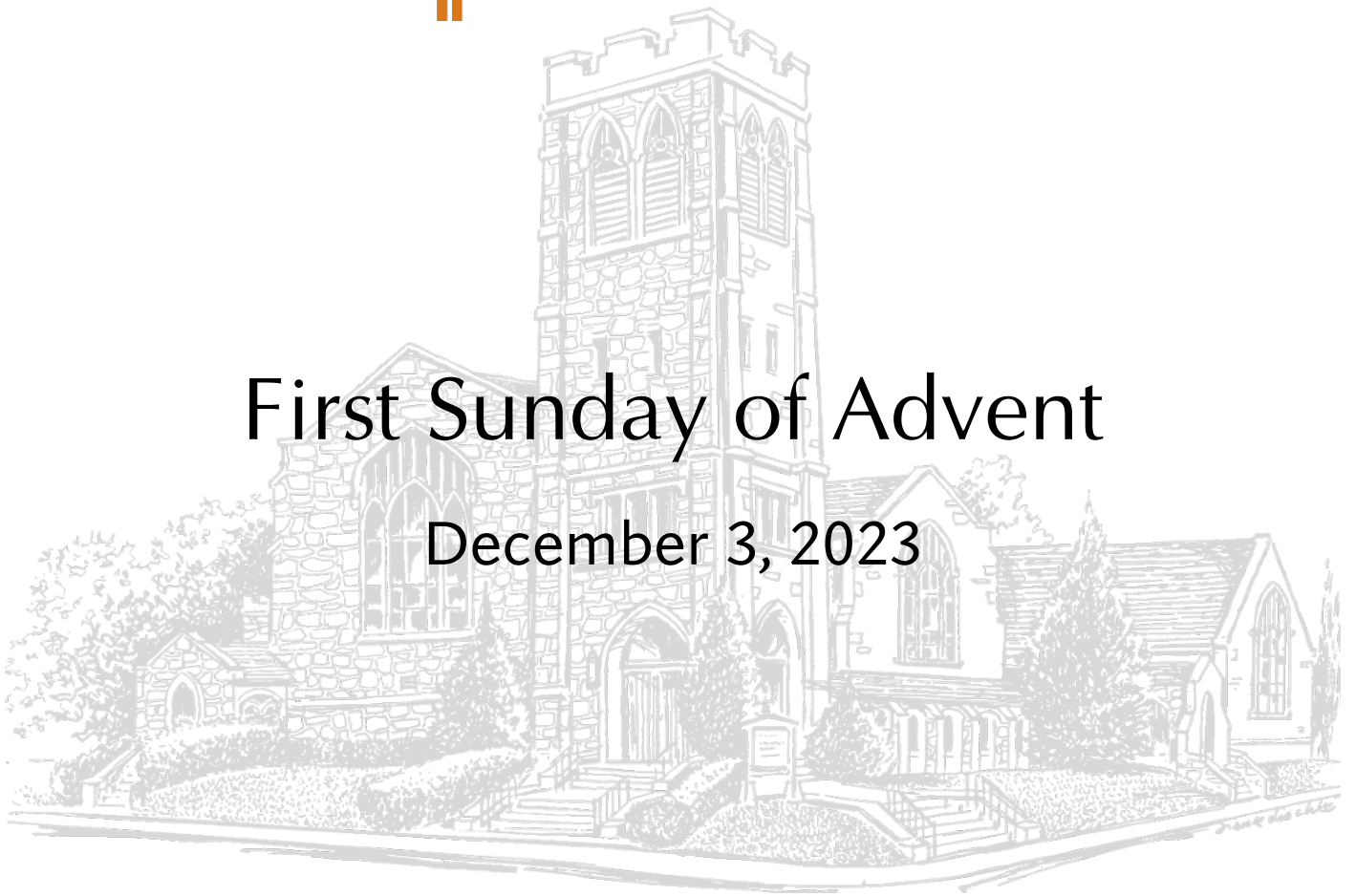




WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023



Westminster Presbyterian Church extends an enthusiastic welcome, in Christ's name, to all who worship here or join us in fellowship. Our church family seeks to embody God's boundless love by embracing, liberating and empowering people – whoever they are and wherever they may be on their faith journeys – to realize the transforming power of Christ in our congregation, community, and the world beyond.



