

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
7979 Commerce Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48324
Phone: (248) 363-0741; Email: info@stmarkwb.org
Website: www.stmarkwb.org



The Fourth Sunday in Advent

18 December A✠D 2022

Divine Service, Setting III

✠ Welcome in the name of Jesus! ✠

Today we observe the Fourth Sunday of Advent. On this day, as we continue waiting eagerly for the Christ, we consider the joy that He brings into our hearts. Right now, we live in a world where joy so often seems out of reach. However, no matter how dark this world might be, in Christ we can “rejoice always” (Philippians 4:4), just as Mary and Elizabeth did long ago, for He comes to be our Savior from sin, death and every evil.

If you are a VISITOR here, we’d like to offer you our warmest welcome! We pray that your experience among us is blessed, and that you depart filled with God’s peace and life.

Also, toward the end of our service today we will be celebrating Holy Communion, in which we will eat and drink Jesus’ body and blood, under bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:26-28). Therefore, we ask that you would please see the statement titled “On the Sacrament of Holy Communion,” printed below, which describes our beliefs and practices regarding this sacred gift.

O Lord, my creator, redeemer, and comforter,
as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth,
I humbly pray that You would open my heart
to the preaching of Your Word so that I may
repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my
only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness.
Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION: We believe that when we receive Holy Communion together, we are publicly declaring both our unity in Christ and our agreement in doctrine (1 Cor. 10:16-17; 1 Cor. 1:10). We also believe that if we receive this sacrament in unbelief, we risk God’s judgment (1 Cor. 11:27-30).

Therefore, communion at this altar is reserved for those who believe and confess the teachings of our church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Those who have not been formally instructed in our teachings should wait to commune until completing a course of instruction with us.

If you are a VISITOR and would like to commune with us today, please speak with the pastor before the service. If you will not be communing, you are welcome to kneel at the altar with your arms folded across your chest to receive a blessing, or you may remain in your pew.

Confession and Absolution

Stand

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 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.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

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

C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Kneel/Stand

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.

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Stand

Hymn of Invocation: 350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come



1 Come, Thou pre - cious Ran - som, come, On - ly hope for
2 En - ter now my wait - ing heart, Glo - rious King and
3 My ho - san - nas and my palms Gra - cious - ly re -
4 Hail! Ho - san - na, Da - vid's Son! Je - sus, hear our



sin - ful mor - tals! Come, O Sav - ior of the world!
Lord most ho - ly. Dwell in me and ne'er de - part,
ceive, I pray Thee; Ev - er - more, as best I can,
sup - pli - ca - tion! Let Thy king - dom, scep - ter, crown,



O - pen are to Thee all por - tals. Come, Thy beau - ty
Though I am but poor and low - ly. Ah, what rich - es
Sav - ior, I will hom - age pay Thee, And in faith I
Bring us bless - ing and sal - va - tion, That for - ev - er



let us see; Anx - ious - ly we wait for Thee.
will be mine When Thou art my guest di - vine!
will em - brace, Lord, Thy mer - it through Thy grace.
we may sing: Hail! Ho - san - na to our King.

Text: Johann Gottfried Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.

Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch, 1699, Darmstadt

Text and tune: Public domain

Service of the Word

Introit (*spoken responsively*)

