

BACH

Vespers



*Evening Prayer
in Advent*

Schwingt freudig euch empor, BWV 36
J. S. Bach

*St. Armands Key Lutheran Church
Tuesday, December 9, 2025
7:00pm*

PRELUDE

SERVICE OF LIGHT

Stand



☐ Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, ☑ **the light no darkness can over- come.**



☐ Stay with us, Lord, for it is eve-ning, ☑ **and the day is almost o- ver.**

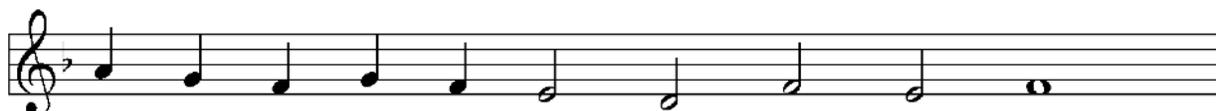


☐ Let your light scat- ter the dark-ness, ☑ **and illumine your Church.**

PHOS HILARON



☐ Joy-ous light of glo - ry: ☑ **of the im - mor - tal Fa - ther;**



heav - en - ly, ho - ly, bless - ed Je - sus Christ.



We have come to the set-ting of the sun, and we look to the eve-ning light.



We sing to God, the Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Spir - it: You are wor-thy of



be - ing praised with pure voic - es for - ev - er. O Son of God,

O Giv-er of life: The u - ni-verse pro-claims your glo - ry.

THANKSGIVING

☐ The Lord be with you. ☑ And al - so with you.

☐ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. ☑ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

☐ Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led your people

Israel by a pil - lar of cloud by day and a pil - lar of fire by night:

Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ; may his Word be a lamp

to our feet and a light to our path; for you are mer - ci - ful,

and you love your whole cre - a - tion, and we, your crea - tures, glo - ri - fy you,

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it. ☑ A - men

Congregation may be seated.

PSALMODY



☐ Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense;



the lift-ing up of my hands as the eve-ning sac - ri - fice.



☐ O Lord, I call to you; come to me quick-ly; hear my voice when I cry to you.



☐ Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense;



the lift-ing up of my hands as the eve-ning sac - ri - fice.



☐ Set a watch be-fore my mouth, O Lord, and guard the door of my lips.



☐ Let not my heart in-cline to an - y e - vil thing; let me not be oc - cu -



pied in wick - ed - ness with e - vil - do - ers. ☐ But my eyes are



turned to you, Lord God; in you I take ref - uge. Strip me not of my life.



☐ Glo-ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;



① as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.



② Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense;



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

Silence for meditation.

Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before you, O Lord, and let your lovingkindness descend upon us, that with purified minds we may sing your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host, and may glorify you forever and ever.

C. Amen





1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
 2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
 3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all
 4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -
 5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,



last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,
 splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child
 hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,
 ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low
 Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



we pray you hear us when we call.
 of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.
 like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
 from all as - saults of our dread foe.
 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.



14 Do not fear, you worm Jacob,
you maggot Israel!

I will help you, says the Lord;
your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

15 I will make of you a threshing sledge,
sharp, new, and having teeth;
you shall thresh the mountains and crush them,
and you shall make the hills like chaff.

16 You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away,
and the tempest shall scatter them.

Then you shall rejoice in the Lord;
in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.

17 When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,

I the Lord will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

18 I will open rivers on the bare heights
and fountains in the midst of the valleys;

I will make the wilderness a pool of water
and the dry land springs of water.

19 I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;

I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,

20 so that all may see and know,
all may consider and understand,
that the hand of the Lord has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

14 I myself feel confident about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another. 15 Nevertheless, on some points I have written to you rather boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast of my work for God. 18 For I will not be so bold as to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to win obedience from the gentiles, by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. 20 Thus I make it my ambition to proclaim the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told of him shall see,
and those who have never heard of him shall understand.”