A Covenant Network Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
An Earth Care Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
A Matthew 25 Church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
A Stephen Ministry Congregation

TODAY AT WESTMINSTER

8:30 – 9:15 a.m. **Cereal Sunday** for Hanover Food Pantry in the Westminster parking lot

8:45 – 12:15 p.m. **Nursery Care** for infants and toddlers in Preschool Suite D

9:00 – 9:55 a.m. **Worship** in the Sanctuary

Time with Our Children (approximately 9:15 a.m.)

The young and young-at-heart are invited to join the worship leader at the front of the sanctuary. Following the TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN, young ones through grade 5 may be escorted to Children's Programming or they are welcome to remain in worship.

Children's Programming (9:20 – 10:00 a.m.)

- Preschool Sunday School: Ages 3 and 4 in the Preschool Suite Room C
- Joyful Noise Choir: Kindergarten–Grade 5 in the Youth Music Room

10:00 – 10:45 a.m. **Holy Toast Café** in Walton Community Hall
Enjoy free coffee, tea, and fellowship. Breakfast items are available for one dollar.

10:10 – 11:00 a.m. **Children and Youth Programming**

- Nursery Care: Age 4 and under in Preschool Suite D
- Kids Zone Sunday School: Kindergarten–Grade 5 in Classroom 1
- Middle School Zone: Grades 6–8 in Classroom 3
- High School: Grades 9–12
 - Confirmation Class in Ruth Christie Room
 - Small Groups in the Library (for already confirmed youth)

Adult Education:

- The History and Origin of Christmas Carols
(see announcement on page 6)

11:15 – 12:00 p.m. **Living Mosaics worship** in Rodney Chapel

11:15 – 12:15 p.m. **Flying Solo brunch** at BBC Tavern and Grill
(4019 Kennett Pike, Greenville, DE)

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For descriptions of our programs for children and youth, visit wpc.org/children-youth.

The Music: Today's offertory anthem was composed by Paul and Ruth Manz in 1953 as an outpouring of their faith when their baby son was critically ill. The anthem has become a staple of the sacred choral repertory since being made famous by The King's College Choir.

The sanctuary flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of their parents, John and Louise Fortner and Dick Williams, by Linda and Rich Williams. Consider giving the flowers for Sunday worship to remember or honor loved ones or to celebrate an event. Please contact Linda Watson at (302) 571-6719 or lwatson@ycst.com.

Westminster's Prayer Team prays for the needs of our community. Please submit your prayer request to wpcprayerlist@gmail.com or online at wpc.org/care-support.

You can make a contribution to Westminster Presbyterian Church by visiting our website at wpc.org and clicking the "Donate" button or scan this QR code on your smart phone. →
We accept donations by bank withdrawal, credit card, and debit card.



Visit wpc.org/staff-leadership for a full listing of Westminster's staff and leadership.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

~ Passages in **bold** print may be spoken by all. At the asterisk (*) please stand in body or rise in spirit. ~

TOWER CHIME

Sara Gavenonis

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

Savior of the Nations, Come

Paul Manz

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Daniel Malzhan

The world says, "All is lost."
God says, "All is loved."
The darkness says, "The light is dying."
The light says, "The fire is catching."
Fear says, "Cover your eyes and your ears."
Hope says, "Wait, watch, and listen."

As we light our first Advent candle,
we pray for the holy hope of God.
Come now, O Child of Mary.
Come now, O Prince of Hope.