Psalm 19:1, 4–6; antiphon: Isaiah 45:8a

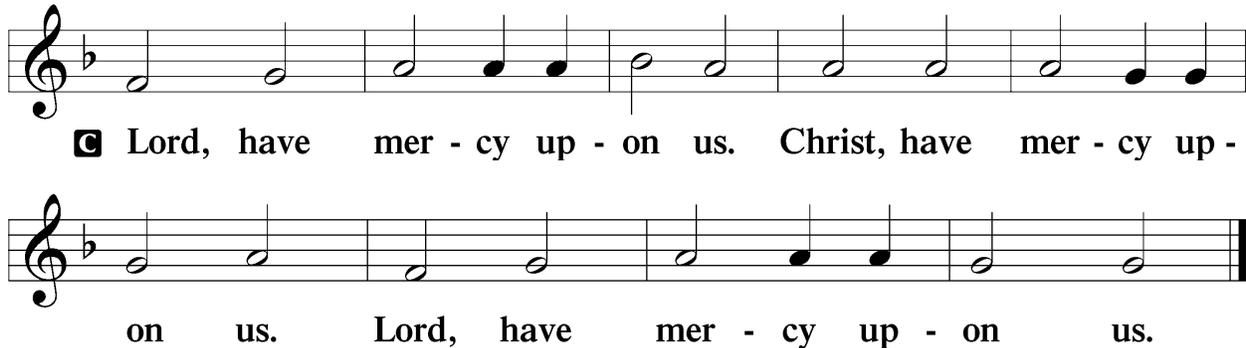
- P** Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
- C** **let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit;
let the earth cause them both to sprout.**
- P** The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
- C** **Their measuring line goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end
of the world.
In them he has set a tent for the sun,**
- P** which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.
- C** **Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.**

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

- P** Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
- C** **let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit;
let the earth cause them both to sprout.**

Kyrie

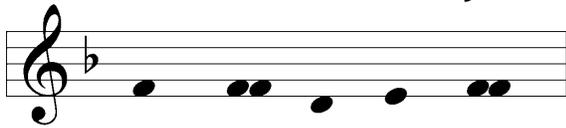
Mark 10:47



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

During Advent, the Gloria in Excelsis is omitted.

Salutation and Collect of the Day



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

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 A - men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Deuteronomy 18:15–19

¹⁵“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— ¹⁶just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ ¹⁷And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.’”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual (*spoken responsively*)

Psalms 145:18, 21

P 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

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand
Alleluia



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

Holy Gospel

Luke 1:39–56

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



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

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

⁴⁶And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

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

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹for he who is mighty has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

⁵⁰And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

⁵²he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;

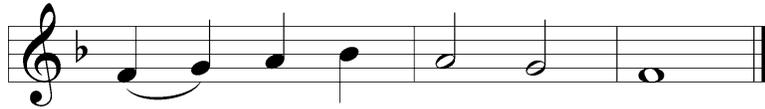
⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.

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

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

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

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



G Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

Sit
Children's Message

Hymn of the Day: 357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



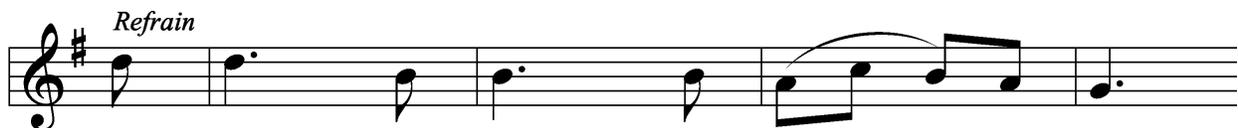
1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
2 O come, Thou Wis - dom from on high, Who or - d'rest
3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy
4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from



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!

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

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-66, alt.

Tune: French, 15th cent.

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Offering

During the Offering, we ask that you please sign a black attendance book located in your pew.

Stand

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.

Stand

Prayer of the Church

- P** Heavenly Father, throughout this Advent season we have heard that Christ has come in the flesh, that He comes to us today in Word and Sacrament, and that He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. Guide us by Your Holy Spirit, that we may be kept firm in Your Word and faith until we are received into Your eternal kingdom. 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 gladly by hearing the Word, singing Your praises, and receiving His body and blood. Pour your blessing down upon our congregation, upon Ziah Town Lutheran Church in Liberia, and upon Your whole Church in every place. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.

P Almighty Father, You uphold all creation by Your hand. Preserve 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 Lord of all, govern the nations of the world. Establish peace in every place, scatter those who delight in war, and provide for the needy. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

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

P O Lord, fill us with joy as we approach Your altar this morning to receive the body and blood of Christ. Give us the peace that passes understanding, the gladness that no man can take from us and the hope that does not fade away. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, heavenly Father, Your love invites us to rejoice in Your goodness. In every circumstance of life, teach us the joy that comes from knowing Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and eagerly expecting His gracious visitation; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

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

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.

