

Adventide

DECEMBER 22, 2024 • SUNDAY • 10:00 A.M.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT (RORATE COELI)



St. John the Baptist. Francisco Robalta (1565 – 1628). Oil on canvas.

BUT TO THIS OFFICE OF THE LAW, THE NEW TESTAMENT IMMEDIATELY ADDS THE CONSOLING PROMISE OF GRACE THROUGH THE GOSPEL. THIS MUST BE BELIEVED. AS CHRIST DECLARES, “REPENT AND BELIEVE IN THE GOSPEL” (MARK 1:15). THAT IS, BECOME DIFFERENT, ACT DIFFERENTLY, AND BELIEVE MY PROMISE. JOHN THE BAPTIST (PRECEDING CHRIST) IS CALLED A PREACHER OF REPENTANCE, BUT THIS IS FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. THAT IS, JOHN WAS TO ACCUSE ALL AND CONVICT THEM OF BEING SINNERS. THIS IS SO THEY CAN KNOW WHAT THEY ARE BEFORE GOD AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THEY ARE LOST. SO THEY CAN BE PREPARED FOR THE LORD [MARK 1:3] TO RECEIVE GRACE AND TO EXPECT AND ACCEPT FROM HIM THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. THIS IS WHAT CHRIST HIMSELF SAYS, “REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS SHOULD BE PROCLAIMED IN [MY] NAME TO ALL NATIONS” (LUKE 24:47).

-SMALCALD ARTICLES. PART III, ARTICLE III. REPENTANCE, 4-6

DIVINE SERVICE – SETTING THREE

“Our churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass. The Mass is held among us and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved”. -*Augsburg Confession*, Article XXIV:1-2a: The Mass



PRELUDE

Prepare the Royal Highway

Franz Mikael Franzén

WELCOME

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

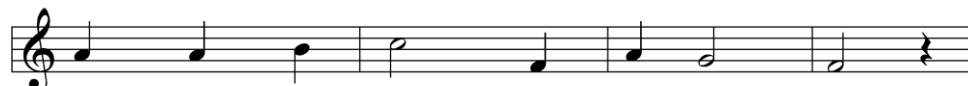
Please stand and face the processional cross.

Lutheran Service Book 355

“O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide”



1 O Sav - ior, rend the heav - ens wide;
2 O Fa - ther, light from heav - en send;
3 O earth, in flow'r - ing bud be seen;
4 O Fount of hope, how long, how long?



Come down, come down with might - y stride;
As morn - ing dew, O Son, de - scend.
Clothe hill and dale in garb of green.
When will You come with com - fort strong?



Un - lock the gates, the doors break down;
Drop down, you clouds, the life of spring;
Bring forth, O earth, a blos - som rare,
O come, O come, Your throne fore - go;



Un - bar the way to heav - en's crown.
To Ja - cob's line rain down the King.
Our Sav - ior, sprung from mead - ow fair.
Con - sole us in our vale of woe.

Continued next page . . .

5 O Morning Star, O radiant Sun,
When will our hearts behold Your dawn?
O Sun, arise; without Your light
We grope in gloom and dark of night.

6 Sin's dreadful doom upon us lies;
Grim death looms fierce before our eyes.
O come, lead us with mighty hand
From exile to our promised land.

7 There shall we all our praises bring
And sing to You, our Savior King;
There shall we laud You and adore
Forever and forevermore.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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]

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

[Hebrews 10:22]

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 124:8

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalm 32:5

Kneeling or sitting forward.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

KYRIE ~ Lord, Have Mercy

Mark 10:47

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

During Advent and Lent, the GLORIA IN EXCELSIS is omitted.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

2 Timothy 4:22

P The Lord be with you.

C **And with thy spirit.**

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sitting

PROPHECY

Deuteronomy 18:15-19

A The Prophecy for the Fourth Sunday in Advent is from Deuteronomy, chapter 18.

A In those days Moses spoke to the children of Israel, saying: "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' And the

LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.'"

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL

Psalm 145:18, 21



- L** The LORD is near to all who | call on him,*
to all who call on | him in truth.
- C** **My mouth will speak the praise | of the LORD,***
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and | ever.

EPISTLE

Philippians 4:4-7

- A** The Epistle is from Philippians, chapter four.
- A** Brethren: Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus our Lord.
- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

Standing

ALLELUIA AND VERSE

Psalm 40:17b



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

- L** You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.



G Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

P At that time: When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask John, "Who are you?" he confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of

the LORD,'" as the prophet Isaiah said." Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



G Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

NICENE CREED

C **I believe in one God**, *Romans 10:10; Deuteronomy 6:4*
the Father Almighty, *Matthew 6:9; Exodus 6:3*
maker of heaven and earth *Genesis 1:1; John 1:1*
and of all things visible and invisible. *Colossians 1:16*

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, *Romans 10:9*
the only-begotten Son of God, *John 3:16; Matthew 16:16*
begotten of His Father before all worlds, *John 1:2*
God of God, Light of Light, *John 17:22; John 8:12; John 1:1*
very God of very God, *Colossians 2:9*
begotten, not made, *John 1:2*
being of one substance with the Father, *John 10:30*
by Whom all things were made; *Hebrews 1:2; John 1:3*
Who for us men and for our salvation *1 Timothy 2:4; Romans 3:23*
came down from heaven *John 6:41; Luke 15:20*
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary *Luke 1:34-35*
and was made man; *John 1:14*
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. *Mark 15:25; John 19:16-18*
He suffered and was buried. *John 19:1-3; Luke 23:53*
And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures *1 Corinthians 15:4; Luke 24:6*
and ascended into heaven *Acts 1:9*
and sits at the right hand of the Father. *Acts 7:55*
And He will come again with glory *Matthew 26:64*
to judge both the living and the dead, *Acts 10:42; Matthew 3:12*
Whose kingdom will have no end. *2 Peter 1:11*

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, *John 14:26; Genesis 1:2; Acts 2:38*
the Lord and giver of life, *Genesis 1:2; John 3:6*
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, *John 15:26*
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, *Matthew 3:16-17; Luke 2:14*
Who spoke by the prophets. *Ezekiel 11:5*
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, *1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22*
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, *Ephesians 4:5*
and I look for the resurrection of the dead *1 Corinthians 15:35-49; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*
and the life ✠ of the world to come. *Mark 10:29-30; Matthew 10:40-42*
Amen. *Psalms 106:48*

P What is the Sixth Petition?

C And lead us not into temptation.

P What does this mean?

C God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.

Sitting

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lutheran Service Book 357

“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 - d'rest
 3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy
 4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
 all things might - i - ly; To us the path of
 tribes on Si - nai's height In an - cient times didst
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny That trust Thy might - y



ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 knowl - edge show, And teach us in her ways to go.
 give the Law In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Refrain



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el



Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

5 O come, Thou Key of David, come,
 And open wide our heav'nly home;
 Make safe the way that leads on high,
 And close the path to misery. Refrain

Continued next page . . .

6 O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight. Refrain

7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace. Refrain

Sitting

SERMON

Standing

OFFERTORY

Psalm 51:10-12



C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Sitting

OFFERING

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

Thomas Olivers

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

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

Brief silence

P Almighty God, You sent John the Baptist to proclaim the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Grant that we who prepare to celebrate the incarnation of our Lord, Jesus Christ, may die to sin and rise to new life, that we may treasure up and ponder in our hearts the Christ announced by Your forerunner. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P God of faithfulness, You have fulfilled Your promises by sending the Messiah. Grant that we may celebrate the birth of Christ by hearing the Word, singing Your praises, and receiving His body and blood. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty Father, You uphold all creation by Your hand. Preserve for Your Church and for future generations the institution of marriage between one man and one woman, which You established even before Adam and Eve's fall into sin, that Your Church may be blessed with many children and that our families may reflect the order of Your creation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Heavenly Father, You delight not in the death of the wicked. Grant to us and to all people freedom from war and disorder, strife and rebellion. Give us good government, faithful magistrates and peace to aid the swift spread of Your Gospel. Renew our hearts with thanksgiving for Your many blessings, and grant us the wisdom to use them to fulfill Your good purposes. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O Lord, grant all women with child and all mothers with infant children increasing happiness in their blessings [*especially* _____]. Look with compassion on the lonely, the depressed and the despairing. Grant healing to the sick, and give peace to the anxious and dying [*especially* _____]. Comfort all who mourn [*the death of* _____] with the certain hope of the resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Heavenly Father, grant that those preparing to receive the Lord's Supper may rejoice in the presence of Your Son, our true Emmanuel, who comes to give us a share in Your divine life and forgiveness by His body and blood. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, heavenly Father, we give You thanks for Your Son, Jesus Christ, who is truly the King of the nations and their desire. He, who formed us of clay, took on our human nature that He might save us. He came to His own and was rejected by them, yet You established Him as the true cornerstone, tested and precious, that whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame. Grant that, as we recall with thanksgiving His advent in the flesh, we may always confess Him and remain watchful for His advent in glory at the Last Day; for You live and reign, ever one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:1-3