P. In many and various ways God spoke to his people of old by the prophets.
C. **But now in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.**



☐ My soul pro-claims the great-ness of the Lord; my spir- it re-joic- es in



God my Sav-ior, for he has looked with fa- vor on his low- ly ser- vant.



From this day all gen- er - a - tions will call me bless - ed.



The Al- might- y has done great things for me, and ho- ly is his name.

He has mer-cy on those who fear him in ev-'ry gen-er-a-tion.
 He has shown the strength of his arm; he has scat-tered the
 proud in their con-ceil. He has cast down the might-y from their thrones,
 and has lift-ed up the low-ly. He has filled the
 hun-gry with good things, and the rich he has sent a-way emp-ty.
 He has come to the help of his ser-vant Is-ra-el,
 for he has re-mem-bered his prom-ise of mer-cy, the prom-ise he
 made to our fa-thers, to A-bra-ham and his chil-dren for-ev-er.
 Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spir-it;
 as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A-men

CANTATA

Komm, du süße Todesstunde, BWV 161

J. S. Bach

Schwingt freudig euch empor zu den erhabnen
Sternen,
Ihr Zungen, die ihr itzt in Zion fröhlich seid!
Doch haltet ein! Der Schall darf sich nicht weit
entfernen,
Es naht sich selbst zu euch der Herr der
Herrlichkeit.

Soar joyfully upwards to the exalted stars,
you tongues that now are joyful in Sion!
Yet stop! The sound need not travel so far,
the Lord of Glory himself approaches you.

Die Liebe zieht mit sanften Schritten
Sein Treugeliebtes allgemach.
Gleichwie es eine Braut entzückt,
Wenn sie den Bräutigam erblicket,
So folgt ein Herz auch Jesu nach.
Ich habe Lust, von dieser Welt zu scheiden.

Love approaches his beloved
with gentle and slow steps.
Just as a bride is delighted
when she beholds her bridegroom,
so a heart follows after Jesus.

Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara
Und laßt die süße Musica
Ganz freudenreich erschallen,
Daß ich möge mit Jesulein,
Dem wunderschönen Bräutigam mein,
In steter Liebe wallen!
Singet,
Springet,
Jubilieret, triumphieret, dankt dem Herren!
Groß ist der König der Ehren.

Strike the strings of the Cythera
and let the sweet music
resound full of joy,
so that I might, with little Jesus,
my fairest bridegroom,
travel in constant love!
Sing,
leap,
rejoice, triumph, thank the Lord!
Great is the King of honor.

Willkommen, werter Schatz!
Die Lieb und Glaube macht Platz
Vor dich in meinem Herzen rein,
Zieh bei mir ein!

Welcome, worthy treasure!
Love and faith make room
for you in my purified heart,
draw near to me!

Der du bist dem Vater gleich,
Führ hinaus den Sieg im Fleisch,
Daß dein ewig Gotts Gewalt
In uns das krank Fleisch enthält.

You who are like the Father,
lead the victory forth in the flesh,
so that your eternal Godly power
may sustain our weak flesh in us.

Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen
Wird Gottes Majestät verehrt.
Denn schallet nur der Geist darbei,
So ist ihm solches ein Geschrei,
Das er im Himmel selber hört.

Lob sei Gott, dem Vater, g'ton,
Lob sei Gott, sein'm eingen Sohn,
Lob sei Gott, dem Heiligen Geist,
Immer und in Ewigkeit!

Also with muted, weak voices
is God's majesty honored.
For if the Spirit only resounds with it,
it becomes such an outcry,
that it is heard in heaven itself.

Praise be to God, the Father,
praise be to God, His only Son,
praise be to God, the Holy Spirit,
for ever and in eternity!

“The aim and final end of all music should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul.”

