

The Festival of the INCARNATION OF OUR LORD

GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Kearney, Nebraska Sunday, December 25, 2016

WELCOME TO GOOD SHEPHERD!

We are so happy you could join us today! If you're interested in membership, or just want to talk about our congregation, please don't hesitate to speak to an usher or Pastor Seelow.

For your convenience, **Listening Devices** are available for those who need assistance in hearing the service and a **Large-Print** version of the service is available for those who need assistance in seeing the service. Please speak with an usher if you need either one. A **Nursery** is also available and is equipped with a speaker so that a minimal amount of the service is missed. The nursery is located in the hallway just off the entryway (first door on left).

THE FESTIVAL OF THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD

With the glory of the Lord still shining from Luke 2, we assemble once again to celebrate with joy the Word made flesh. The mystery of the incarnation is beyond us. Yet we are blessed to participate in him who is born the Bread of Life in the House of Bread. How beautiful is the good news! How radiant his glory! How perfect his timing! How gracious is the Father to give us his son for us and for our salvation!

OUR COMMUNION PRACTICE

As Christians who believe that the Bible is inspired by God and that every word written in it is God's holy word, we believe that we receive the body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine. While this is something that goes beyond our human understanding, our faith allows us to accept this as true. God warns us in the Bible that anyone who doesn't understand this teaching or who denies this real presence of Christ's body and blood will do damage to his or her soul if not properly taught first (I Corinthians II:27-29).

As a congregation we care about people and about the spiritual well-being of individuals, especially those attending the Lord's Table today. If you are a guest and desire to commune, please speak to the pastor before the service. Our altar is open to those who confess oneness with us in doctrine, are not under church discipline in another congregation, and are members of our congregation, one

of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod [WELS], or a member of our sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod [ELS].

THE ADVENTWREATH



The traditional Advent Wreath is a combination of two very common symbols: light and the fir tree. From the early centuries of Christianity, it has been the practice to represent Christ by a burning candle. The fir tree also has a long history of religious use, and no doubt the idea of an Advent Wreath was inspired by the fir tree.

It seems that the Advent Wreath originated a few hundred years ago among the Lutherans of eastern Germany. A wreath of evergreens, made in various sizes, was either suspended from the ceiling or placed on a table. Four candles representing the four Sundays of Advent were fastened to the wreath. Eventually, the use of the Advent Wreath became widespread and moved from the home into the church. The general symbolism of the Advent Wreath lies in the growing light of the wreath, increasing each week as we approach the birthday of Jesus, the Light of the world.

Today, the entire wreath is lit—including the Christ Candle. The Christ Candle is white to remind us that the Christ-child is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins. His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth! "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Presiding Minister	Pr. Nathanael P. Seelow
Organist	Michelle Reinsch
Trumpet	Logan Hansen

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

All liturgical songs and text in this worship service is used by permission under One-License #A-716958.

 $\it Divine Service II © 2008$ Northwestern Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Psalm tune: Kermit Moldenhauer © 2006 Northwestern Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Unless noted, all Scripture is from the *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version [ESV]. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

Prayer of the Church for Christmas Day from Let Us Pray © 2016 Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. All rights reserved. Used by permission. lcms.org/letuspray

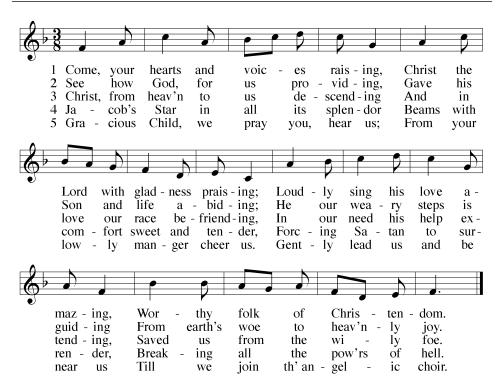
Seasonal Proper Preface from *Lutheran Service Book: Altar Book* © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Cover and Introduction (p. 3) artwork by Ed Riojas © 2012 Higher Things, Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Service artwork by Steve Erspamer. © 1992 Archdiocese of Chicago. All Rights Reserved.

THE DIVINE SERVICE

OPENING HYMN & Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising





The sign of the cross #
may be made throughout
the service by
worshippers in
remembrance of their
baptism.