Following the prayers, please greet one another in the name of the Lord by saying, "Peace be with you," as a sign of forgiveness and reconciliation in preparation for worthy reception of the Holy Supper.

Please remain standing.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

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



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them up un - to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.

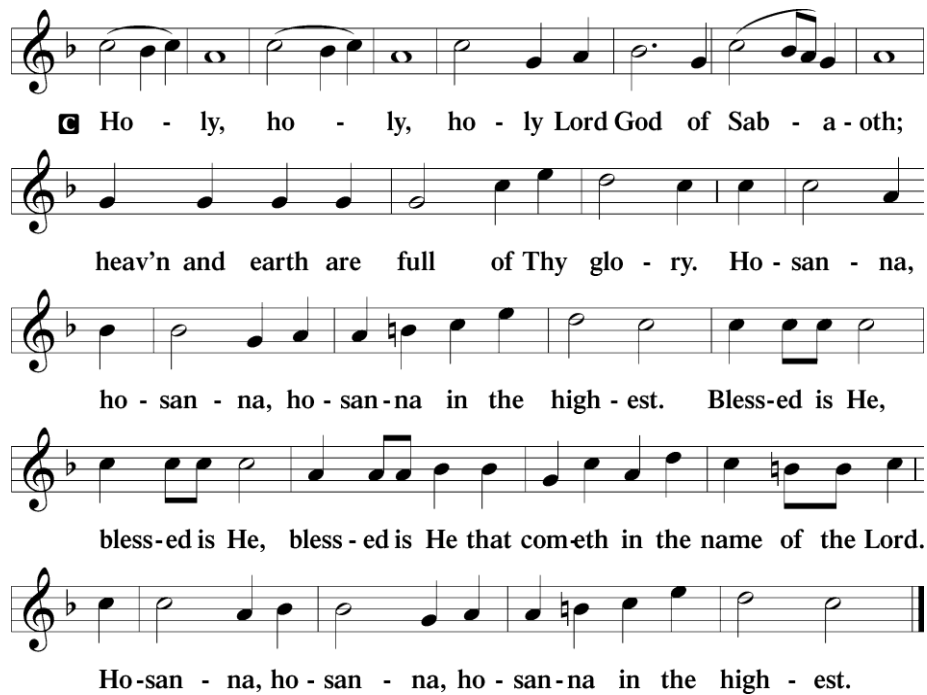


C It is meet and right so to do.

P It is truly meet, 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, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. 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 Sab - a - oth;
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,
bless-ed is He, bless - ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.
Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Kneeling or sitting forward.

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 Je-sus Christ, on the night when He was be-trayed, took bread,
and when He had giv - en thanks, He broke it and gave it to the
dis-ci-ples and said: "Take, eat; this is My [†]bod - y, which is giv-en for you.
This do in re-mem - brance of Me." In the same way al - so
He took the cup after sup - per, and when He had giv-en thanks, He gave it
to them, say - ing: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in
My [†] blood, which is shed for you for the for-give-ness of sins.
This do, as often as you drink it, in re-mem-brance of Me."