~ J. S. Bach

THE LITANY

□ In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

▣ Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For Pedro, our Bishop in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

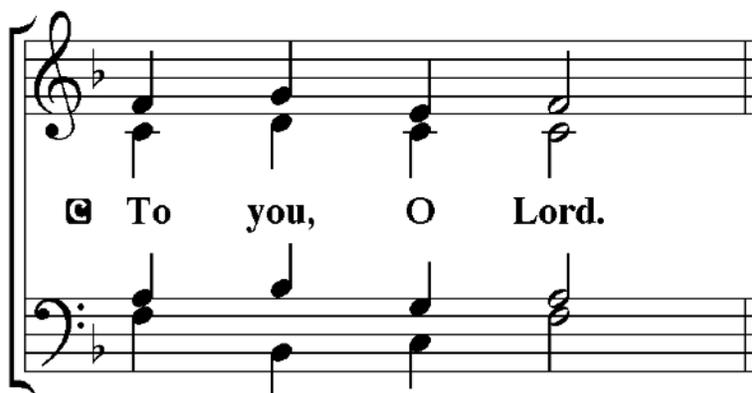
For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

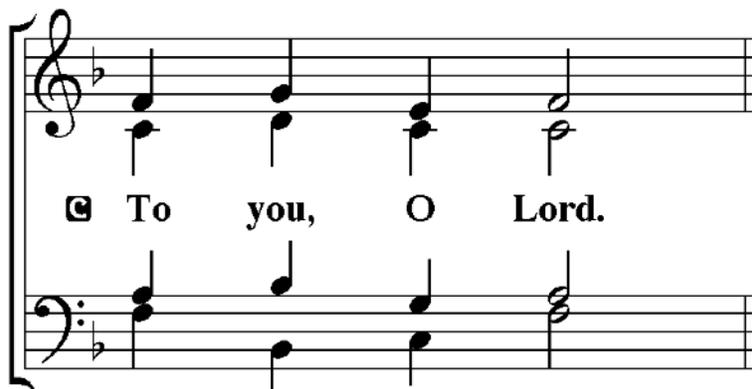
For the faithful who have gone before us and are at rest, let us give thanks to the Lord.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Silence for meditation.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.



P. O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever.

C. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

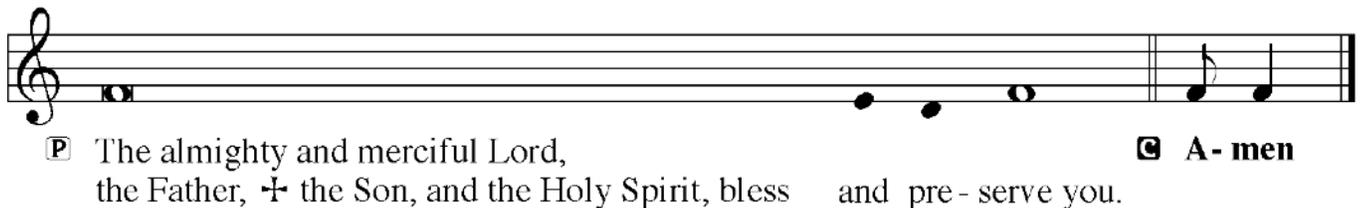
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**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.**



BENEDICTION

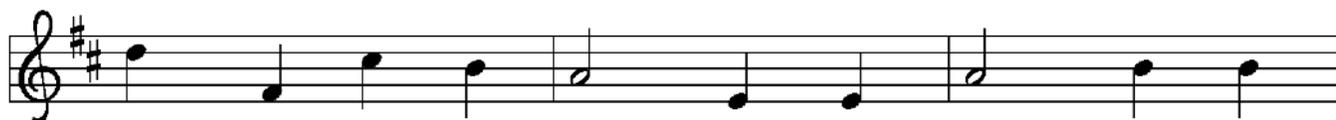




1 As the dark a - waits the dawn,
 2 As the blue ex - pec - tant hour
 3 As the moon re - flects the sun
 4 Shine your fu - ture on this place,



so we a - wait your light. O Star of
 be - fore the sil - v'ring skies, we long to
 un - til the night's de - crease, may we your
 en - light - en ev - 'ry guest, that through us



prom - ise, scat - ter night, lov - ing bright, lov - ing
 see your day a - rise, whole and wise, whole and
 heal - ing light re - lease, liv - ing peace, liv - ing
 stream your ho - li - ness, bright and blest, bright and



bright, till shades of fear are gone.
 wise, O lu - cent Morn - ing Star.
 peace, un - to your ho - ly dawn.
 blest; come dawn, O Sun of grace.