"In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross and say, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

> — Small Catechism Daily Prayers

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76, abr.; tr. *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941. Tune: OUEM PASTORES (88 87) *Ein Schlesich singebüchlein*, Breslau, 1555.

INVOCATION

Matthew 28:19

Please stand.

M In the name of the Father and of the

■ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

- M But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, Galatians 4:4-5 born of woman, born under the law,
- to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
- For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government Isaiah 9:6 shall be upon his shoulder,
- and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- M In this the love of God was made manifest among us, 1 John 4:9
- that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

CONFESSION OF SINS

M Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

Silence for meditation on God's Word and for self-examination as you consider your thoughts, words, and actions according to the Ten Commandments.

- M Lord of Life,
- I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.

For faithless worrying and selfish pride, For sins of habit and sins of choice, For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,

You should cast me away from your presence forever. O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus sake.

- M In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son ₱ and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

It is only through the forgiveness of sins that we enter into the life of heaven. To confess our sins is to speak the truth about our lives. God seeks that truth in the heart and on the lips. To confess our sin is to say "Amen" to God's just verdict that we have sinned against Him and so deserve only death and hell (1 John 1:8-10). The truth of our sinfulness is answered by the truth of God's forgiveness for the sake of the suffering and death of His Son. From the lips of man "called and ordained" as a servant of the Word, we hear God Himself speaking absolution, that is, the forgiveness of sins. To that forgiveness faith says, "Amen," that is, "Truth." Amen is the great word of worship; it indicates that the gift has been received.

"Kyrie eleison" is a Greek phrase meaning "Lord, have mercy." In the Kyrie we come before the King of mercy with the prayer that was on the lips of Blind Bartimaeus, whom Jesus healed. We approach our merciful Savior and King as citizens of heaven, seeking His mercy for our salvation, the peace of the whole world, the wellbeing of His church, our worship, and our everlasting defense.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. M

> For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

- \mathbf{C} Lord, have mercy.
- M For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.
- C Christ, have mercy.
- M For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.
- \mathbf{C} Lord, have mercy.
- M Lord of Life, live in us that we may live for you.
- \mathbf{C} Amen.



- In anticipation of the birth of Christ, the church has omitted the Gloria in Excelsis during the season of Advent. Today, on Christmas Day, we sing with the angels once again, and praise his holy name:
 - Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful, all you nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies; With th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

- 2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord, Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th' incarnate Deity! Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! Refrain
- 3 Hail, the heav'nly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with healing in his wings. Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die, Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us second birth. Refrain

This Collect, which dates back to the 8th century A.D., beautifully collects a very concise and complete doctrinal statement of the Incarnation of the Son and the goal set before him.

The description of the Lord's birth as "new" may seem odd, but it is exactly right. The birth of the only-begotten Son of God in the flesh is active here and now, and is therefore ever new to us and for us. The Christmas mystery is not something old and getting older, receding further into the distant past with each passing year. It is a gift that is to be received as a new and fresh grace in our lives and in the world.

M The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY & Collect

M Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

¥ Be seated.

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

FIRSTLESSON & Micab 5:2-5a



UT YOU, O BETHLEHEM EPHRATHAH, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come the one to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from ancient times, from eternity."

Therefore he will surrender them until the time she who is in labor gives birth to a child.
Then the remainder of his brothers will return to the children of Israel.

⁴ He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

They will dwell securely,

for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth.

The Lord never promised his Old Testament people that they would not endure hardship or suffering. But he did promise a ruler from the house of David who would bring lasting peace and security. The Lord has not promised us victory over all our earthly enemies, but he has given us the victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil through Jesus, the Son of David, both at Bethlehem in "the fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4).

- ⁵ This one will be their peace.
- M The Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God!

PSALM & Psalm 98

The Pastor will sing the refrain. The congregation is invited to sing the verses of the Psalm.







- M Refrain
- Sing to the LORD a | new song, for he has done mar- | velous things.

The LORD has made his sal- | vation known and revealed his righteousness to the | nations.

He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of | Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation | of our God.

M Refrain

Following each lesson, the Pastor announces, "The Word of the Lord." We know from Scripture that God comes to us through the Means of Grace, that is the Gospel that is found in the Word and the Sacrament. So, within the service God has come to us convicting us in our sin through the Law, and pronouncing forgiveness through the life-giving Gospel. The congregation —in response to such love —praises the Lord in reply: "Thanks be to God!"