Lord's Prayer (*spoken together*)

Matthew 6:9–13

**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; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25

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

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

Pax Domini

John 20:19



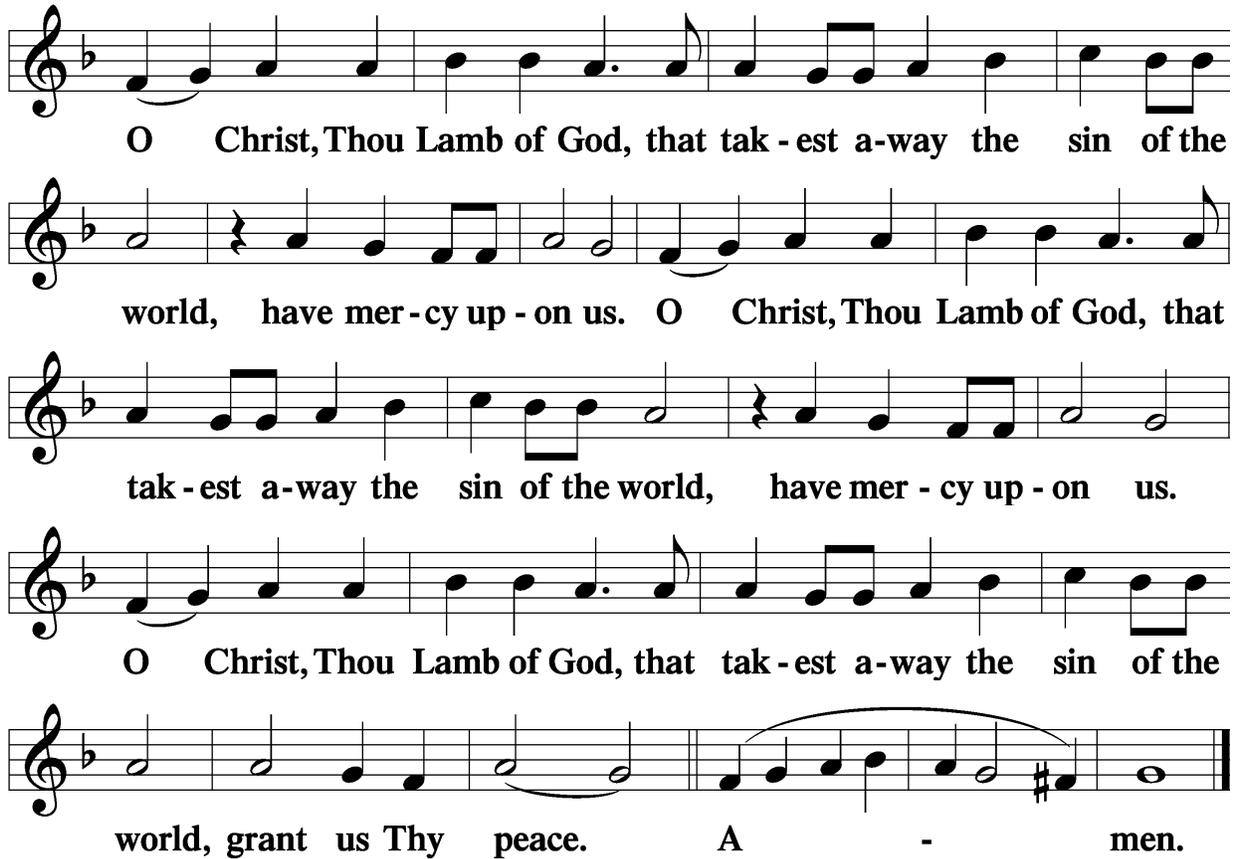
P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

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.

Sit

Distribution

Visitors – Please see the note on the inside front cover of this service folder regarding our Holy Communion policy.