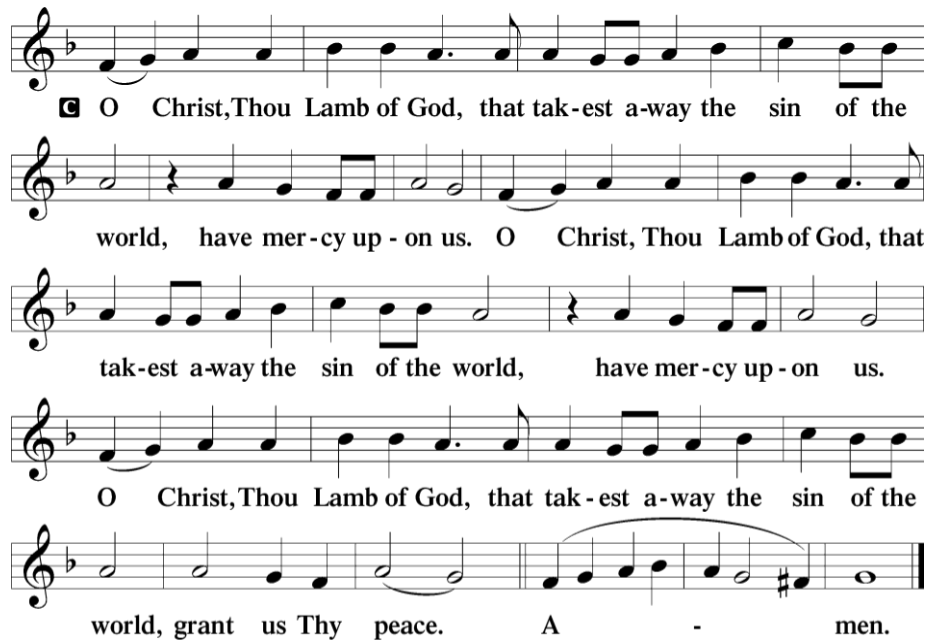
PAX DOMINI ~ *The Peace of the Lord*

John 20:19

P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.
C A - men.

AGNUS DEI ~ *Lamb of God*

John 1:29



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sitting

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 346

“When All the World Was Cursed”



1 When all the world was cursed By Mo-ses' con - dem-na - tion,
2 Be - fore he yet was born, He leaped in joy - ful meet - ing,
3 Be - hold the Lamb of God That bears the world's trans-gres - sion,
4 O grant, dear Lord of love, That we re - ceive, re - joic - ing,



Saint John the Bap - tist came With words of con - so - la - tion.
Con - fess - ing Him as Lord Whose moth - er he was greet - ing.
Whose sac - ri - fice re - moves The dev - il's dread op - pres - sion.
The word pro - claimed by John, Our true re - pen - tance voic - ing,



With true fore - run - ner's zeal The great - er One he named,
By Jor - dan's roll - ing stream, A new E - li - jah bold,
Be - hold the Lamb of God, Who takes a - way our sin,
That glad - ly we may walk Up - on our Sav - ior's way



And Him, as yet un - known, As Sav - ior he pro - claimed.
He tes - ti - fied of Him Of whom the proph - ets told:
Who for our peace and joy Will full a - tone - ment win.
Un - til we live with Him In His e - ter - nal day.

Lutheran Service Book 623

“Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray”



1 Lord Je - sus Christ, we hum - bly pray That we may
2 Give us, who share this won - drous food, Your bod - y
3 By faith Your Word has made us bold To seize the
4 One bread, one cup, one bod - y, we, Re - joic - ing
5 Lord Je - sus Christ, we hum - bly pray: O keep us



feast on You to - day; Be - neath these forms of
bro - ken and Your blood, The grate - ful peace of
gift of love re - told; All that You are we
in our u - ni - ty, Pro - claim Your love un -
stead - fast till that day When each will be Your



bread and wine En - rich us with Your grace di - vine.
sins for - giv'n, The cer - tain joys of heirs of heav'n.
here re - ceive, And all we are to You we give.
til You come To bring Your scat - tered loved ones home.
wel - comed guest In heav - en's high and ho - ly feast.



1 What hope! An E - den proph-e - sied Where tame live with the wild;
2 A shoot will sprout from Jes - se's stem, A branch from Da-vid's line,
3 As ban - ner of God's love un-furled, Christ came to suf - fer loss,
4 Come, Je - sus, come, Mes - si - ah Lord, Lost Par - a - dise re - store;

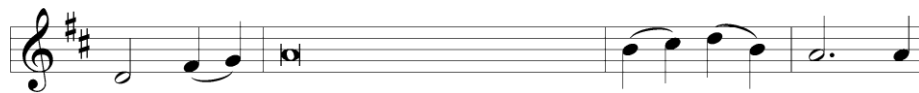


The lamb and li - on side by side, Led by a lit - tle child!
A Prince of Peace in Beth-le - hem: The fruit of God's de - sign.
That by His death a dy - ing world Would ral - ly to the cross.
Lead past the an - gel's flam - ing sword—Come, o - pen heav - en's door.