The defeats of life are discouraging. Thanks be to God that he is victorious for us! Sin and death are conquered. Satan's bead is crushed. Eternally we are God's children. All creation is waiting for that final day of redemption. For the Lord's victory is only begun in the manger. It is finished in an empty tomb on Easter morning.



Shout for joy to the LORD, | all the earth, burst into jubilant song with | music;

make music to the LORD | with the harp, with the harp and the sound of | singing.

Shout for joy before the | LORD, the King. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with | equity.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son and to the Holy | Spirit, as it was in the be- | ginning, is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

M Refrain

SECOND LESSON Galatians 4:4-7



UT WHEN THE SET TIME HAD FULLY COME, GOD sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, 5 in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons. 6 And because

you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to shout, "Abba, Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, then you are also an heir of God through Christ.

- M The Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God!

The Incarnation of God meant that children of wrath could become the sons of God, and Pentecost proves our adoption as sons. The Spirit that cries, "Abba, Father," also testifies to our freedom from sin and our new status as heirs of

Worshippers may choose to bow during the first

two lines of the Gloria Patri (italics, Latin for

"Glory be to the Father). This action shows honor

and glory in physical

God's care for his sons

language of Greek, the peace of the Roman Empire, the ability to travel, the dispersion of

the Jews throughout the world—all these served to help the message of

Jesus spread. But even more, the time was right

for God to fulfill every

commissioned his own

himself to law so that everyone under sin's curse

might be bought back.

God's kingdom.

Son to become the Godman who subjected

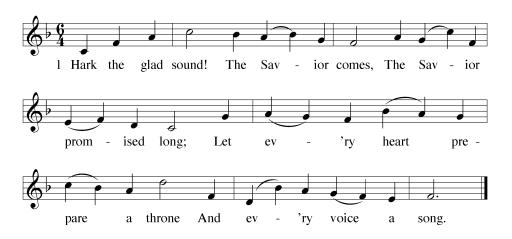
prophetic promise to care for his children. He

meant preparing the world for the coming of Christ. The common

form as we give our Triune God glory with

our lips.

Please stand.



THE HOLY GOSPEL & John 1:1-18

M The Holy Gospel appointed for the Festival of the Incarnation of our Lord according to St. John, chapter one.

C Praise be to you, O Lord!



N THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has

been made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵ The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

- ⁶ There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.
- 9 The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world.

 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the

Who is it that we receive in the manger of our heart this day? Not just a cute and cuddly baby! No, that lowliness of form is designed to make it possible for us to receive Light brighter than the sun, the Creator of all that is, the Eternal God, the Child who makes us God's children. As the manger and the Virgin's arms held him whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, so we too recognize and receive him who has come in human flesh and blood to dwell in us through the Word and sacrament. It is in the Word and sacrament that we recognize him and receive him, the One who receives us.

world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³ They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.



¹⁴ The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.") ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

- M The Gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise be to you, O Christ!

CONFESSION OF FAITH The Second Article and Luther's Explanation

- M We confess our Christian faith:
- I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
- M What does this mean?
- I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil,

Having heard the Word of God, we confess our faith in His name. The creed is our saying back to God what He has first said to us. In the Creed we acclaim the truth of the triune God and His work of salvation accomplished for us in His incarnate Son, Jesus Christ.

not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

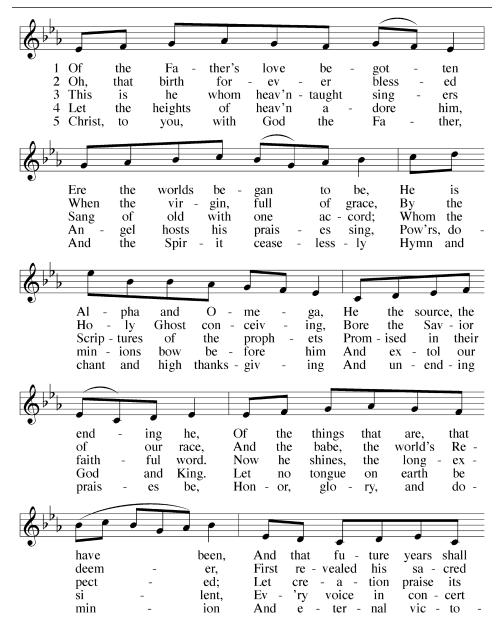
This is most certainly true.