Distribution Hymn: 342 What Hope! An Eden Prophesied



- 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.

Text: Stephen P. Starke, 1955

Tune: Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, 1813, Harrisburg, ed. John Wyeth

Text: © 1998 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110002763

Tune: Public domain

Distribution Hymn: 916 Only-Begotten, Word of God Eternal



1 On - ly - be - got - ten, Word of God e - ter - nal, Lord of cre -
2 Ho - ly this tem - ple where our Lord is dwell - ing; This is none
3 Hear us, O Fa - ther, as we throng Your tem - ple. By Your past
△ 4 God in three per - sons, Fa - ther ev - er - last - ing, Son co - e -



a - tion, mer - ci - ful and might - y: Hear us, Your ser - vants,
oth - er than the gate of heav - en. Ev - er Your chil - dren,
bless - ings, by Your pres - ent boun - ty, Smile on Your chil - dren,
ter - nal, ev - er bless - ed Spir - it: To You be prais - es,



as our tune - ful voic - es Rise in Your pres - ence.
year by year re - joic - ing, Chant in Your tem - ple.
and in grace and mer - cy Hear our pe - ti - tion.
thanks, and ad - o - ra - tion, Glo - ry for - ev - er.

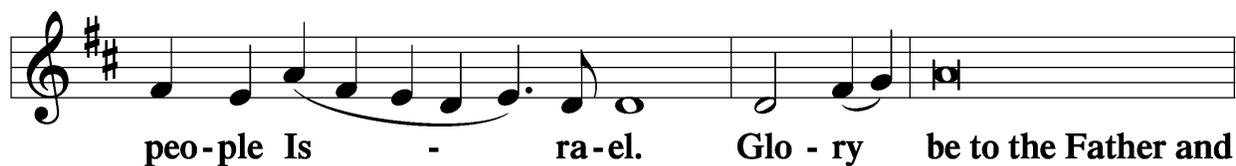
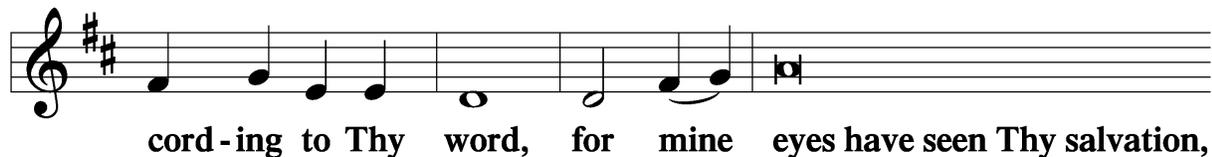
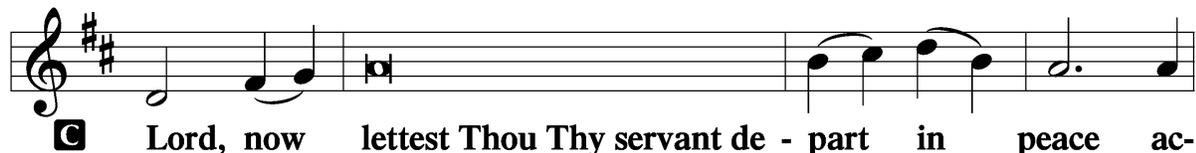
Text: Latin, c. 9th cent.; tr. Maxwell J. Blacker, 1822–88, alt.

Tune: Antiphoner, 1746, Poitiers

Text and tune: Public domain

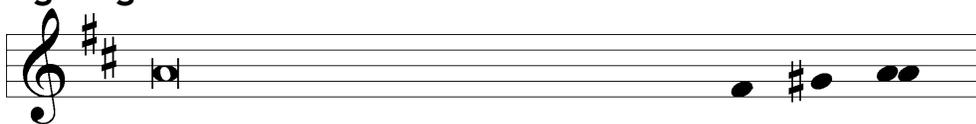
Stand
Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29-32