*HYMN NO. 88

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
v. 1: Solo
vv. 2, 6, 7: Sung by All

VENI EMMANUEL

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy One,
Christ is coming; your kingdom is drawing near.
We cannot remain unchanged.
As we prepare to welcome the Christ Child,
help us abandon wayward wanderings
and return to faithful paths.
We have neglected to plead the case of the poor,
and ignored the needs of the afflicted.
We have denied our part in systems that oppress,
and turned a blind eye toward injustice.
Renew our minds and transform our hearts,
that our lives might bear the fruit of compassion and care.
Baptize us with your Spirit,
and claim us again for your holy work,
until you come in glory. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN (See "Today at Westminster" on page 2 for more information)

Gregory Knox Jones

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Mark 13:24-37

New Testament, page 44

SERMON

Sudie Niesen Thompson

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

Manz

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all and shed his blood that we might saved be.
Sing holy, holy to our Lord, the Lord, Almighty God,
Who was and is and is to come; sing holy, holy, Lord!
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
For Christ is coming soon!
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more;
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their All!
—Revelation 22, adapted by Ruth Manz

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

*HYMN NO. 347

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

PICARDY

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Eternal God . . .

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord's Supper is open to all who trust in Christ. To receive communion by intinction, please approach the station on either the lectern or pulpit side, take a piece of bread and dip it in the chalice. If you prefer packaged communion elements, you will find those in the bread basket. Please return to your seat to partake of the packaged elements. If you are unable to come to a station, please tell an usher so that you may be served. Those sitting in the balcony will be served in their pews.

**God of Grace,
we give thanks that you have gathered us at your table
and nourished us with the bread of life.
May the meal we have shared strengthen us for service,
and sustain us as we go forth to bring good news.
Send us out, filled with hope
but hungry for a world that resembles your Kingdom. Amen.**

*HYMN NO. 357

The Days Are Surely Coming

LLANGLOFFAN

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Toccata on VENI EMMANUEL

Thurman

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2023 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Deadline: Wednesday, December 13



You are welcome to make a contribution toward the beauty of the church for the Christmas season in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones. The deadline is **December 13** for memorial/honoree names to be listed in the Christmas Eve worship bulletins. For any form received *after* that date, the names will be listed in the December 31 bulletin. Please complete a paper form (available on the credenza in the guest seating area near the reception desk) or complete it online at bit.ly/WPC-Poinsettias-2023. PAYMENT AND FORM MUST BOTH BE RECEIVED.

ADULT EDUCATION

TODAY, DECEMBER 3



The History and Origin of Christmas Carols

Presented by Dr. F. Anthony Thurman, Director of Music/Organist

10:10 a.m. | Classroom 6 and Zoom

Zoom link: bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom

Westminster's Director of Music/Organist Tony Thurman will discuss the history of Christmas carols in their historical context and modern-day usage using selections from the upcoming Christmas Concert to highlight specific examples of composition and style. The adult education hour will conclude with the singing of several Christmas favorites. Dr. Thurman graduated from the Manhattan School of Music with a Doctor of Musical Arts degree and from the University of Louisville with a Master of Music in Organ Performance and Church Music. He has served as Westminster's Director of Music/Organist since August 2020.

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

Holiday Traditions

Presented by Bob Cox

10:10 a.m. | Classroom 5

Part of the joy of the holidays is the traditions, many of which have been with us since childhood or our parents' or grandparents' childhoods. Other countries and cultures have different traditions. Join Bob Cox as we explore the many different Christmas traditions within the Christian faith. Of course, Dickens will be discussed.



Experience the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)

Presented by Baden Saathoff

10:10 a.m. | Classroom 6 and Zoom

Zoom link: bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom

Baden just hiked the entire 2,653 miles of the PCT and will share his photos and stories. His five-month "walk" took him from the US-Mexico border to Canada, through three states, seven national parks, and 25 national forests. He faced intense weather conditions and long days. Come hear about who he met, what he ate, and how he felt along the way.