¥ Be seated.



HYMN OF THE DAY Of the Father's Love Begotten

This hymn was originally written in Latin ("Corde natus ex parentis," literally, "Of the Parent's Heart Begotten). It was written by Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, a 5th & 6th century Spanish lawyer who wrote poetry in his retirement. In this hymn, he gathers the whole sweep of the Christmas proclamation in its impressive power.





Text: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348-c. 413, abr.; tr. John M. Neale, 1818-66, st. 1-4, alt.; Henry W. Baker,

1821–77, st. 5, alt.

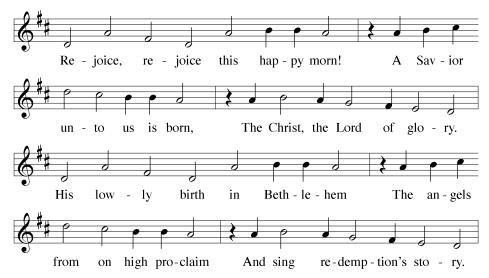
Tune: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM (87 87 877) Plainsong melody, 13th century.

SERMON Sohn 1:14, 16-18

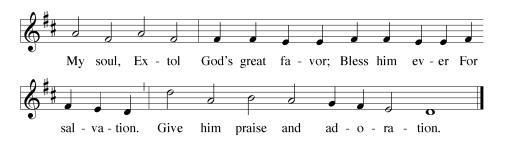
Please stand.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ ... ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

After the reading of the sermon text, the congregation joins to sing:



In Scandinavian
Lutheran circles, it is
customary in the service
on Christmas Day, after
the Pastor has delivered
the introduction to the
sermon, for the
congregation to rise and
sing this bymn. Following
the singing of the hymn,
the congregation is seated,
and the Pastor proceeds
with the preaching of the
sermon.

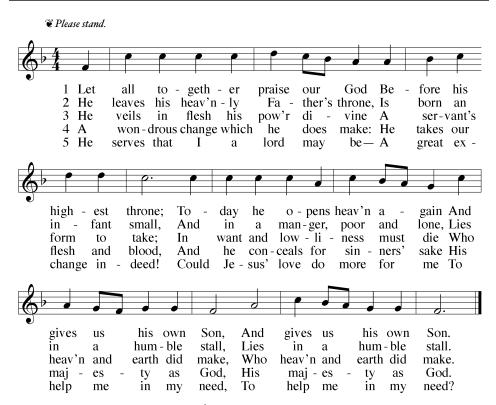


Text: Birgitte K. Boye, 1742–1824; tr. Carl Döving, 1867–1937.
Tune: WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET (887 887 22 44 48) Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608, alt.

¥ Be seated.

Grace Upon Grace

HYMN OF PRAISE Let All Together Praise Our God



6 For us he opens wide the door
Of paradise today.
The angel guards the gate no more;
To God our thanks we pay,
To God our thanks we pay.

Text: Nikolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561, abr.; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt. Tune: Lobt Gott, ihr Christen (86 866) Nikolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561.

₩ Be seated.

OFFERING

Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to give an offering.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Please stand.

- M On this festal day as we celebrate the incarnation of our Lord, Jesus Christ, let us now lift up holy hands in prayer for the Church and the world.
 - Brief silence.
- M Lord God, heavenly Father, as You have caused Your eternal light to dawn on our darkness in the incarnation of Your only begotten Son, cause His glory to shine on us in the grace and truth of His Word, so that we may receive Him with joy and believe on His name. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.
- As You have given us new birth as Your children in Holy Baptism, keep far from us the error that we could in any way come to You by our own works or will. Fix our eyes on the descent of Your Son into our flesh to save us, so that we might hold fast to the truth that He alone could restore us to You. Lord, in Your mercy,
- **C** hear our prayer.
- M Be near to all those who suffer persecution for the sake of Your Son. As the darkness seeks to quench His light in them, sustain them in the truth that as