Standing

NUNC DIMITTIS ~ Song of Simeon

Luke 2:29-32



Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -



cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,



which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,



a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy



peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and



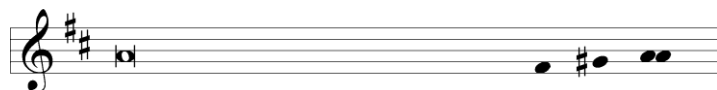
to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,



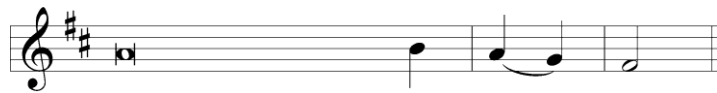
is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

THANKSGIVING

Psalm 107:1



A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

SALUTATION AND BENEDICAMUS

2 Timothy 4:22, Psalm 103:1



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



A Bless we the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make
His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.
G A-men, a-men, a - men.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Lutheran Service Book 352

“Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”

1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has tru - ly
2 What the Fa - thers most de - sired, What the proph - ets'
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
4 As Your com - ing was in peace, Qui - et, full of
kept His word And at last to us did send
heart in - spired, What they longed for man - y a year,
Ja - cob's Lord— Him of two - fold race be - hold—
gen - tle - ness, Let the same mind dwell in me
Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
Stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
Tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
Which is Yours e - ter - nal - ly.

**5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith,
Safely kept through life and death.**

**6 Then when You will come again
As the glorious king to reign,
I with joy will see Your face,
Freely ransomed by Your grace.**

POSTLUDE

O Bride of Christ, Rejoice

Victor O. Petersen



SERVING IN OUR WORSHIP

Presiding Minister

The Rev. David V. Miller, *Pastor*

Altar Assistant(s)

Jason Schoellen, *Elder*

Emilie Schoellen, *Acolyte*

Jude Miller, *Gospel Bearer*

Organist

Laura Darden, *Director of Music*

Cantor

Bri Darden

Altar Guild

Linda Rathje/Kati & Hank Durden

Usher(s)

Tom Lawton/Trevor Dunkel

Fellowship Host(s)

The Kalugendo family

SERVING NEXT WEEK

Presiding Minister

The Rev. Al Oren, *Guest Pastor*

Altar Assistant(s)

Jason Schoellen, *Elder*

Emilie Schoellen, *Acolyte*

Organist

Laura Darden, *Director of Music*

Cantor

Adrian Popescu

Altar Guild

Whitney Worthington/Kati & Hank Durden

Usher(s)

Greg Ison/Brian Beckman

Fellowship Host(s)

TBD

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OVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL,
AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. THIS IS THE GREATEST AND MOST IMPORTANT
COMMANDMENT. THE SECOND IS LIKE IT: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS
YOURSELF.”

-JESUS CHRIST (MT. 22:37-39)

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sunday 12/22	Fourth Sunday in Advent (Rorate Coeli) Nursery available Children's Sunday School Adult Bible Study: <i>The History of the Kingdom of Israel</i> Holy Mass Fellowship Hour	8:30 – 11:30 AM 9:00 – 9:45 AM 9:00 – 9:45 AM 10:00 AM Following Holy Mass
Monday 12/23	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	Closed Closed
Tuesday 12/24	The Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord Open Arms LCDC Church Office Christmas Eve Mass	Closed Closed 7:00 PM
Wednesday 12/25	The Nativity of Our Lord Open Arms LCDC Church Office Christmas Day Mass	Closed Closed 10:00 AM
Thursday 12/26	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	Closed Closed
Friday 12/27	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	Closed Closed
Saturday 12/28	Open Arms LCDC Church Office	Closed Closed
Sunday 12/29	First Sunday after Christmas Nursery available Holy Mass Fellowship Hour	9:30 – 11:30 AM 10:00 AM Following Holy Mass

LOVING THE LORD

✝ **CANCELLED: Due to the Christmas and New Year's holidays, there will be no Sunday school or Bible study December 29 and January 5.**

✝ **Adult Bible Study: *The History of the Kingdom of Israel***

Sundays at 9:00 A.M.

Church fellowship hall

A barren woman's miraculous pregnancy. God passed over for a human king. The wicked sons of a righteous prophet. A king's crimes of murder and adultery. A son's coup against his father's throne. A prophet's persecution. The Word of God lost and found again. These are just a handful of what you will encounter in this provocative Bible study covering the history of the kingdom of Israel. We began with 1 and 2 Samuel, now we will pick up with 1 Kings, as we continue the turbulent history of God's people and their Lord's unwavering faithfulness.