ONGOING/WEEKLY

Online Bible Studies

Midweek Manna Bible Study

Wednesdays | 12 p.m. | Zoom

Not meeting 12/6

Facilitator: The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson

Contact: sniesenthompson@wpc.org

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Thursdays | 6–7 p.m. | Zoom

Facilitators: Randy Williamson

and Mary Anne Peters

Contact: randywilliamson1@comcast.net

Peace and Justice Thursday Evening Education Event

The Power of the Gettysburg Address

With Westminster member David McBride and Wilmington attorney Martin Lessner

December 7 | 7 p.m. | Zoom

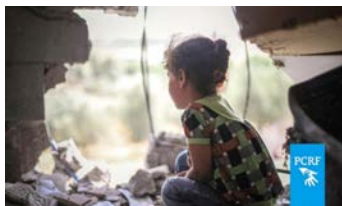
Zoom link: bit.ly/peace-justice-zoom

Hosted by our Peace & Justice Work Group.

zoom.us/join | Meeting ID: 860 2752 1655

For full descriptions of our programs and more adult education and small group opportunities, visit WPC.ORG/ADULTS or check our events calendar at WPC.ORG/EVENTS. Select adult education programs are available as a livestream/recording on our [YouTube channel](#).

ECHO Giving for Advent



ECHO Giving provides the opportunity to honor someone by making an *ECHO* gift in their name, while supporting the nine local and three global mission partners of Westminster. Your *ECHO* gift made during this season of giving produces life-sustaining reverberations of kindness and goodwill throughout Wilmington and around the world. Gifts of any size are welcome and 100% of dollars donated go directly to the mission organization you select.

***ECHO Giving* Order Forms are available online at:**

bit.ly/ECHO-Giving-Advent2023

and can be found at the information table in Community Hall.

You can request gift cards to notify recipients that a gift was made by you in their name.

It's Time for the Christmas Box Project!

We continue this joyful *Christmas Box Project* tradition at Westminster, although “boxes” will be shopping “bags” again this year. Our mission is to provide food for Christmas dinner and the means to buy gifts for the children in the families. Help bring holiday cheer to families in our community – be a part of this wonderful project!

- **Check and Online Donations**

Your donations are used to buy ShopRite and Walmart gift cards for the families. Make a financial donation by **DECEMBER 15** for 2023 year-end giving by writing and mailing a **CHECK** to *Westminster Presbyterian Church* (memo: Christmas Box) and either place it in a Sunday offering plate or mail to the church **or** by making an **ONLINE** donation at wpc.org/donate (preferred method); click the blue “DONATE NOW” button, click “Give Online” (or “Sign In” if you already have a Realm login), enter the amount, and choose “Christmas Box Project” from the fund drop-down list.

- **Wrap Toys and Pack Bags**

Join the joy of our Christmas Fellowship Dinner in Walton Community Hall on **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8**. Westminster will provide baked ham. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share for 6-8 people. Prior to dinner, your hands will be needed to wrap coffee cans for Christmas Box cookies, wrap and sort gifts for infants to 12-year-olds, and pack wrapped children’s gifts in shopping bags. Please bring your children!

- **Bake and Pack Cookies**

Be an elf on the baking team to make and pack cookies for the Christmas bags. Join Master Cookie Sergeant Jim Carter in the church kitchen on **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9**, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Volunteers are needed! If interested, email pylecarter@comcast.net.

- **Distribution Day**

You are needed on **MONDAY, DECEMBER 10**, between 8 a.m. and 12 noon for Distribution Day. It’s a joyous time when the Christmas spirit flows with smiles and hugs!

Thank you for your generosity and for sharing the love of Christ!



Experience Christmas at Westminster

Please join us in celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior!

CHRISTMAS CHORAL CONCERT

Sunday, December 10, 2023 • 3 p.m. • Sanctuary

Starlight and candlelight will enhance this concert of Christmas carols by Jantz Black, Craig Courtney, Dan Forrest, John Rutter, and Mack Wilberg. The Westminster Choir will be joined by Ted W. Barr at our Steinway & Sons concert grand piano, and Dr. F. Anthony Thurman at the organ. A pre-concert Tower Chime recital by Timothy Ohmart begins at 2:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS HANDBELL CONCERT

Saturday, December 16, 2023 • 4 p.m. • Sanctuary

Experience the joy and wonder of the season across cultures and continents with the Wilmington Handbell Ensemble, Kerry Dietz, artistic director, as they present *Carols Around the World*. A pre-concert Tower Chime recital by Susan Spilecki begins at 3:30 p.m.

