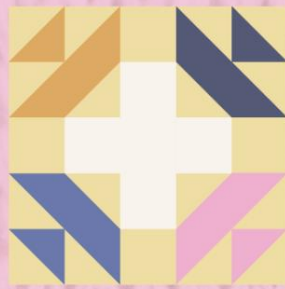




FOR THE **BEGINNING**

— DO THE GOOD THAT —
IS YOURS TO DO



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 15, 2024
10:30AM WORSHIP



First Presbyterian
Church of Albany

Welcome!

Whether you are worshipping with us for the first time or have grown up here at FPC,
we are glad you are worshipping here this morning!

The Gathering

**indicates when to rise in body or spirit*

Prelude

Prelude on 'Savior of the Nations, Come!' arr. Douglas Wagner
played by First Presbyterian Handbell Choir

Welcome, Announcements & Minute for Mission

Karen Brown & Eric Fagans

Ringling of the Bell

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

Kelsey Mayo, Sally, Elliot & Caroline

One: In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

All: Let us start small.

Let us begin with what is right in front of us.

Let us do the good that is ours to do,

And let us do it with joy!

One: Yes, let us begin with joy. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

All: May these lights remind us of what could be.

May these lights inspire action.

May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.

One: May it be so! Amen.

Choral Introit

Comfort, Comfort Ye, My People

Claude Goudimel

First Presbyterian Chancel Choir

Comfort, comfort now my people; speak of peace! Thus saith our God:

“Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning ‘neath their sorrow’s load.

Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them!

Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.”

***Call to Worship**

One: "Teacher," the crowd asked, "What should we do?"

All: If you have two shirts, give one away. Hold onto hope. Live like we belong to one another. Speak the truth. Look for God. Do the good that is yours to do.

One: It is as easy as that, and it is as hard as that.

All: Let us worship the living God.

***Hymn No. 104**

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

***Prayer of Confession**

Liberating God, there are days when the world can feel like it's crumbling. There are days when we doubt that we can make a difference. We wonder what our hands can really do. Can our voices really say something to change the world? Shake us free of our paralysis and self doubt. Forgive us and remind us that we are not called to fix everything. We are called to do the good that is ours to do. It is with hope in our hearts we pray

Silent prayers of personal confession may be offered.

***Kyrie Eleison No.578**

O Lord, Have Mercy

ORE PORIAJU VEREKO

O Lord, have mer - cy; O Lord, have mer - cy; O
 O Christ, have mer - cy; O Christ, have mer - cy; O

Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy on us. _____
 Christ, have mer - cy, have mer - cy on us. _____

***The Welcome and Peace**

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.


All: And also with you.

The congregation greets one another with words and signs of peace.

***Gloria Patri No. 585**

Glory to God

MACHU-PICHU



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry in the high-est. Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God,
glo-ry to Christ Je-sus. Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to the Spi-rit. To God be
glo-ry for-ev-er! To God be glo-ry for-ev-er! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men!
Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! _____

The Word

Old Testament Lesson

Isaiah 58:9b-12 (O.T., pp.688-689)

Carla Fisk

One: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Springs in the Desert

Arthur B. Jennings

First Presbyterian Chancel Choir

Say to them that are of a fearful heart: behold, your God will come and save you! The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose. For in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams flow in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return with songs and everlasting joy. And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Gospel Lesson

Luke 3:7-16 (N.T., p. 60)

One: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise be to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Do the Good That is Yours to Do