✝ **Small Group Bible Study: *The Books of the Church***

Sunday January 26 at 3:30 P.M.: Judith; Wisdom of Solomon; Tobit

Sunday February 23 at 3:30 P.M.: Ecclesiasticus (Sirach); Baruch; The Letter of Jeremiah

Sunday March 23 at 3:30 P.M.: 1 & 2 Maccabees

Pastor Miller's home (see church directory for address)

God has blessed us with His inspired Word in the canon of Holy Scripture. From Genesis to Revelation, God has given us everything we need to establish the doctrine of His Church. Nevertheless, there are ecclesiastical texts that, while not inspired by the Holy Spirit, are still helpful in recording the history of God's people and clarifying biblical contexts. Even Martin Luther retained many of these texts in his German translation of the Bible. Lutherans since have also included them in their daily lectionary. And the Jews in Jesus' day made frequent use of them in their Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament).

This might explain why the Bible itself makes references to them. For example, when Jesus calls Himself "the Light of the world" (John 8:12), it's in the context of Hanukkah which originated in 1 Maccabees. And the author of Hebrews refers to Tobit when he says, "some have entertained angels unawares" (13:2), and 2 Maccabees when Hebrews says, "women received back their dead, raised to life again" (11:35). Because these texts have been judged as worthwhile reading in the Church, yet not to detract from God's inspired Word in Sunday Adult Bible Class, we would like to begin a supplemental Small Group Bible Study.

Concordia Publishing House (LCMS) has compiled *The Apocrypha: The Lutheran Edition with Notes*. It is available for purchase at \$44.99 through its website (cph.org). This is a nice companion volume to your *Lutheran Study Bible*. However, a bare bones version of the texts is also available at no cost online via apocrypha.org.

✝ Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve Mass with Carols by Candlelight: Tuesday, 12/24 at 7:00 P.M.

Christmas Day Mass: Wednesday, 12/25 at 10:00 A.M.

✝ Sermons on YouTube

Missed a sermon? Had to walk out halfway through? Want to hear it again? No problem! Most sermons are now being recorded and posted to an official YouTube channel for you to watch at your leisure. Simply type in <https://www.youtube.com/@lcaatlanta> and you will be directed to the YouTube page where you have access to Pastor Miller's sermons online. Sermons are posted in the order of the date they were preached.

✝ *Looking Forward to Sunday Emails*

For a few months now, you've been receiving an email called *Looking Forward to Sunday*. Have you wondered why you're getting it or what to do with it? We want you to get the most out of worship each Sunday, and one way you can do that is by pre-reading the lessons and glancing at the hymns. Some of you I know like to get familiar with the hymns by cracking open your home hymnals and singing through a stanza on your own or with your family. If you don't have a home hymnal, by the way, let me know and we'll fix that. Hearing the readings and hymns more than once really helps it to sink in, and it's one way you can come prepared for worship. At the end of each email, there's also a list of that weekend's events so you won't miss anything. So keep an eye out each week for this email and make sure you open it!

LOVING OUR NEIGHBOR

✝ Congregational Potluck: Soup Fest!

Sunday January 26, following Mass

"Baby, it's cold outside"! So, let's all warm up with some hot delicious soups. Members of the congregation are invited to make their favorite recipes to share with the Ascension family. It's always fun to try new things, and we hope to have plenty of new ones to go around. Crockpots are recommended to keep your soup warm. Also, breads and salads are welcome, because frankly who doesn't love a good combination of soup and salad for lunch? Drinks will be provided. In advance, we thank attendees with last names that begin with the letter A-L for staying to help clean up afterward. Join us for our first Soup Fest!

✝ **Book Club: *Travels with Charley***

Sunday TBD at 3:30 P.M.

Tom & Linda's Home (see church directory)

Read *Travels with Charley* by John Steinbeck (author of *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Of Mice and Men*) to discuss with the Book Club. New attendees are always welcome!

Here's what some people are saying about *Travels with Charley*:

An intimate journey across America, as told by one of its most beloved writers

To hear the speech of the real America, to smell the grass and the trees, to see the colors and the light—these were John Steinbeck's goals as he set out, at the age of fifty-eight, to rediscover the country he had been writing about for so many years.