WESTMINSTER CHRISTMAS CAROLING: HOME DELIVERY

Sunday, December 17, 2023 • 12–2:30 p.m. • Walton Community Hall

Team up with the Westminster Choir and our Board of Deacons to share the joy of Christmas at four local retirement communities: Cokesbury, Country House, Maris Grove, and Stonegates. Lunch is provided at 12 noon followed by a 30-minute rehearsal and departure to each caroling site. All ages are welcome – especially children! Contact TonyThurman@wpc.org or (302) 654-5214, ext. 121.

THE LONGEST NIGHT: A SERVICE OF WHOLENESS AND HEALING

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 • 6 p.m. • Rodney Chapel

For many, the holidays bring fresh waves of grief. This contemplative worship service will offer a space for both heartache and hope as we wait in darkness for the Light of the World. On the eve of the longest night of the calendar year, we invite you to join us in this candlelight service of healing and wholeness, with music by the Westminster Choir.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunday, December 24, 2023 • Sanctuary

Morning Worship, 10 a.m. – The Fourth Sunday of Advent will be celebrated with joyful music and the lighting of the fourth candle in our Advent wreath. The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson will offer an inspired sermon to bring the season of Advent to a close while we wait in anticipation of our Savior's birth.

Children's Pageant, 4:00 p.m. – O come, little children, O come, one and all. This lively service featuring a living crèche and our children's choir will be no silent night! All children are invited to participate in the pageant. Gather for costumes in the Preschool Suite at 3:30 p.m.

Service of Story and Song, 5:30 p.m. – O come, all ye faithful. The Westminster-by-Heart Storytellers will bring new life to ancient scriptures. Westminster's professional soloists, brass, and percussion will trumpet the joy of Jesus' birth! We will celebrate communion (offered to all) and sing by candlelight.

Candlelight Communion Service, 8:00 p.m. – On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring: news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful Savior's birth. Our traditional candlelight communion (offered to all) service will include a stirring sermon by the Rev. Dr. Gregory Knox Jones and anthems by the Westminster Choir accompanied by organ, piano, and percussion.

Join us in person or online! All concerts and services held in the sanctuary will be livestreamed/recorded at [WPC.ORG/WATCH](https://wpc.org/watch) and on Westminster's [YouTube channel](#).

88 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
 4 O come, thou Root of Jes - se, free thine own from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
 all things might - i - ly: to us the path of knowl - edge
 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple



here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 show; and teach us in her ways to go. Re-joice! Re-joice!
 law in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 save and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



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

- 5 O come, thou Key of David, come,
 and open wide our heavenly home;
 make safe the way that leads on high,
 and close the path to misery.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
 our spirits by thine advent here;
 disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadows put to flight.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
 all peoples in one heart and mind;
 bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
 fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 shall come to thee, O Israel.

One stanza of this paraphrase of the great O Antiphons may be sung on each of the last days of Advent as follows:

Dec. 17: O Wisdom (2)

Dec. 20: O Key of David (5)

Dec. 23: O Emmanuel (1)

Dec. 18: O Lord of might (3)

Dec. 21: O Dayspring (6)

Dec. 19: O Root of Jesse (4)

Dec. 22: O Desire of Nations (7)

These titles of the coming Christ appeared in daily Vesper antiphons sung during the week before Christmas; their roots date at least to the reign of Charlemagne. Both text and tune are the fruit of 19th-century efforts to reclaim Christian treasures from pre-Reformation sources.