Glenn Leupold

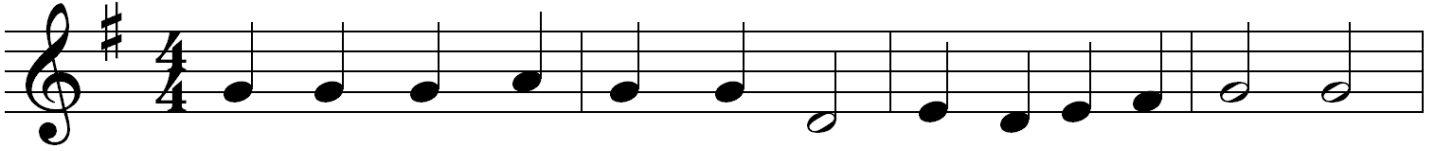
Our Response

***Hymn**

Do the Good That's Yours to Do

TEMOS ADEST FLORIDUM

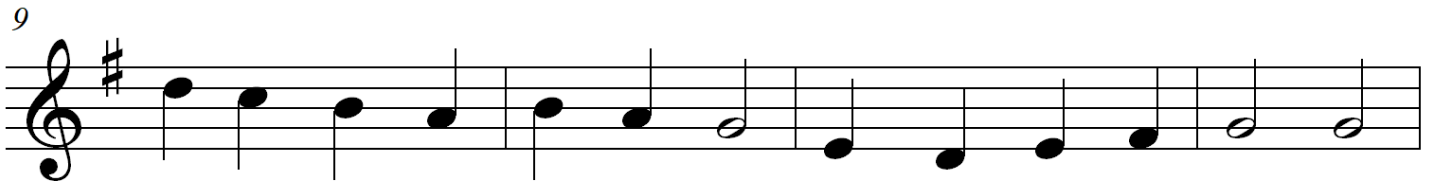
Words by Anna Strickland, 2024 Music from the *Piae Cantiones*, 1582



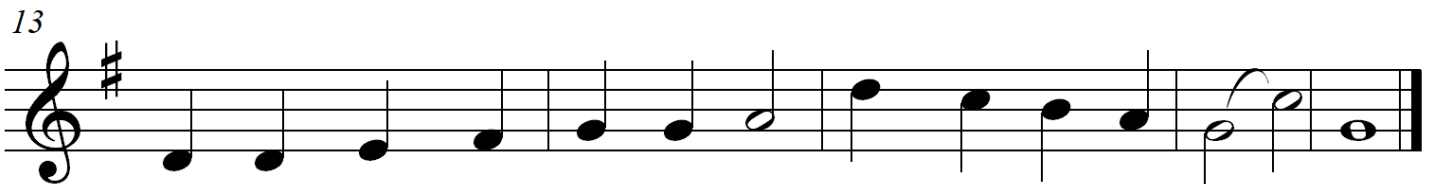
Peo - ple came from all a - round just to see the tea - cher
"Tell me, John, what should I do as a tax col - lec - tor?"
Some are called to of - fer care, some to ex - hor - ta - tion



Liv - ing in the wil - der - ness, speak - ing to the see - kers
"Take on - ly what's yours to take; don't a - buse your debt - ors"
Some to hos - pi - tal - i - ty, some to ed - u - ca - tion



He had no pre - ten - tious - ness; he would tell you blunt - ly
Soldiers, shepherds, fish - er - men asked him the same ques - tion
All our gifts col - lec - tive - ly work to bring sal - va - tion



So they sought out his ad - vice on how to live just - ly
John re - spond - ed all the same, "Share all your pos - ses - sions"
Do the good that's yours to do with de - ter - min - a - tion

Prayers of the People

Jon Rice

*There is a "Prayers of the People" book on the table in the back of the sanctuary. We encourage the congregation to write their concerns and thanksgivings in the book before the service so they can be included in the Prayers of the People. Several petitions are offered, each concluding with: O God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Offering of Ourselves and Our Gifts

Ushers will pass the offering plates to each pew. There are also offering receptacles located in the back of the sanctuary. You may place your offering in one on the way into worship or as you leave. You may also donate online at <https://firstpresalbany.org/give/> or scan the QR code to the right.



Offertory

Arise, Shine!