God's Word is always primary in worship. We speak only as we are spoken to. Gathered in Jesus' name, we bring the petitions and thanksgivings before Him that grow out of His Word. This prayer is called the Prayer of the Church for in it the royal priesthood of all believers does its priestly work of making "requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving" for all people, "for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."

deep and oppressive as the night may grow, it cannot overcome Him. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

M Send forth men to publish Your peace and bring us Your good news of happiness. Keep them faithful in declaring Your gracious reign in Christ. Bless the work of our missionaries at home and abroad, that all the ends of the earth may see Your salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

As Your Son upholds the universe by the word of His power, grant our nation to walk in humility before You. Bless all our soldiers this day who stand watch in foreign lands. Keep them in safety as they serve us, and uphold their families while they are apart. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

M Look in mercy on the destitute of the world. Overcome every form of selfishness that leaves so many without the necessities of life. Open Your hand through us, that their desires might be satisfied and their sorrow turned to joy. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Your Son took up our flesh that He might heal and restore it, according to Your good purposes; let His healing hand be upon all the sick and those who suffer in our midst [especially...]. Comfort those who grieve this day with the truth that the Babe of Bethlehem was born that the dead might live. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

M As the great love that laid Your Son in a manger lays His flesh and blood down before us in bread and wine, grant us grace to bow our hearts before Him with all those in heaven and on earth who adore Him, that we might receive His forgiveness and life with repentant joy. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

M Joining in heaven's eternal praise for the revelation of Your love in Your Word made flesh, we boldly lay all our petitions before You, dear Father, trusting that

You will hear us for His sake, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

M The Lord be with you.

Ruth 2:4; 2 Timothy 4:22

C And also with you.

M Lift up your hearts.

Lamentations 3:41

- **C** We lift them up to the Lord.
- M Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Psalm 136

C It is good and right so to do.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and 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 all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY & Sanctus

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9



The Sanctus brings together the song of heaven's angels in adoration of the holy Three in One and the acclamations of Palm Sunday: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

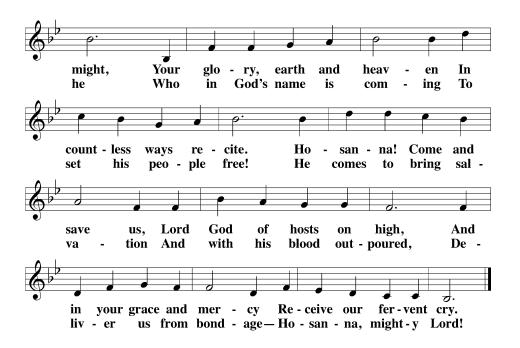
Drawn toward the gifts of Jesus' body and

thanksgiving and praise

blood, our hearts are lifted up in

as we anticipate the reception of the gifts

that carry with them our redemption.



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

M

Holy Father, in the beginning, you spoke and created light. But we loved the darkness of sin and unbelief. When the time had fully come, you sent your Son to be a light for those walking in darkness and in the shadow of death.

We praise you and give you thanks that Jesus, the eternal Word, became flesh and made his dwelling among us; that born of a woman, born under law, he lived without sin as our substitute; that as the Lamb of God, he suffered and died to take away the sin of the world; that he rose from death and lives forever to proclaim peace to all.

As the shepherds came to the manger, we now approach your altar with reverent joy. Here we find our Savior, Christ the Lord, who gives us his body and blood for forgiveness and peace. Through this meal, bring us life and light.

Now hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

In this Prayer of Thanksgiving we give thanks to the Lord of the redemption that He has secured for us by His taking on flesh and the cross; we ask Him to prepare us to receive that redemption in living and joyful faith. The Pater Noster ("Our Father"), the prayer that Fesus taught His disciples to pray, is then "table prayer" with which we come to the Lord's Table.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver

us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

Worshippers may make the sign of the cross in the seventh petition as they pray to be "delivered from evil." This action serves as a remembrance of baptism and its connection to Christ's death on the cross, the means by which God has delivered us all from evil and why we pray that he will "grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to himself in heaven."

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & Verba

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The words of our Lord in the Words of Institution bestow exactly what they say. In the words of consecration the Lord's Word delivers His body and blood for our forgiveness. Though we are blessed with many good foods throughout the week, no other meal gives the body and blood of Christ to sinners.

