



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

+ The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord +

THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

+ December 25, 2024 +

*“The People Who Walked in Darkness
Have Seen a Great Light”*



We welcome our members and guests to Christ Lutheran today,
and pray God’s richest blessings upon you during this time of worship!

*All members and our guests are asked to complete the
worship attendance pads which can be found on each pew.
Guests are also asked to sign the guest register found in the Narthex.
We are so glad to have you worshipping with us today!*

*LARGE PRINT worship folders are available
at the usher stand at the back of the nave.*

WELCOME:

“Take courage, you who were lost: Jesus comes to seek and save that which is lost. Ye sick, return to health: Christ comes to heal the contrite of heart with the balm of his mercy. Rejoice, all you who desire great things: the Son of God comes down to you that he may make you the co-heirs of his kingdom.”

–St. Bernard of Clairvaux

THE LORD'S SUPPER

In preparation for reception of the Lord's Supper (*Holy Communion*), it is important that we review and understand what the Bible teaches regarding this sacrament:

The Bible teaches that Jesus gives us His very body and blood along with bread and wine in Holy Communion¹, and that these are means by which He forgives our sins², and strengthens us for daily living, and draws us into closer fellowship with Him and other believers. The Bible also teaches us to examine ourselves prior to receiving the meal³. For those receiving Holy Communion, examine yourself with these questions:

Do I believe that I am a sinner and I am sorry for my sins?

Do I believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and my personal Savior?

Do I believe that Christ's true body and blood are present in this holy meal for my forgiveness?

Do I truly intend with the help of God to correct my sinful life?

According to Christ's Word in the Holy Scriptures, and in confession with the true Christian faith, at Christ Lutheran we observe the practice of closed communion. We believe that all who commune must confess the same holy faith, as Holy Scripture teaches. Since one's church affiliation indicates an individual's confession of faith, we ask that only those who have been instructed in the above teaching **and** are confirmed members of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod commune. If you have not been instructed in this teaching on Holy Communion, are in doubt, or hold a different confession of faith⁴, you are still welcome to come forward and cross your arms to indicate that you would like a blessing.

¹ Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23

² Matthew 26:28; 1 John 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19

³ 1 Corinthians 11:28-32

⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 11:26

DIVINE SERVICE I

PRESERVICE MUSIC

The congregation may use this time for prayer and meditation.

OPENING HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

#379

CONFESSION & 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.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

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

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

PSALM: CANTATE DOMINO

Psalm 96; Ant. Psalm 96 :2



Sing to the Lord, | bless his name;*
tell of his salvation from | day to day.

**Oh sing to the Lord a | new song;*
sing to the Lord, | all the earth!**

**Sing to the Lord, | bless his name;*
tell of his salvation from | day to day.**

Declare his glory among the | nations,*
his marvelous works among all the | peoples!
For great is the Lord, and greatly | to be praised;*
he is to be feared a- | bove all gods.

**For all the gods of the peoples are worthless | idols,*
but the Lord made the | heavens.**

**Splendor and majesty are be- | fore him;*
strength and beauty are in his sanctu- | ary.**

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the | peoples,*
ascribe to the Lord glo- | ry and strength!
Ascribe to the Lord the glory | due his name;*
bring an offering, and come in- | to his courts!

**Worship the Lord in the splendor of | holiness;*
tremble before him, | all the earth!**

**Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall
nev- | er be moved;*
he will judge the peoples with | equity."**

Let the heavens be glad, and let the | earth rejoice;*
let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and every- | thing in it!

**Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord, | for he
comes,***

**for he comes to | judge the earth.
He will judge the world in | righteousness,*
and the peoples in his | faithfulness.**

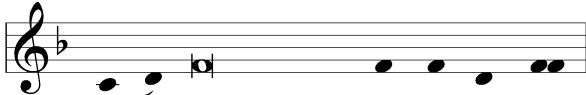
**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;**

as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.


Sing to the Lord, | bless his name;*
tell of his salvation from | day to day.