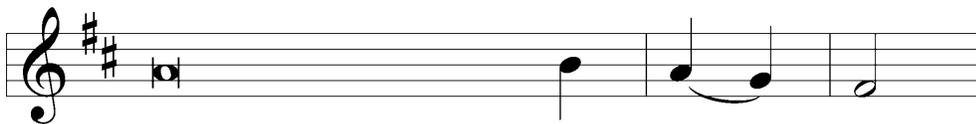


Thanksgiving

Psalm 107:1



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



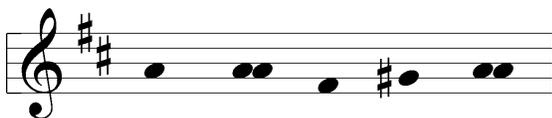
C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; 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.



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

Psalm 103:1



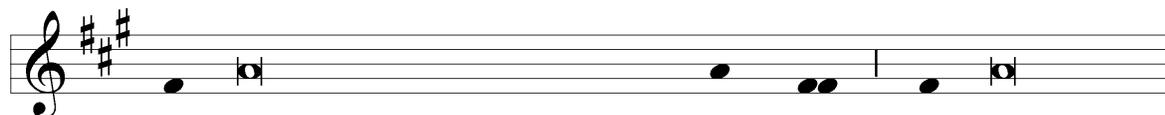
A Bless we the Lord.



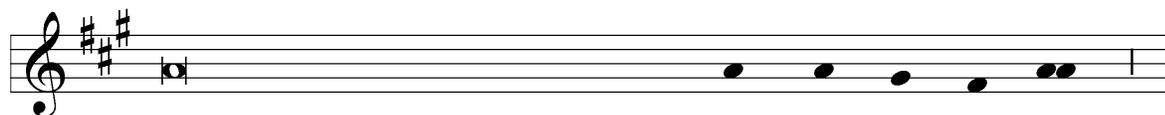
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

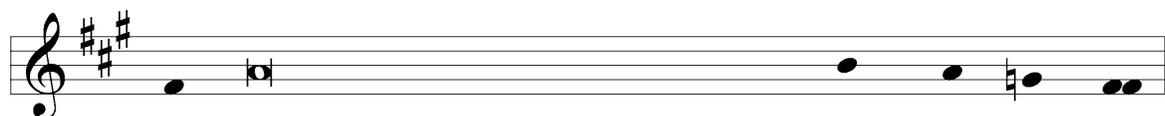
Numbers 6:24–26



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.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

The Benediction marks the end of the Divine Service. Following the Announcements, the congregation will sing the Closing Hymn below and depart in joy.

Closing Hymn: 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.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–59; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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THIS WEEK'S CHURCH CALENDAR

Sun. 12/18 The Fourth Sunday in Advent

- **Divine Service** 9:30 a.m.
- **Adult Bible Class** 11:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Mon. 12/19 Pastor's Day Off

Wed. 12/21 Winter Begins

Wednesday Nights in Christ Program:

- **Dinner** 5:15 p.m.
- **Youth Bible Lesson** 5:45 p.m.
- **Christmas Party** 6:15 p.m.

Midweek Advent Service 7:00 p.m.

Thu. 12/22 Pastor out of the office in the p.m.

Fri. 12/23 January's newsletter distributed

Sat. 12/24 Christmas Eve Worship Service at 6:00 p.m.

Sun. 12/25 Christmas Day Divine Service at 10:00 a.m.

- **Divine Service** 9:30 a.m.

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADULT BIBLE CLASS – St. Mark's Adult Bible Study takes place in the Fellowship Hall **each Sunday**, at 10:45 a.m. and all adults, and youth in middle or high school, are welcome to attend. Pastor will continue to teach on the book of Genesis. The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible, and it tells the story of God's salvation from the very beginning. It starts with the creation of the world and the fall into sin, and from there it traces the promise of the Savior from generation to generation, beginning with Adam and culminating with Jacob's twelve children. It includes the account of Noah and the Flood, the Tower of Babel, the Call of Abraham, and Joseph's rise in Egypt. At every place it proclaims the steadfast love of God and His faithfulness in redeeming mankind from the guilt of our sin. Please join this educational class, if you can!