Healey Willan

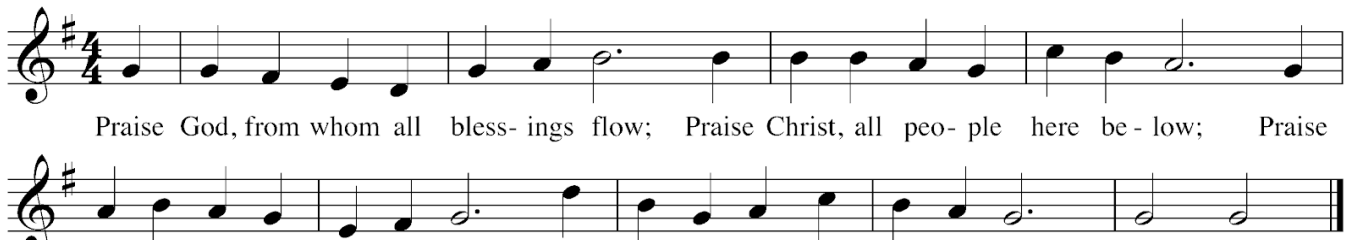
Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Alleluia!

Oh, praise the Lord, all ye nations, sing praises all ye people!

For God's merciful kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Alleluia!

*Doxology (sung in unison)



Praise God, from whom all bless- ings flow; Praise Christ, all peo- ple here be - low; Praise
Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er-more; Praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore. A - men.

*Prayer of Dedication

The Eucharist (Thanksgiving)

Invitation to the Lord's Supper

All those, including children, who seek the way of Christ and desire fellowship in the church are invited to the Lord's Table to share in our common meal of Thanksgiving.

Great Prayer of 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.

(prayer continues)

One: ...Hear us now as together we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

All: 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.

Breaking of the Bread and Communion of the People

The congregation is served at the front of the sanctuary, coming forward by the center aisle and returning by the side aisles. Communion is by intinction – take a piece of bread from the loaf or a piece of pita from the plate, dip it into the cup of juice, and eat. When served, you may respond by saying “Amen,” “Thanks be to God,” or another response. You may choose a sealed prepackaged communion element from one of the baskets – the ones with “GF” are gluten-free. If you prefer to receive communion in the pew, you may remain in your seat and signal an usher. Servers will bring you the elements.

Communion Music *Großer Herr und starker König (BWV 248, the Christmas Oratorio)* J.S. BACH

Daniel Hoke, *baritone* Sarah Dworjan, *flute*

Großer Herr, o starker König,
Great Lord, o powerful King,

Liebster Heiland, o wie wenig
dearest Savior, o how little

Achtest du der Erden Pracht!
you care about the glories of the earth!

Der die ganze Welt erhält,
He who sustains the entire world,

Ihre Pracht und Zier erschaffen,
who created its magnificence and beauty,

Muß in harten Krippen schlafen.
must sleep in a harsh manger.

Prayer after Communion

All: Lord God, we give you thanks for feeding us in this sacrament. Remind us that the power we receive in this meal cannot be counted in calories but in the way the Holy Spirit has been present with us. As we head out into this season of expectation, may we be alert for the subtle ways that you are emerging in our midst, within our hearts, and within those around us. Amen.

The Sending

***Hymn No. 97**

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

ABERYSTWYTH

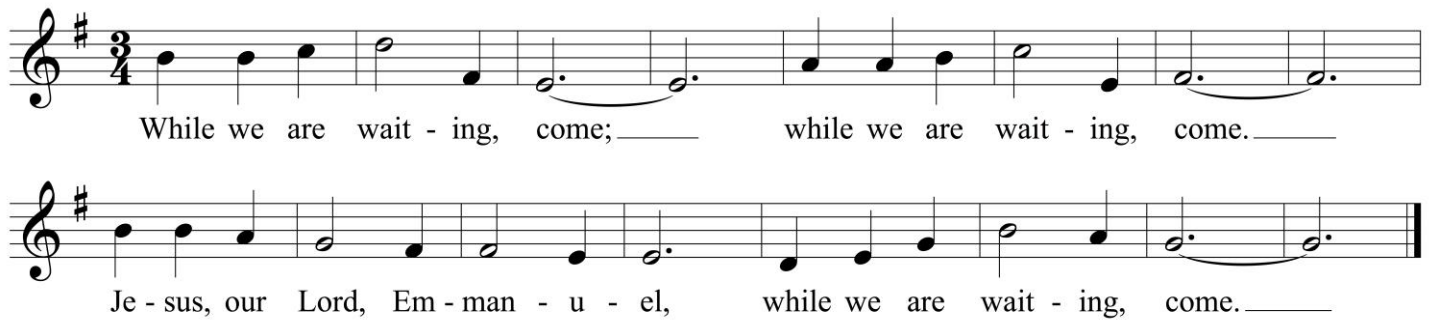
***Charge and Blessing**

***Response by the People (in unison) Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Amen.**

***Responsive Hymn No. 92 v. 1**

While We Are Waiting, Come

WAITING (CASON)



