


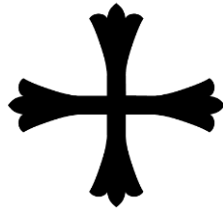
Service of Lessons & Carols

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS



 THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF THE ASCENSION

DECEMBER 27, 2020 ✝ SUNDAY, 10:00 A.M.



PRELUDE

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Gordon Phillips

WELCOME

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

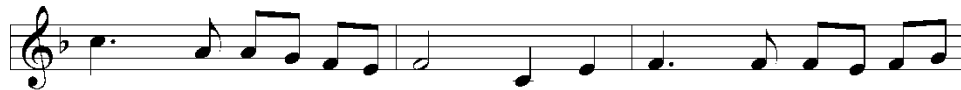
Please stand and face the processional cross.

Lutheran Service Book 376

"Once In Royal David's City"



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a
2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by
4 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and
own re - deem - ing love; For that child so dear and



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
feels for all our sad - ness, And He shares in all our glad - ness.
leads His chil - dren on To the place where He is gone.

- 5 Not in that poor, lowly stable
With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned,
All in white, His praise will sound!

INVOCATION

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]

PSALMODY

Psalm 89:1-8

P O LORD God of hosts,
who is mighty as you are, O LORD,
with your faithfulness all around you?

P I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;
C with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations.

P For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up forever;
C in the heavens you will establish your faithfulness."

P You have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
C I have sworn to David my servant:

P 'I will establish your offspring forever,
C and build your throne for all generations.'"

P Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD,
C your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!

P For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD?
C Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD,

P a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones,
C and awesome above all who are around him?

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P O LORD God of hosts,
who is mighty as you are, O LORD,
with your faithfulness all around you?



P The Lord be with you.

C And with your spirit.

P Let us pray.

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sitting

FIRST READING

Luke 1:5-25

A The Nativity of Our Lord according to St. Luke.

⁵In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

⁸Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his

name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, ¹⁷and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

¹⁸And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." ¹⁹And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."

A ²¹ And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²² And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. ²³ And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴ After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, ²⁵ "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.

FIRST CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 354

"Arise, O Christian People"



1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre - pare your - selves to -
 2 Pre - pare the way be - fore Him; Pre - pare for Him the
 3 The hum - ble heart and low - ly God rais - es up on
 4 Pre - pare my heart, Lord Je - sus; Turn not from me a -
 day; Pre - pare to greet the Sav - ior, Who takes your
 best. Cast out what would of - fend Him, This great, this
 high; Be - neath His feet in ter - ror The haugh - ty
 side, And help me to re - ceive You This bless - ed
 sins a - way. To us by grace a - lone The
 heav'n - ly guest. Make straight, make plain the way: The
 soul shall lie. The heart sin - cere and right, That
 Ad - vent - tide. From stall and man - ger low Come
 truth and light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from
 low - ly val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -
 heeds God's in - vi - ta - tion And makes true prep - a -
 now to dwell with - in me; I'll sing Your prais - es
 heav - en To all the world is shown.
 bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.
 ra - tion— It is the Lord's de - light.
 glad - ly And forth Your glo - ry show.

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A ²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the

house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.



SECOND CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 356

"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born



With wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
All gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
"To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said,
In Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
Thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
"My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
And Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:



Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!
"Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!

"We must both read and meditate upon the Nativity. If the meditation does not reach the heart, we shall sense no sweetness, nor shall we know what solace for humankind lies in this contemplation. The heart will not laugh nor be merry. As spray does not touch the deep, so mere meditation will not quiet the heart. There is such richness and goodness in this Nativity that if we should see and deeply understand, we should be dissolved in perpetual joy. Wherefore Saint Bernard declared there are here three miracles: that God and man should be joined in this Child; that a mother should remain a virgin; that Mary should have such faith as to believe that this mystery would be accomplished in her. The last is not the least of the three. The Virgin birth is a mere trifle for God; that God should become man is a greater miracle; but most amazing of all is that this maiden should credit the announcement that she, rather than some other virgin had been chosen to be the mother of God."