THE PEACE OF THE LORD A Pax Domini

John 20:19

M The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

"The peace of the Lord..." The resurrected Lord calmed the fears of his disciples with his peace. The resurrected Lord is present in the Supper, and so the pastor speaks to us on his behalf.

With the words of John the Baptist, the Agnus **Dei** confesses the mercy and peace that we receive from the Lamb of God in His Supper. We come to the Lord's Table hungry and thirsty, and He feeds us with His body and refreshes us with His blood. It is the Lord's Supper. As Luther reminds us, "Our Lord is at one and the same time chef, cook, butler, host, and food."



¥ Be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

Those who will be receiving Holy Communion today may wish to read **Personal Preparation for Holy Communion**, found on page 156 in the front section of the hymnal. This page helps us put into practice what the Bible encourages: "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:28) **Prayer suggestions for before and after receiving the Lord's Supper** can be found in the hymnal on pages 10-11 and 134-139.

Good Shepherd confesses and practices the Biblical teaching of a Closed Communion. We ask that only members of the Wisconsin Synod [WELS] or the Evangelical Lutheran Synod [ELS] join us at the Lord's Table. If you have questions concerning our communion practice, or would like to inquire about how you, too, can commune with us, please speak with the Pastor following the service.

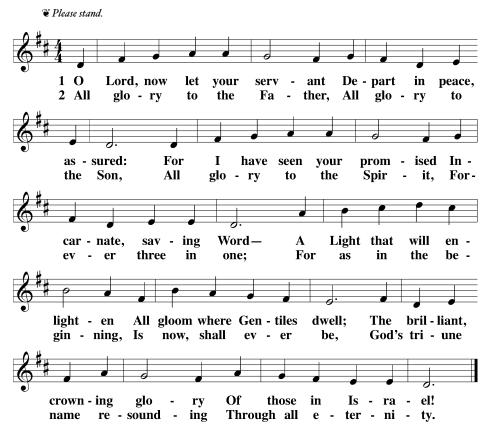
In dismissing the communicants, the minister says:

M

Now, may this true body and blood strengthen and keep you in the true faith to life everlasting. Your sins # are forgiven. Go in peace. Amen.

SONG OF SIMEON & Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29-32



Having received the Lord's body and blood for our salvation, like Simeon who held in his arms the Savior of the world, we go in peace and joy, singing Simeon's song.

If they wish,

communicants may make the sign of the cross as the

following their reception of the Supper. This sign is a reminder of Christ's death, a necessary element

for this Meal. It is made on one's body to remind the communicant that

this death is "for you."

pastor blesses them

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

M

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this Holy Supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our

Before we leave the Lord's Table, we give thanks, asking that the salutary gift of Jesus' body and blood would have its way in our lives, strengthening us in faith toward God and fervent love toward one another. The Sacrament draws us outside of ourselves to live in Christ by faith and in the neighbor by love.

Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The name of the Lord is the beginning and the end of the Divine Service. We are now marked with the

Lord's name in the Blessing—that word of God from Numbers 6 in which He favors us with His grace and peace. With the Lord's name given us in Holy Baptism, we were drawn together. Now, with that same name, He sends us back into the world, to the places of our various callings, to live by the mercy we have received as living sacrifices to the praise of His glory and the good of our neighbor.

C Amen.

BLESSING

Numbers 6:22-27

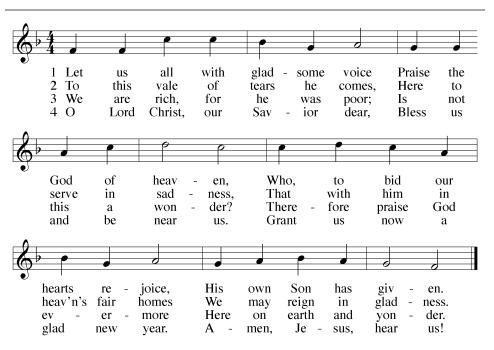
M The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The LORD look on you with favor and ₱ give you peace.

- C Amen.
 - ₩ Be seated.

CLOSING HYMN & Let Us All With Gladsome Voice



Text: Ander Theil Des Dressdenischen GesangBuchs, Dresden, 1632; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt. Tune: LASST UNS ALLE (76 76 Trochaic) Ander Theil Des Dressdenischen GesangBuchs, Dresden, 1632, alt.