JOIN US IN READING THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2023! For us Christians, there is no greater joy than meditating on the Holy Scriptures, for there God proclaims to us the Truth of Christ, so that in Him we might have life! With this in mind, the Board of Elders invites you to join us in reading through the entire Bible in 2023. If you are interested in participating, please plan to stick around for a few minutes **after church today**. At that time, Pastor Vergin will be introducing the reading plan and getting a list of participants. If you would like to join in, but can't be at church that day, please let Pastor know!

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES CONTINUE – We hope you will join us for the last of our Advent midweek worship services on **Wednesday, December 21** at 7:00 p.m. Here, we will gather to receive the Lord’s Word and to wait for His salvation. This service will follow a series titled “In the Beginning Was the Word: An Advent Series on Genesis.” Just like last year, circuit pastors will be rotating between churches for these services, so we hope you will welcome the visiting pastors! Please make these services a part of your yearly Advent preparations!

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES – Next weekend, we will be holding two different services in celebration of Christmas. First, on **Saturday, December 24**, we will be holding our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service. This service will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will include many of your favorite Christmas Hymns, ending with Silent Night sung by candlelight. Then, on **Sunday, December 25**, we will be holding our annual Christmas Day Divine Service. This service will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will include Holy Communion. We hope you will join us as we celebrate with joy the birth of Christ!

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS IN CHRIST – Our midweek program for kids called *Wednesday Nights in Christ* continues to meet **each Wednesday** starting at 5:15 p.m. (***Please note: we will not meet on Wednesday, December 28 due to the holidays.***) All kids, ages 4 through those in 5th Grade, are invited to join us for this fun and educational class! The program will always begin with a simple dinner at 5:15 p.m., followed by a Bible lesson at 5:45 p.m., and conclude with a craft, game, or “Life Skills” speaker at 6:15 p.m. The program will end each Wednesday at 6:45 p.m. If you haven’t registered your child or grandkids yet, please do! Also, any child who brings a friend will get to choose a cool prize! Just visit our website at www.stmarkwb.org, hover over the “Contact/Registration tab,” and you’ll see the Wed. Nights in Christ Registration form that you can then complete. **We are also seeking dessert donations for each night of class.** A sign-up sheet has been posted in the lobby for anyone who might be interested in helping in this way!

WRAPPING PAPER, GIFT BAGS AND BOWS FOR SALE – The Board of Human Care has wrapping paper, bows and gift bags for sale in the lobby for a donation to the Joe Boway fundraiser. You can pick out whatever you need and donate as you wish. Donations can be given to Karen Kaufman or Leslie Oehring.

THER ARE ONLY 2 WEEKS LEFT OF OUR READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2022 SCHEDULE! Were you able to keep up and read through the Bible during 2022? If so, that’s wonderful! If not, we invite you to try again in 2023 as Pastor rolls out a new type of reading schedule (see article on previous page).

The readings for Week 51 (December 18 – December 24) are:

Sun	18-Dec	Hebrews 5-8
Mon	19-Dec	Hebrews 9-10
Tue	20-Dec	Hebrews 11-13
Wed	21-Dec	James 1-5
Thu	22-Dec	1 Peter 1-5; 2 Peter 1-3
Fri	23-Dec	1 John 1-5
Sat	24-Dec	2 John 1; 3 John 1; Jude 1

NO QUILTING BEE FOR DECEMBER OR JANUARY – St. Mark’s Quilting Bee will not be meeting in December or January. This group will resume meeting on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall **starting in February**.