KYRIE

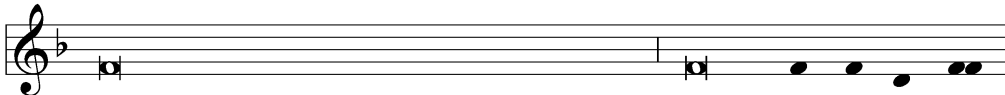
Mark 10:47




A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



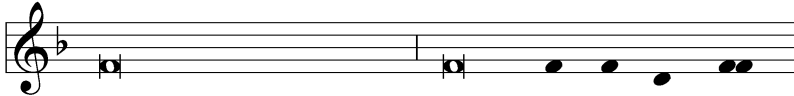
A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



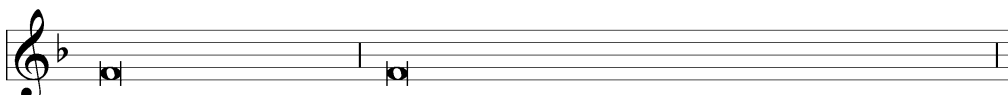
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



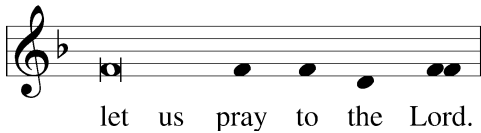
and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



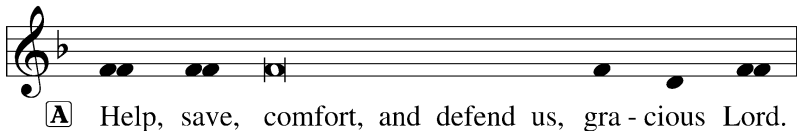
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

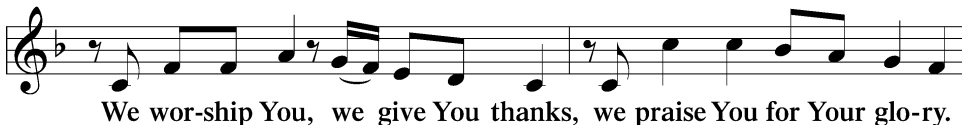
Luke 2:14, John 1:29



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His peo - ple on earth.



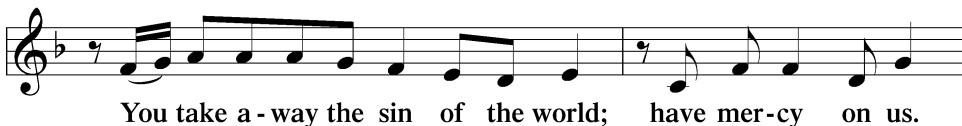
C Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa - ther:



We wor-ship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer.



For You a-lone are the Ho-ly One, You a-lone are the Lord,



You a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY



P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

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



C A - men.

Please be seated

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.
You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL

Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1



To us a child is born, to us a son is | given;*
and the government shall be upon his | shoulder.
And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, | Mighty God,*
Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.
Sing to the Lord a | new song,*
for he has done | marvelous things!

EPISTLE

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL PROCESSION

Just as the Word of God came to dwell among us in His Incarnation, so we see in the Gospel Procession that the Word descends from the chancel to dwell among us. In reverence, we turn to face the crucifix as it passes, and you may bow and make the sign of the cross.



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Cantor:

Luke 2:11

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a / Savior,
who is / Christ the Lord.*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-14

P The Holy ✠ Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.



C Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise to You, O Christ.