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence 347

Capo 3: (Bm) Dm (G) B \flat (D) F (Bm) Dm (C) E \flat



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim, with

(G) B \flat (F \sharp) A (G) B \flat (D) F (Em) Gm



trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly
 earth he stood, Lord of lords, in hu - man
 on the way, as the Light of light de -
 sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the

(Bm) Dm (C) E \flat (G) B \flat (D) F



mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
 ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
 scend - eth from the realms of end - less day,
 pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry,

(B) D (Em) Gm (Bm) Dm (A) C



Christ our God to earth de - scend - eth,
 he will give to all the faith - ful
 that the powers of hell may van - ish
 "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

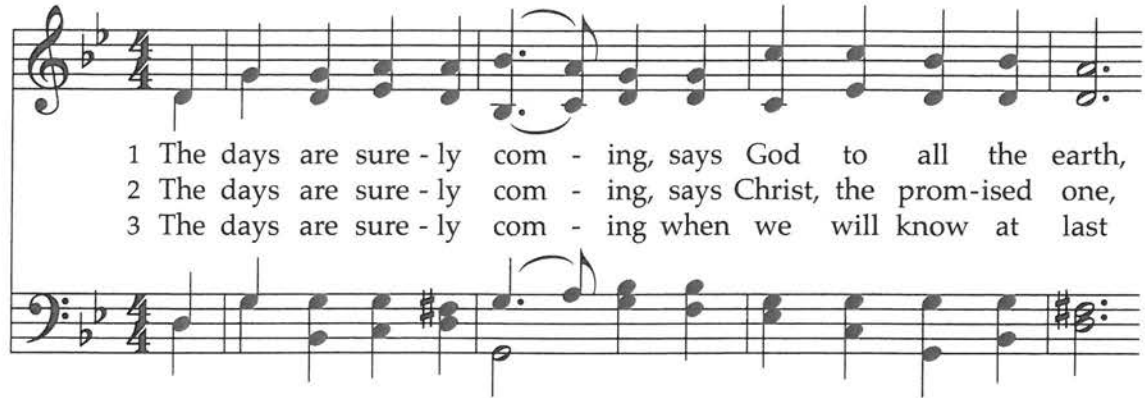
(Bm) Dm (Em) Gm (F \sharp m) Am (Bm) Dm



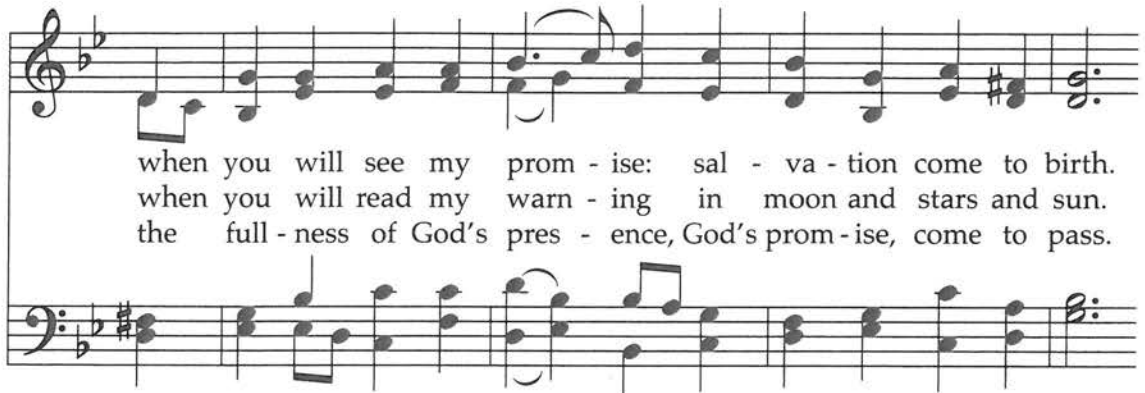
our full hom - age to de - mand.
 his own self for heaven - ly food.
 as the shad - ows clear a way.
 al - le - lu - ia, Lord most high!"

The flowering of English hymnody in the 19th century included the rediscovery, translation, and versification of ancient Christian hymns, such as this text from one of the earliest existing Christian liturgies. It is set here to an adaptation of a 17th-century French melody.