BOTTLE AND CAN DRIVE FOR ZIAH TOWN LUTHERAN SCHOOL - If you would like to donate your returnable cans and bottles, the Board of Human Care will now be accepting them **EVERY week!** Just bring your bag to church and an usher will let you know where you can set them. A member of the Human Care Board will collect them and make the return. All money will then go into the fund for the Ziah Town Liberian school to be used for catechisms and/ or school supplies. You may also make donations at any time by either putting your check/cash in a green envelope and writing Liberian School on the front (checks made payable to St. Mark’s), or visiting the St. Mark’s website, clicking on the online giving button and selecting the fund titled Joe Boway/Liberian School. Thank you for your continued support of this important ministry!

LAST DAY TO ORDER CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS – **Today is the final** day to place an order for our Christmas poinsettias that will adorn the altar area for Christmas. Each poinsettia plant costs \$10 and you may take your plant home with you (if you wish) in early January. You may order one or more plant in honor, or in memory, of a loved one, or just to help beautify the sanctuary for Christmas. Either complete a pink flower order form found in our Sunday bulletins, place it and your payment (cash or a check made payable to St. Mark’s Lutheran Church) inside a pink flower envelope (located in the pew racks), write “Poinsettia” on the envelope, and then place it into an offering plate. The names of those being honored or remembered will be included in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day bulletins.

UPCOMING JANUARY EVENTS:

- 1 The Circumcision and Name of Jesus Divine Service on New Year’s Day
- 7 Men’s Bible Study 9 a.m.. – 10:30 a.m.; Undecorate St. Mark’s 10 a.m.
- 8 The Epiphany of our Lord Divine Service (observed)
- 15 Installation of Church Servants for 2023
- 29 The Transfiguration of our Lord Divine Service

WE CONTINUE TO COLLECT used postage stamps for Wycliffe Bible Translation Ministries, and used eyeglasses for MOST Ministries in the two plastic bins on the shelves at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs. Wycliffe sells the stamps to stamp collectors and then uses the proceeds to fund Bible translation projects throughout the world. MOST Ministries repairs/refurbishes used eyeglasses and distributes them via eyeglass clinics to the needy around the world. If you donate postage stamps, please be sure to leave ¼” of the envelope paper around the stamp.

TOILETRY/HYGIENE DONATIONS FOR THE OPEN DOOR OUTREACH CENTER – We continue to receive hygiene & toiletry products year around for the Open Door Outreach Center in Waterford. There are two bins located on the shelves at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs where you can place product donations. The Open Door is a non-profit organization that assists needy families in the Lakes Area. They are **ALWAYS** in need of toiletry and hygiene items, so **if you can provide any of these throughout the year, it would be appreciated.**

KEITH ELEMENTARY “INVISIBLE DAD” LUNCH PROGRAM DONATIONS – Keith Elementary’s Invisible Dad Lunch Program was started a few years ago by a dad of one of the students so that if a child forgot to bring a lunch, or if their personal lunch fund balance was short, the school could offer them a full lunch at no cost instead of the free, state-sponsored “tiny lunch” that doesn’t contain enough food and isn’t the healthiest. St. Mark’s has placed our Invisible Dad Lunch donation jar back on the table in the back of the sanctuary so that we can receive any extra change you’d like to donate for next year’s lunch program at Keith. Thanks in advance!

IF YOU SHOP AT A KROGER STORE, please consider participating in their Community Rewards program and **link your shopper’s bonus card to St. Mark’s** so that our congregation will receive free cash each quarter! There is no cost to you! Kroger will send a percentage of what you spend to our congregation as a way of supporting the community. If interested (and we hope you will be!), please click on this URL below to see how you can link your Shopper’s Bonus Card to our congregation: <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>. In order to locate St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, search for business # 82449. Thanks so much!



SERVING THE LORD WITH GLADNESS THIS MORNING

Presiding Minister

Pastor Aaron Vergin

Altar Guild

Julie Kosmalski/Jennie Kaufman

Elder on Duty

Darryl Swainson

Greeter(s)

Gail Fitzgerald

Offering Counters

John & Debbie Sidelinker

Organist

Rob Wheeler

Trumpet

Chris Gerard

Usher

John Reardon

Video Technician

Karen Kaufman