ABOUT THE CANTATA

B-A-C-H. These four letters changed the course of music history. Never has there been or likely ever will be a performing or composing talent such as this most notable son who devoted nearly his entire professional musical life to service in the Lutheran Church.

Bach's known compositions number over 1,100 and cover all musical genres of his day with the exception of opera. Writing primarily to fulfill the needs of the various positions he held, he not only incorporated all the styles and forms available, but developed unsuspected potentialities of each with technical perfection of every detail. Little of Bach's music was published during his lifetime while the rest remained in handwritten copies. A rediscovery of his music in the early nineteenth century cemented his place in the history of western music for good.

When sitting in church on 2 December 1731, one of the teachers at the St Thomas School would have looked up in surprise. He would suddenly have heard the music that Bach wrote for his birthday six years earlier. The opening chorus was followed by a second surprise. Bach had replaced the recitatives with new chorale arrangements, based on the Advent chorales 'Nun komm, der heiden Heiland' and 'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern'. This was a smart move, as it made it immediately clear that it was an Advent cantata. Everyone knew these familiar and popular church songs, so the tone of this Sunday - looking forward to Christmas - was set straight away.

The secular, festive origins of the music can be heard clearly. The two oboe d'amores are very prominent. In the first aria, about the bride that welcome Jesus as the bridegroom, the oboe is literally used as an instrument of love. In the second part, which was performed after the sermon, the strings are also given an important role in the arias. In the first aria, Jesus is welcomed by the bass as a treasure. All the strings come together in an elegant, festive accompaniment, in which the triplets of the opening section return. In the second aria, in contrast to this tutti accompaniment, there is just one solo violin, which plays *con sordine* (with mutes). It is a perfect illustration of the words, as the soprano sings: 'Even with subdued, weak voices God's majesty is revered'. In between the two arias is a repeat of the melody of the Advent chorale 'Nun komm der heiden Heiland', this time with no ornamentation and with long notes in the tenor part, supported by a strict canon from the oboe d'amores. The cantata ends with the same chorale, set for four voices and accompanied by the whole ensemble.

As several versions of this cantata have survived, we are given a glimpse behind the scenes of Bach's process of composition. In 1725, the piece originated as a secular cantata, written for the birthday of a teacher at the St Thomas School, who has not yet been identified with certainty. In 1726, Bach used the piece again for the birthday of Charlotte Friederike Wilhelmine, princess of Köthen. Later, he brought out the score again and used the music - with new words in the recitatives - as a birthday offering to someone from the Rivinus family of lawyers. Somewhere between 1725 and 1730, he also transformed the secular cantata into church music. In this first sacred version, he used only the arias, and added a final chorale. It was only in 1731 that he composed the chorale arrangements that appear instead of the recitatives from the original birthday cantata. In all these adaptations, Bach was not concerned with improving the piece or with making the ultimate version. If you compare all the versions, you see that it was more a case of him thinking practically and continually adapting his music to the occasion and the circumstances

Johann Sebastian Bach.

Participating in Worship

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Blyth, Pastor

Michael Bodnyk, Minister of Music

Kris Soderman, Assistant Musician

SAKLC Sunday Singers & Choral Scholars

Soloists

Michelle Giglio, soprano

Gabriel Welch, tenor

Jesse Martin, bass

Instrumentalists

Nick Arbolino & Kevin Chavez, oboe d'amore

Carlann Evans & Milene Moriere, violin

Matt Pegis, viola

Chris Schnell, cello

Kris Soderman, organ

With gratitude to Louise Hauser for proofreading.

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CONGREGATION COUNCIL

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PASTORS EMERITI

Rev. Robert J. L. Zimmer & Rev. Eric Wogen