While we are wait - ing, come; _____ while we are wait - ing, come. _____

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el, while we are wait - ing, come. _____

Postlude

Postlude on 'Savior of the Nations, Come!' BWV 661

J.S. Bach

You may be seated if you wish to listen to the postlude.

Please come to Assembly Hall for Fellowship Time.

For your convenience and as an aid to your worship experience, large print hymnals and Bibles are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

The music is reprinted under CCLI License #2853455 and OneLicense #A-716938.

Prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed of A Sanctified Art LLC sanctifiedart.org

Serving you on Sunday, December 15

Sanctuary Ushers/Greeters: Sue Haney, Lee Helsby, Harriet Seeley, and Alison Stonbely

Online Worship Assistant: Maureen Del Giacco

Scripture Reader: Carla Fisk

Prayer Reader: Jon Rice

Communion Servers: Paloma Luisi & John Myers

Offering Counters: Leslie Cheu & Marc Boucher

Audio Visual Specialist: Dwight Cheu

Serving you on Sunday, December 22

Sanctuary Ushers/Greeters: Kathie Keck, Yousaf Mathias, Amy Robinson

Online Worship Assistant: Fadia Ghobrial

Scripture Reader: Lillie McLaughlin

Prayer Reader: Sue Haney

Communion Servers: Amy Robinson & Marian Eaton

Offering Counters: Laura Schultz & Janna Pfluger-Boucher

Audio Visual Specialist: Kevin Fuscus

All are Welcome in this Place!

New faces and voices are always welcome and add to the spirit of our worship, education, mission and fellowship. Let us know you worshipped with us by either filling in the yellow card in the pew in front of you or by scanning the QR code. Pastors Miriam & Glenn use email addresses to share congregational email and important announcements about the life of the church.



First Presbyterian Church

is a community for all people where apprentices of Jesus seek to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

We are called by God to envision and work toward eradicating systemic poverty, eliminating structural racism and sharing the experience of the good news of God's love, peace and joy.

We welcome children to our worship services. Nursery care for children ages birth through kindergarten is provided on the second floor of the Christian Education Building. Nursery care is available from 8:45am to 12:15pm and is staffed by experienced childcare providers Morgan Odom and Mary Margaret Cabuhat.

Parking is available on Sunday mornings in Washington Park. There is also a parking lot on Washington Avenue just west of Lark Street available during church services on Sunday mornings. The church parking lot on Sunday mornings is reserved for visitors and for those who, for physical reasons, need close access to the church. Please note the spaces reserved for those with disabilities, and please do not block other cars.

We continue to livestream our Sunday worship services on Facebook.

Christian Education on Sunday mornings

9:15-10:15 Education Classes in the Education Building

Godly Play in the Preschool Class on 2nd floor (age 3 thru kindergarten)

Godly Play in The Upper Rooms on 3rd floor (Grades 1-5)

Youth Education in the Youth Room on 2nd floor (Grades 6-12)

Adult Education is the Rose Room



FOR THE **BEGINNING**

REMINDERS FOR NEW SEASONS



YOU ARE A BLESSING



WE CAN'T GO ALONE



**DO THE GOOD THAT
IS YOURS TO DO**



DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH



HOPE IS WORTH THE RISK



THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT



LOVE KNOWS YOUR NAME

**Come explore these words with us each Sunday
during Advent and Christmas**

**10:30am worship service in the sanctuary and
online (Facebook and YouTube)**

11:45am Fellowship Time



for more info

Announcements

Today's **Adult Ed Class** focused on the texts and ideas of the second Sunday of Advent. **Next week** the class will look at the issues and texts of the third Sunday of Advent.