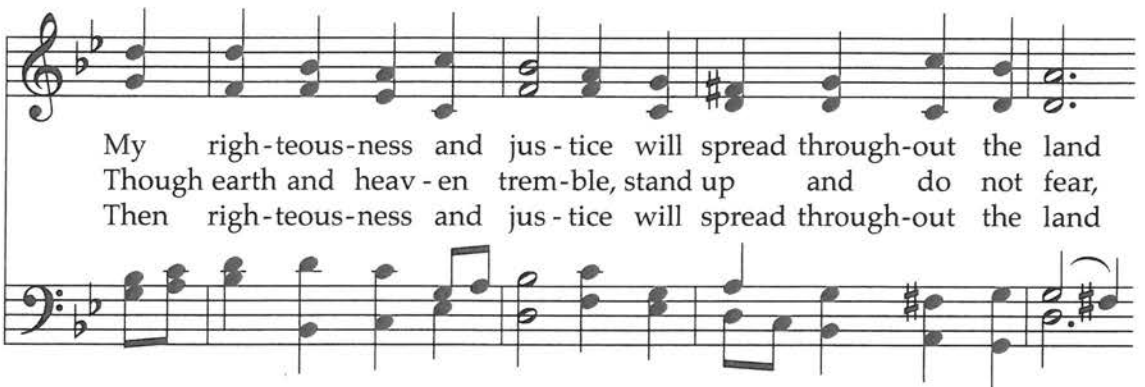
The Days Are Surely Coming 357



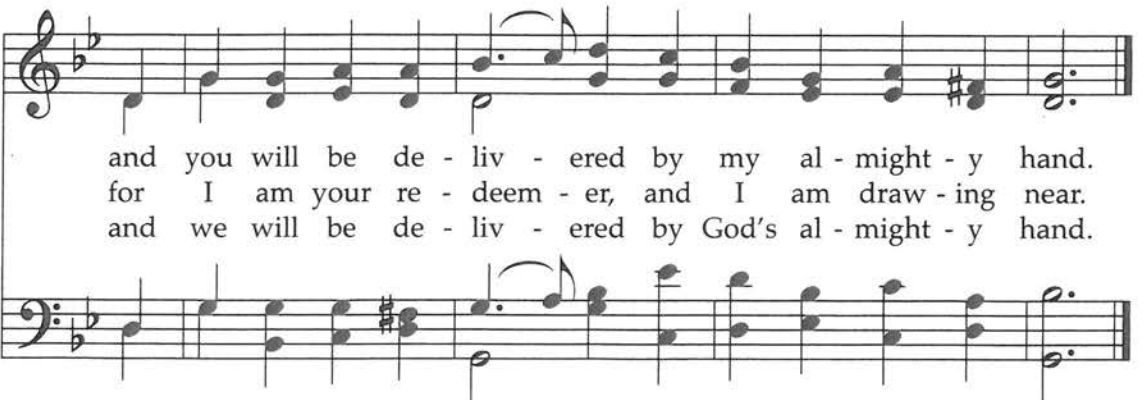
1 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says God to all the earth,
 2 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says Christ, the prom - ised one,
 3 The days are sure - ly com - ing when we will know at last



when you will see my prom - ise: sal - va - tion come to birth.
 when you will read my warn - ing in moon and stars and sun.
 the full - ness of God's pres - ence, God's prom - ise, come to pass.



My righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land
 Though earth and heav - en trem - ble, stand up and do not fear,
 Then righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land



and you will be de - liv - ered by my al - might - y hand.
 for I am your re - deem - er, and I am draw - ing near.
 and we will be de - liv - ered by God's al - might - y hand.

This text uses imagery from Jeremiah 33:14–16 and Matthew 24:29–36/Mark 13:24–32/Luke 21:25–36. These passages are especially associated with the beginning of Advent, a season that looks forward to Christ's second coming while also preparing us to remember his first coming.