



ROAD TRIP

THE JOURNEY TO CHRISTMAS

ARE WE THERE YET?

10mi Continue South 81
SPEED LIMIT 55
3:54P
237mi

SOUTH
81
↑

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

Offertorio Pastorale

Anonymous

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Call to Worship

One: As we gear up for the next leg of our Advent Road Trip, the voice of John the Baptist, like the voice from a GPS, directs us from the vast wilderness. It's a call to recalibrate our routes, ensuring we're on the right path towards the anticipated Savior.

All: With engines revving, we're set to follow the guidance, keen on the promise of Christ's arrival.

One: In the bustling traffic of our lives, the beacon calls for a pit stop, a rest area moment to ponder, to turn away from distractions, and to focus on the true destination of this season. An invite to venture deeper, driving into God's embrace.

All: We're captivated by the wilderness route, yearning for the fresh revelations it brings.

One: In hope, we adjust our mirrors, looking out for divine directions, thirsty for clarity on this highway, and craving the comfort of God's convoy.

All: Steer us, O Lord, on this Advent drive. Navigate our course, illuminate our journey, and fuel us with the hope of your imminent arrival.

Prelude

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

George Lachenauer

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Introit

Prepare Ye (The Way of the Lord)

Stephen Schwartz

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Welcome

† Opening Hymn

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

UMH 198

1. My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.
2. My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is this name.
All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.
3. From age to age, to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.
4. Love casts the mighty from their thrones, promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied, the rich seem suddenly poor.
5. Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,
remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

Blessing for Young Hearts

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Peace

One: In days when God’s people longed for peace, Isaiah declared, A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

One: We who gather today also seek comfort and peace, yet we are unsatisfied with ideas of peace that tell us to keep quiet and go with the flow. We long for real peace, true peace, just peace.

All: We wait as people who yearn for peace that bears the fruit of community, equity, and flourishing for all.

One: We light these candles as signs of God’s shocking hope and just peace. May they be beacons calling us to repent and to live the good news of Jesus Christ as we wait and watch and labor for the day when all people can gather together to worship and glorify God. Amen.

Prayers of the People

*A Pastor will begin a time of prayer and name those for whom our congregation is praying.
Online Worshipers may type prayer requests in the Live Chat, taking care for privacy.*

Pastoral Prayer

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 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. Amen.

Prayer Response

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Bob McGee
©1976 Bob McGee

WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

Mark 1:1-8 (CEB)

The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, God’s Son, happened just as it was written about in the prophecy of Isaiah:

Look, I am sending my messenger before you.
He will prepare your way,
a voice shouting in the wilderness:
“Prepare the way for the Lord;
make his paths straight.”

John the Baptist was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. He announced, "One stronger than I am is coming after me. I'm not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Scriptural Response

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God! Amen**

Anthem

The Colors of Christmas

John Rutter

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Message

Road Trip: Are We There Yet?

Rev. Bob Rhodes

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Response to the Word

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks
Dorian Bells

G.F. Handel/Arr. Jason W. Krug
©2021 Grassy Meadow Music

† Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 94

Prayer of Confession

All: Merciful God, in your gracious presence we confess our sin and the sin of this world. Although Christ is among us as our peace, we are a people divided against ourselves as we cling to the values of a broken world. The profit and pleasures we pursue lay waste the land and pollute the seas. The fears and jealousies that we harbor set neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation. We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom, of intellect and reason, and have turned them into bonds of oppression. Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us. Set us free to serve you in the world as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ. Amen.

One: As recipients of God's grace, let us remember that the valleys will be filled and the mountains will be brought low. Let us remember that all flesh shall see the salvation of God. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

WE FOLLOW CHRIST INTO THE WORLD

† Closing Hymn

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

UMH 196

1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

† Benediction

Postlude

Partita on "People Look East"

Joseph Bertolozzi

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Liturgical elements from *The Abingdon Worship Annual* and the *Road Trip: Journey to Advent* series written by Jason Moore of Midnight Oil Media.

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