The **paraments** (the cloth on the pulpit, lectern, and communion table) and the **pastors' stoles** (the cloth around their necks) are blue, one of the liturgical colors for the season of Advent (the four Sundays before Christmas Day). Blue is the color associated with Mary the mother of Jesus. As she prepared for his birth, so do we.

Festival Celebration Choir (which rehearses at FPC) and the Capital Community Voices will present "**A Season for Song**" **Today Sunday, December 15, at 3pm at Emmanuel Reformed Church in Castleton.**

Holiday Photo opportunity! Would you like a family portrait for the holidays? Dwight Cheu has offered to take your holiday portrait on **December 14** at 5pm during the Potluck & Carol Sing and **December 22** after worship during the Cookie Exchange. Please call the Church office (518-449-7332 or email info@firstpresalbany.org) to schedule a 10 minute time slot during one of the above dates. All photos will be taken on a plain, neutral background, so that

you can add your own holiday background, say using the free version of Adobe Express. And then you could print cards, say on Shutterfly, while also adding a holiday border.

Fresh flowers for the chancel on Sundays may be purchased in honor or in memory of a loved one at a cost of \$80. This cost may be shared if two people would like to donate flowers on the same day. The dedication will appear in that Sunday's bulletin. For more information, contact Ellen Kemp.

Would you like to sponsor a **poinsettia plant** to decorate the sanctuary in Advent and Christmas this year? You may do so in honor or memory of a loved one, and that dedication will be noted in the worship bulletin beginning December 22. There are two ways to make your dedication. 1) By emailing the church office (info@firstpresalbany.org) a note that spells out the dedication as well as the name of the dedicator. Then visit the website (firstpresalbany.org/give/), scroll down to the bottom of the page and make your payment online (\$16 per poinsettia) OR 2) Fill out one of the forms that is located in the pews in the sanctuary and put that and your check in the offering plate or offering box. **Deadline is TODAY, December 15.**

A Message from the Stewardship

Team: Many thanks to all who filled out a financial pledge card for 2025. If you have not submitted your pledge card, we hope you will do so soon. We are counting on you! If you need a pledge card, there are extras on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Another option is to go to our website (<https://firstpresalbany.org/pledge/>) and fill out a pledge card online.

Offering Envelopes are available in the Assembly Hall if you are interested in having them for 2025. These are not dated or numbered and can be used at any time. They are in groups of 12. Please take as many as you need.

Each month the **FOCUS Food Pantry** requests items from its member churches. FPC's December donation is shampoo. All items must be new and unopened. The **FOCUS Food Pantry** is also requesting one-pound bags of rice. Please leave donations in the box in Assembly Hall. Questions? Call Susan Sneeringer at 518-496-4793.

Have you been wondering what you can do to make a difference? Especially now – after the election? One way is to become a **tutor at the Wizard's Wardrobe's** free, after-school tutoring program. You can make a difference by helping a youngster who is struggling in school learn to read. Becoming literate – truly literate – helps to strengthen democracy. Twenty-one percent (1 in 5 adults) in our country are functionally illiterate, which means they read below a 5th grade level. Fifty-four percent read below a 6th grade level. Is it any wonder why it is so easy to spread misinformation? Help us help the children who live in the South End to grow up reaching their full potential. It will not only benefit them, but our country as well.

Our next two-day tutor training will take place on : January 11th & 18th, 8:45am – 4:00pm Please consider coming and making a difference. For more information speak to Carol Green or Debbie Fagans.





Christmas Cookie Market

Help us raise funds to support the FOCUS Breakfast Program while creating a scrumptious assortment of Christmas cookies for your family & friends!

How does it work?

Please bring 3 dozen (or more!) of your favorite Christmas cookies to worship on Sunday, December 22nd. During coffee hour, you will be able to shop for cookie varieties from some of the BEST bakers in town and create your own Christmas cookie special collection! We'll also enjoy Christmas music and hot mulled cider to get you in the cookie shopping mood!