Martin Luther

Martin Luther's Christmas Book

A ³⁹ In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God
my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble
estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all

generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done
great things for me,

and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ And his mercy is for those who
fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his
arm;

he has scattered the proud in the
thoughts of their hearts;

⁵² he has brought down the mighty
from their thrones

and exalted those of humble
estate;

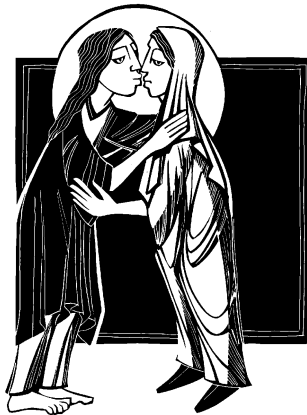
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good
things,

and the rich he has sent away
empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring
forever."

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about
three months and returned to her
home.



THIRD CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 933

"My Soul Rejoices"



1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the
2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the



great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me
great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He



fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and
shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion



bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and
halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the



ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy
wealth - y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the



sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,
to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring



Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!
God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

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A ⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹ And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." ⁶¹ And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." ⁶² And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. ⁶⁴ And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶ and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation
for us

in the house of his servant David,
⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high
⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

FOURTH CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 344

“On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry”



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; Make straight the
3 We hail Thee as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our ref - uge
4 Lay on the sick Thy heal - ing hand And make the
5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to Thee Whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - ken,
way for God with - in, And let us all our
and our great re - ward; With - out Thy grace we
fall - en strong to stand; Show us the glo - ry
sets Thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
of Thy face Till beau - ty springs in ev - 'ry place.
we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

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FIFTH READING

Luke 2:1-7

A ¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called

Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

“What happened in Bethlehem was the fulfillment of that eternal decree of the heavenly Father. As soon as His Son became man, the unbearable burden of all humanity’s sin was laid upon Him. And so, as Christ, God’s sacrificial Lamb for the sins of the whole world, lay in a hard crib in the dark stable, the eyes of God looked into the future to see His Son already dying on the cross. Therefore, this atonement for sins, by which God’s offended holiness and righteousness were satisfied and men were reconciled to Him, was already as good as accomplished.”

C.F.W. Walther
God Grant It

FIFTH CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 374

"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"



1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;
2 An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



There He lay, the Un - de - filed, To the world a strang - er.
Heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth Glo - ry all a - round Him.
He is still the Un - de - filed But no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Sav - ior?
Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, Heard the an - gels sing - ing;
Son of God of hum - ble birth, Beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His fa - vor.
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ring - ing.
Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glo - ry!

SIXTH READING

Luke 2:8-21

A ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with
whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

"Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

²¹ And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

SIXTH CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 368

"Angels We Have Heard on High"



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

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SEVENTH READING

Luke 2:22--40

A ²² And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." ²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation ³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

³⁶ And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin,

A ³⁷ and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

SEVENTH CAROL

Lutheran Service Book 519

"In His Temple Now Behold Him"

1 In His tem - ple now be - hold Him, See the long - ex -
 2 In the arms of her who bore Him, Vir - gin pure, be -
 3 Je - sus, by Your pre - sen - ta - tion, When they blessed You,

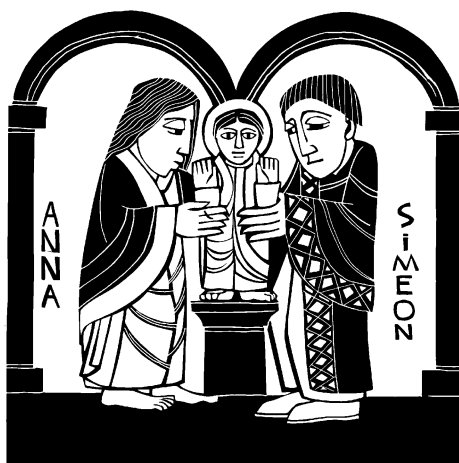
pect - ed Lord; An - cient proph - ets had fore - told Him,
 hold Him lie While His a - ged saints a - dore Him
 weak and poor, Make us see Your great sal - va - tion,

God has now ful - filled His word, Now to praise Him,
 Ere in per - fect faith they die, Al - le - lu - ia,
 Seal us with Your prom - ise sure; And pre - sent us

His re - deem - ed Shall break forth with one ac - cord,
 al - le - lu - ia! Lo, the in - car - nate God Most High!
 in Your glo - ry To Your Fa - ther, cleansed and pure.

