo line or use the "Special Gifts" drop-down at www.npcovenant.org/give. The deadline to make a contribution is Wednesday, December 10.

Christmas for Our Missionaries: Throughout the year, we as a church support missionaries in five areas of the world via a percentage of General Fund donations. Now it's time to remember these missionary servants with a special Christmas gift. To make a special donation, write "missionary gift" in the memo line on your check and drop it in the offering plate (using the ivory envelopes in the pews) or select "Missionary Gift" from the drop-down menu at www.npcovenant.org/give. The deadline for these gifts is Sunday, December 14.

From Church Co-chairs, Nancy Ebner and Susan Dawson: The season of giving thanks and giving to others is upon us! We at North Park Covenant Church are grateful for the ministry of the staff throughout the year, and in this season, we have a tangible way to express our thanks to them. Contributions for the staff gift are being received from now through December 15. You can contribute by using the “Staff Gift” option at www.npcovenant.org/give, writing a check with “Staff Gift” in the memo line, or by using the green envelopes stamped with “a Christmas gift for our staff” that can be found in the pews on Sundays. May the Spirit of God move among us all this Advent season, as we wait and pray: “Come, Lord Jesus.”

Advent Worship Schedule

The season of Advent is upon us! Here is our service schedule for the next few weeks. All services begin at 10:30 am unless otherwise noted:

Sunday, December 14: Advent III - A Service of Lessons & Carols

Come hear the story of the birth of Jesus in word and song. Uniting Voices Chicago's Albany Park Neighborhood Choir will be our special musical guest!

Sunday, December 21: Advent IV Worship Service

Sunday, December 21, 7 pm: Blue Christmas Worship Service

We recognize that Advent and Christmas are not joy-filled for everyone. This service offers a time to acknowledge the pain so many feel around the holidays.

Wednesday, December 24, 5 pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

This whole-family celebration of Christmas will center on singing Christmas carols together and reading a Christmas story with all the children, and we'll close with a candle-lit singing of Silent Night.

Thursday, December 25, 6:30 am: Julotta Worship Service

You're invited to return on Christmas morning at 6:30 am for our traditional Julotta service. It's early, we know. But you'll be glad you came—trust us! We invite you to join us for worship (which will take place mostly in English, but with a little Swedish thrown in for good measure), followed by coffee and a continental breakfast (the Swedes call it *fika*). Reservations are required for the breakfast so we can plan ahead and seat those who are there. Please RSVP by Thursday, December 18, [using this link](#).

The Church Calendar This Week

The calendar is available at www.npcovenant.org/calendar and is updated as changes occur.

Monday, December 8

9:15 am	Women's Bible Study (Hybrid/Large Conference Room)
10:30 am	Staff Meeting (Staff Conference Room)
4 pm	Tutoring (Parlors)
6:30 pm	Geezerball (Gym)
7:30 pm	Centering Prayer (Staff Conference Room)

Tuesday, December 9

8 am	Men's Bible Study (Hybrid/Large Conference Room)
4:30 pm	Uniting Voices Chicago Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
5 pm	Board of Community Concern Meeting (via Zoom)
6 pm	Cudahy Basketball (Gym)
7 pm	Board of Christian Formation Meeting (Hybrid/Parlors)
	Board of Deacons Meeting (Hybrid/Staff Conference Room)
	Board of Trustees Meeting (Large Conference Room)

Wednesday, December 10

10 am	Wednesday Women's Bible Study (Edstrom Home)
6 pm	Gather Dinner (Parlors)
6:30 pm	Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal (Side Balcony, Sanctuary)
	Contemporary Music Rehearsal (Choir Room)
7 pm	Knit or Not (Coffee Lounge)
	Middle-school Youth Group (Youth Room near the Gym)
7:15 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

Thursday, December 11 - Office Closed

9 am	Fireside Fika Staff Work Day (Piotrowski Home)
4:30 pm	Uniting Voices Chicago Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

Friday, December 12

11 am	World Relief Chicagoland Christmas Party (Parlors)
1 pm	Prayer Group Gathering (Edstrom Home)
7:30 pm	LTAC Girls' Basketball Practice (Gym)

Saturday, December 13

8 am	Geezerball (Gym)
9 am	Lane Tech Scandinavian Club Dance Rehearsal (Parlors)
10:15 am	Cudahy Basketball (Gym)
11 am	BravoStudio Recital (Sanctuary)

Sunday, December 14 - The Third Sunday of Advent/Lessons & Carols

9 am	Confirmation (Staff Conference Room)
9:15 am	Adult Formation (Parlors)
	Bible Journaling (Art Room)
	Sunday School for Preschool - 6th Grade (Junior Chapel)
10:30 am	Worship (Sanctuary)
12 pm	Uniting Voices Chicago Holiday Party (Gym)
1:30 pm	Vida Plena Covenant Church Worship Service (Parlors)
7 pm	AA Meeting (Parlors)
	High-school Youth Group (Attic Youth Room)

North Park Covenant Church Staff

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*To reach both Jeff and Libby, please use
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The Friendship Center

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Missionaries We Support

Chris Peterson,
Regional Coordinator for Europe

Peter and Anna Kim, Taiwan

James and Rachel Ventress, Alaska

Paul and Sheryl Noren, Congo

Eugenio and Pia Restrepo,
Regional Coordinators for Latin America

Welcome Statement

We welcome all people to begin or deepen their relationship with Christ through worship and study. We invite all believers to fully participate in the life and ministry of our church as members, leaders, and lay staff. We celebrate the gifts and presence of diverse Christians among us—whether those differences be race, ethnicity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, or socioeconomic status. We are blessed by our diversity and are unified in Christ.

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