Please be seated

OFFICE HYMN

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

#380

SERMON

The Descent of the Most High

Please stand

NICENE CREED

☩ I believe in one God, (Rom 10:10; Deut 6:4)
the Father Almighty, (Mt 6:9; Ex 6:3)
maker of heaven and earth (Gen 1:1; Jn 1:1)
and of all things visible and invisible. (Col 1:16)
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, (Rom 10:9)
the only-begotten Son of God, (Jn 3:16; Mt 16:16)
begotten of His Father before all worlds, (Jn 1:2)
God of God, Light of Light, (Jn 17:22; Jn 8:12; Jn 1:1)
very God of very God, (Col 2:9) **begotten, not made,** (Jn 1:2)
being of one substance with the Father, (Jn 10:30)
by whom all things were made; (Heb 1:2; Jn 1:3)
who for us men and for our salvation (1 Tim 2:4; Rom 3:23)
came down from heaven (Jn 6:41; Lk 15:20)
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary (Lk 1:34-35)
and was made man; (Jn 1:14)
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. (Mk 15:25; Jn 19:16-18)
He suffered and was buried. (Jn 19:1-3; Lk 23:53)
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures (1 Cor 15:4; Lk 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 (Mt 26:64)
to judge both the living and the dead, (Acts 10:42; Mt 3:12)
whose kingdom will have no end. (2 Pt 1:11)
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, (Jn 14:26; Gen 1:2; Acts 2:38)
the Lord and giver of life, (Gen 1:2; Jn 3:6)
who proceeds from the Father and the Son, (Jn 15:26)
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, (Mt 3:16-17)
who spoke by the prophets. (Eze 11:5)
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, (1 Pt 2:5; Eph 2:19-22)
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, (Eph 4:5)
and I look for the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:35-49; 1 Thess 4:13-18)

and the life ✠ of the world to come. (Mk 10:29-30; Mt 10:40-42)

Amen. (Ps 106:48)

Us men means all people.

Christian: the ancient text reads “catholic,” meaning the whole Church as it confesses the wholeness of Christian doctrine

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Please be seated

OFFERING

Please stand

OFFERTORY

Psalm 116:12-13, 17-19



G What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

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



P The Lord be with you.



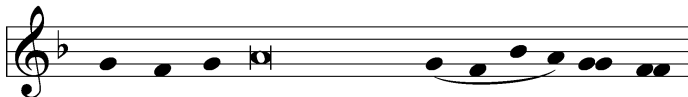
C And al - so with you.



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 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; 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

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.

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.

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 26:26-28

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.”

PAX DOMINI

John 20:19

P The peace ✠ of the Lord be with you always.



C A - men.

AGNUS DEI

John 1:29



C Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

Please be seated

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SACRAMENT

All who are members in good standing of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and have introduced themselves to the pastor are welcome to partake of the Holy Communion at Christ Lutheran. If you have not spoken to the pastor, but would like to receive the Lord's blessing, you may still come to the rail and kneel, crossing one arm over the other in the shape of an 'X'. This symbolizes that one is marked by the cross and Triune name of Almighty God.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

#621

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

#386

Please stand following distribution of communion

NUNC DIMITTIS

Luke 2:29-32



Lord, now You let Your ser-vant go in peace; Your word has been ful-



filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va-tion which You have pre-



pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re -



veal 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

A Let us pray.

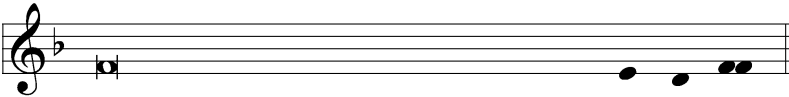
O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your 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 A - men.

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.

CLOSING HYMN

The People That in Darkness Sat

#412

Acknowledgments

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Serving Today:

Celebrant: Rev. George Fields

Acolyte: William Held

Interpreter: Denee Smith

Altar Guild: Mary Atchley

Elder: Glen Hansford

Organist: Sr. Sara Fields

Cantor: Emily Held

Take Your Christmas Poinsettias: Don't forget to take your poinsettias today! If you ordered a Christmas poinsettia, you may take it home following today's Divine Service. Thank you for beautifying the God's house on this holy day!

Readings for this Sunday, December 29th, the First Sunday after Christmas:

Introit 98:1-4; Psalm 111; Exodus 13:1-3, 11-15; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:22-40.



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
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