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SERMON



APOSTLES' CREED

P God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

P Let us pray for the people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Brief silence

P Eternal Lord God, in the fullness of time, You sent forth Your Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us and give us the adoption as Your sons and heirs. Hear us, Father, as we call to You in His name. Give us grace to rejoice in Christ's blessed incarnation, and grant us a glad new year. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Heavenly Father, from whom all fatherhood on earth is named, bless the families of all Christians with Your promises. Give parents diligence and delight in their work, and grant Your favor on all children, that they may grow in strength and wisdom. Bless all widows, orphans and broken families also with Your mercy, and give them joy in the redemption You have won for us in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P O worthy Judge, from You proceeds the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Give wisdom to those who make, administer and judge our laws, that they may serve faithfully in their tasks, according to Your good pleasure, for the benefit of our people. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Gracious Lord, receive our prayers for those who suffer from loneliness. Comfort them with the sure and certain knowledge that they will never be forsaken by You. Give them family and friends within the household of faith with whom they can find loving companionship. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Blessed Lord, help the sick and suffering, especially those who desire our prayers [_____]. Surround them with Your love in Christ and, according to Your gracious will, heal them. Comfort all those who mourn [*especially* _____] and fill their hearts with the certain hope of the resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Father of lasting peace, show Your mercy to those who receive the Lord's Supper this day, that they would behold their salvation in the very body and blood of Christ given for them and, with St. Simeon, be well-prepared to depart in peace according to Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**

Sitting

OFFERING

MUSIC

Sonata KV 67

Wolfgang Mozart

MEDITATION

Luke 2:39 – “And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord...” The Law of God is good. Of course, it always shows us our sins, but that is good, too! We need to be driven back to the forgiveness of Christ. And the Law also shows us the truly blessed way to live. As Mary and Joseph found their joy in a godly life, so should we see the Law as a guide for Christian living and the roadmap for saying thank you to the Lord for all His grace and mercy to us.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

2 Timothy 4:22; [Colossians 3:1]; [Psalm 136]



P The Lord be with you.

C And with your spirit.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

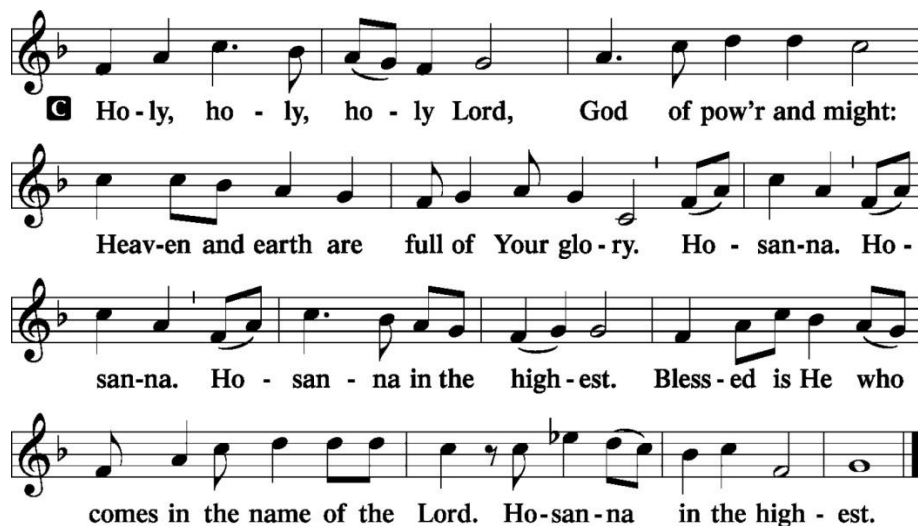
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS ~ *Holy, Holy, Holy*

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:

Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -

san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C 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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Matthew 26; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

John 20:19

John 1:29

Sitting

Bo Giertz
To Live with Christ

About participation in the Lord's Supper:

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor. [Those coming to the altar for a blessing rather than Holy Communion are asked to cross their arms over their chest.]