With Charley, his French poodle, Steinbeck drives the interstates and the country roads, dines with truckers, encounters bears at Yellowstone and old friends in San Francisco. Along the way he reflects on the American character, racial hostility, the particular form of American loneliness he finds almost everywhere, and the unexpected kindness of strangers.

✝ **Letter from Charles Schnell (former member and current seminarian)**

Dear Lutheran Church of the Ascension,

Grace and peace to you in Christ Jesus our Lord!

I just finished my first week of classes of the winter quarter. Seminary is a wonderful place to be. I am growing spiritually and learning much about Christianity, our history, and our Lutheran confession. It is an honor to be here preparing to serve our Lord Jesus as a pastor in His Church.

This semester I am learning Hebrew (!) and am also taking classes in liturgy, teaching the catechism, and on the Augsburg Confession. It's a very busy life, but it is where I am called to be.

Thank you once again for supporting my education and living expenses here. Your help makes this possible and is a great blessing in my life. I look forward to seeing you all again for Grayson's wedding!

*In nomine Jesu,
Charles*

LIFTING HOLY HANDS

Celebrations

Birthdays:

- + Hank Durden, 12/22
- + Jason Schoellen, 12/22
- + Lauren Morr, 12/27

Rebirthdays (Baptismal Anniversaries):

- + Jill Drachenberg, 12/27
- + Lucie Woolery, 12/27

Wedding Anniversaries:

- + None this week

Membership Anniversaries:

- + Joan Bentley, 12/27

Recent Requests

For comfort, health, and recovery:

- + Bill Bigelow (brother of Anne Bigelow)
- + Dee Keiger (sister of Eileen Buehl)
- + Michelle Levell (mother of Grayson Beckman's fiancée)
- + Hellen Kalugendo
- + Betty & Donald Licht
- + Michelle Noel
- + Rachel Preus (friend of Jeni Miller)
- + Ed & Jackie Sherwood (grandmother of Bekah Beckman)
- + Evan Woolery (son of Tracy and Lucie Woolery)

For those requesting special prayers:

- + The health and wellbeing of all the unborn, especially the child of Isaac & Bekah Beckman.
- + Faith Lutheran Church and School in Marietta, that God would provide them with a faithful pastor and principal.
- + Family and friends of Booker T. Campbell (husband of Eunice Campbell), that the grieving be comforted by the Gospel.

Ongoing Requests

For family and friends of the congregation:

- + David Abee (brother of Nancy Grossberg)
- + Will Edinger (friend of the Beckmans)
- + Zachary Harmon (grandson of Steve and Patty Harmon, friends of Ascension)
- + Ruth Henry
- + Heidi Schnakenberg (niece of Clara Smith)
- + Charles Schnell (former member), for his formation as a pastor.

For the leaders of Church and state:

- + Director Barbara Collins-Hopkins & Open Arms Board
- + English District Bishop Jeffrey G. Miskus & 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 Joseph Biden & all U.S. government officials

JOHN SAYS, “REPENT, BOTH OF YOU. YOU FALSE PENITENTS AND FALSE SAINTS, BOTH OF YOU NEED THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. NEITHER OF YOU KNOW WHAT SIN REALLY IS. MUCH LESS YOUR DUTY TO REPENT OF IT AND SHUN IT. FOR NO ONE OF YOU IS GOOD. YOU ARE FULL OF UNBELIEF, STUPIDITY, AND IGNORANCE OF GOD AND GOD’S WILL. BUT HE IS PRESENT HERE, OF WHOSE ‘FULNESS WE HAVE ALL RECEIVED, GRACE UPON GRACE’” [JOHN 1:16]. WITHOUT HIM, NO ONE CAN BE RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD. THEREFORE, IF YOU WANT TO REPENT, REPENT RIGHTLY. YOUR WORKS OF PENANCE WILL ACCOMPLISH NOTHING. AS FOR YOU HYPOCRITES, WHO DO NOT NEED REPENTANCE, YOU SERPENTS’ BROOD, WHO HAS ASSURED YOU THAT YOU WILL ESCAPE THE WRATH TO COME AND OTHER JUDGMENTS?” [MATTHEW 3:7; LUKE 3:7].

-SMALCALD ARTICLES. PART III, ARTICLE III. REPENTANCE, 276



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