WHEN: Immediately following worship, Sunday, 12/22

WHERE: Fellowship Hall

WHY: to benefit the FOCUS Breakfast Program

COST: \$4.00 per dozen cookies



FOCUS
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

Brought to you by the FPC Outreach & Mission Committee

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Sunday, 12/15 11:45am Fellowship Time
12:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, 12/18 10:00pm Women to Women Small Group

Thursday, 12/19 7:00am Men's Bible Study
11:00am Labyrinth Monthly Walk
5:00pm Labyrinth Monthly Walk
7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Next Sunday, 12/22

9:15am Adult Education
9:15am Children's Education (1st through 5th grade)
9:15am Preschool Education
9:15am Youth Education
9:30am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
10:30am Worship Service in the sanctuary and livestreaming on
Facebook
11:45am Cookie Exchange & Fellowship Time
12:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal



First Presbyterian
Church of Albany

*Glenn D. Leupold, Co-Pastor • Miriam Lawrence Leupold, Co-Pastor • Michael C. Lister, Director of Music
Trevor Kahlbaugh, Organist • Molly Dowell, Youth Director • Steven Minchin, Office Administrator*



Check out our socials!



FOR THE **BEGINNING**

-- LOVES KNOWS YOUR NAME --

CHRISTMAS EVE- DECEMBER 24

7:00pm Musical Prelude

7:30pm A Service of Lessons & Carols

CHRISTMAS DAY- DECEMBER 25

11:00am Worship Service

Come as you are to sing, pray,
hear a story and rejoice!

-- DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH --

SUNDAY - DECEMBER 29

10:30am Worship Service

Something a wee bit different-full of fun and joy!

11:45am Fellowship Time



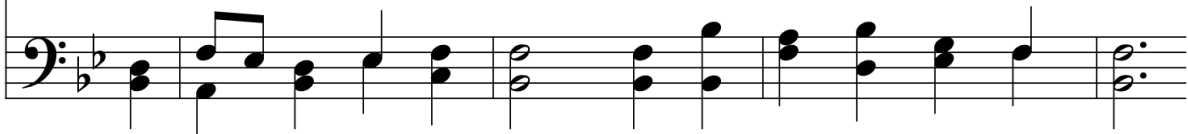
O Lord, How Shall I Meet You 104



1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel-come you a - right?
 2 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me;
 3 You come, O Lord, with glad - ness, in mer - cy and good-will,



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
 your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro-cured my lib - er - ty.
 to bring an end to sad - ness and bid our fears be still.



O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, a lamp with - in my breast,
 O love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace
 In pa - tient ex - pec - ta - tion we live for that great day




to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
 in love, all loves ex - cel - ling, our lost and fal - len race.
 when your re - newed cre - a - tion your glo - ry shall dis - play.





Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, this more contemplative text considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night 97

*

 1 Watch-man, tell us of the night, what its signs of prom-ise are.
 2 Watch-man, tell us of the night; high-er yet that star as-cends.
 3 Watch-man, tell us of the night, for the morn-ing seems to dawn.


 Trav-eler, what a won-drous sight: see that glo-ry-beam-ing star.
 Trav-eler, bless-ed-ness and light, peace and truth its course por-tends.
 Trav-eler, shad-ows take their flight; doubt and ter-ror are with-drawn.


 Watch-man, does its beau-teous ray news of joy or hope fore-tell?
 Watch-man, will its beams a-lone gild the spot that gave them birth?
 Watch-man, you may go your way; has-ten to your qui-et home.


 Trav-eler, yes; it brings the day, prom-ised day of Is-ra-el.
 Trav-eler, a-ges are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth.
 Trav-eler, we re-joice to-day, for Em-man-u-el has come!

**May be sung antiphonally.*

This unusual dialogue hymn alternates between the voice of a traveler and that of a watchman, setting up an exchange that creates parallels between the coming of dawn and the birth of Christ. The tune is named for a Welsh town whose name means "mouth of the bending river."