For further study, see Matthew 5:23f.; 10:32f.; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

(Above is the "Model Communion Card Statement" from Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper, a 1983 report by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.)

MUSIC DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

Lutheran Service Book 366

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,



From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.



"Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king."
A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-'ring wing,
Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
His word of peace shall to the earth God's an-cient prom-ise bring,



The world in sol-emn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
And ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.

NUNC DIMITTIS ~ *Song of Simeon* Luke 2:29-32



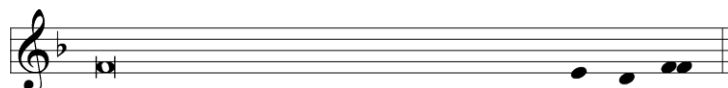
Lord, now You let Your ser-vant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va-tion which You have prepared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to reveal You to the na-tions and the glo-ry of Your peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it; as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

- P** Let us pray.
O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26



P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



C A - men.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Lutheran Service Book 361

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - d'ring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

POSTLUDE

Te Deum

Marc Charpentier

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SERVING IN OUR WORSHIP

Presiding Minister

The Rev. David V. Miller, *Pastor*

Altar Assistant(s)

Grayson Beckman

Edie Durden, *Acolyte*

Organist

Debbie Dickensheets, *Director of Music*

Musician(s)

Brandon Austin, trumpet

Altar Guild

Caitlin East/Jill Drachenberg

Usher(s)

Greg Ison/Isaac Beckman

Fellowship Host(s)

The Durden family

SERVING NEXT WEEK

Presiding Minister

The Rev. David V. Miller, *Pastor*

Altar Assistant(s)

J.P. Morr, *Head Elder*

Edie Durden, *Acolyte*

Organist

Debbie Dickensheets, *Director of Music*

Altar Guild

Anne Bigelow

Usher(s)

Grayson Beckman/Richard Drachenberg

Fellowship Host(s)

The Miller family

Making Christ Known

CALENDAR		
Sunday 12/27	First Sunday after Christmas Nursery available Service of Christmas Lessons & Carols Fellowship Hour Service of Christmas Lessons & Carols	9:30 – 11:30 AM 10:00 AM Following worship Noon
Monday 12/28	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	Closed Closed
Tuesday 12/29	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	7:00 AM – 6:30 PM 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Wednesday 12/30	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	7:00 AM – 6:30 PM 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Thursday 12/31	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	7:00 AM – 6:30 PM 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Friday 1/1	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	7:00 AM – 6:30 PM 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Saturday 1/2	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	Closed Closed
Sunday 1/3	Second Sunday after Christmas Nursery available Divine Service with Holy Communion Fellowship Hour	9:30 – 11:30 AM 10:00 AM Following worship

Truth ~ GROWING IN HIS WORD

✝ Adult Bible Study and Sunday School Cancellations

Theme: Due to the upcoming holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year, we will suspend the 9:00 A.M. education hour for the Sundays following each occasion. When we resume, we look forward to seeing you back in class!

Dates: Cancellations: December 27 and January 3

✝ Adult Bible Study: *Paul's Epistle to the Romans*

Theme: Law and Gospel. Judgment and grace. Freedom and bondage. These are just a few of the powerful themes St. Paul mentions in his letter to the Christians at Rome. Masterfully, he uses such images to paint a vivid portrait of salvation in Christ Jesus. Come, uncover the beautiful picture of what life now looks like on account of your Savior.

Day & Time: Sundays at 9:00 A.M., beginning January 10

Location: Church fellowship hall

✝ Women's Group Bible Study: *Praise and Honor: Hymn-Inspired Devotions*

Theme: Come, delve into the great hymns of our church as they're informed by God's Word! The Ascension Women's Group is taking on a new hymn each month using the book *Praise and Honor: Hymn-Inspired Devotions* by Timothy Shoup. It's available for purchase on Amazon for \$13 or through Concordia Publishing House for \$18, and the book "features introductions to 14 hymns with devotions based on each stanza, helping readers learn the biblical basis of the words the authors chose."

If you've never joined this group for a book study before, now is a great time – since the ladies will be studying a different hymn each month, you're free to come when you can and not stress if you can't commit to every meeting. Childcare is provided!

Day & Time: TBD

Location: Church narthex

Goodness ~ SERVING IN HIS NAME

✝ 1-1-1 Mission Campaign

Theme: 1-1-1 is a campaign of the English District to raise \$1/per person/per week. That means that by giving \$4 each month, just \$52 a year, everyone can give toward the district's mission efforts. Just think what could happen if every person in the English District did this! Right now, those missions are focusing on district ministries on college campuses. Please consider playing a part in this special mission! Dollars may be contributed in the designated 1-1-1 Mission box located in the narthex.

LIFTING UP ONE ANOTHER IN PRAYER

Birthdays

- ✝ Lauren Morr, 12/27

Rebirthdays (Baptismal Anniversaries)

- ✝ Jill Drachenberg, 12/27
- ✝ Lucie Woolery, 12/27
- ✝ Tom Russell, 1/1
- ✝ Jason Schoellen, 1/1

Wedding Anniversaries

- ✝ None this week

Membership Anniversaries

- ✝ Joan Bentley, 12/27
- ✝ Jean Meyers, 12/31
- ✝ Kati Durden, 1/1

In Need

Recent Requests

For persecuted Christians:

- ✝ India

For comfort, health, and healing:

- ✝ Shelly Atkins (sister of Jean's Meyer's son-in-law)
- ✝ Edith Bohannon (mother of Caitlin East's friend)
- ✝ Brandon Irwin (friend of Lauren Morr)
- ✝ The unborn child of Lauren and J.P. Morr
- ✝ Mariza Inez Rosnoski (wife of Martin Kunkel)
- ✝ Heidi Schnakenberg (niece of Clara Smith)
- ✝ The unborn child of Luke Voss (former neighbor of the Schoellens)
- ✝ All impacted by COVID-19

Ongoing Requests

For family and friends of the congregation:

- ✝ Terrie Dowling (aunt of Caitlin East)
- ✝ Hannibal (Hank) Durden
- ✝ Rev. David Heller (Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Athens, GA)
- ✝ Adi Murphy (former neighbor of the Beckmans)
- ✝ Jimmy Murray (friend of Adrian Popescu)
- ✝ Homero Salgado (Maintenance Manager)

For the leaders of Church and state:

- ✝ Director Barbara Collins & Open Arms Board
- ✝ English District Bishop Jamison Hardy & all district officials
- ✝ LCMS President Matthew Harrison & all synodical officials
- ✝ Pastor David Miller & Church Board of Lutheran Church of the Ascension
- ✝ Rev. Dr. Jonathan & Dcs. Cheryl Naumann, missionaries to Dominican Republic
- ✝ President Donald Trump & all U.S. government officials

THE POINSETTIAS ADORNING THE ALTAR
WERE GRACIOUSLY PROVIDED BY:

Darlene Beckman,
in memory of Marvin & Pauline Gerecke, and Bill Gerecke.

Anne Bigelow,
in memory of Marlys & Bob Bigelow, and Robert Bigelow.

Eileen Buehl,
in thanksgiving for all blessings!

Ruth Henry,
in memory of her brothers, Zacharias and Isaiah Gaither.

Arlene and John Kateen,
to the glory of God.

Clara Smith,
in memory of Thees & Rachel Schnakenberg, and John & Dolores Schnakenberg.

Keith & Whitney Worthington,
in memory of Ingrid Worthington.



THE LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF THE
ASCENSION

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