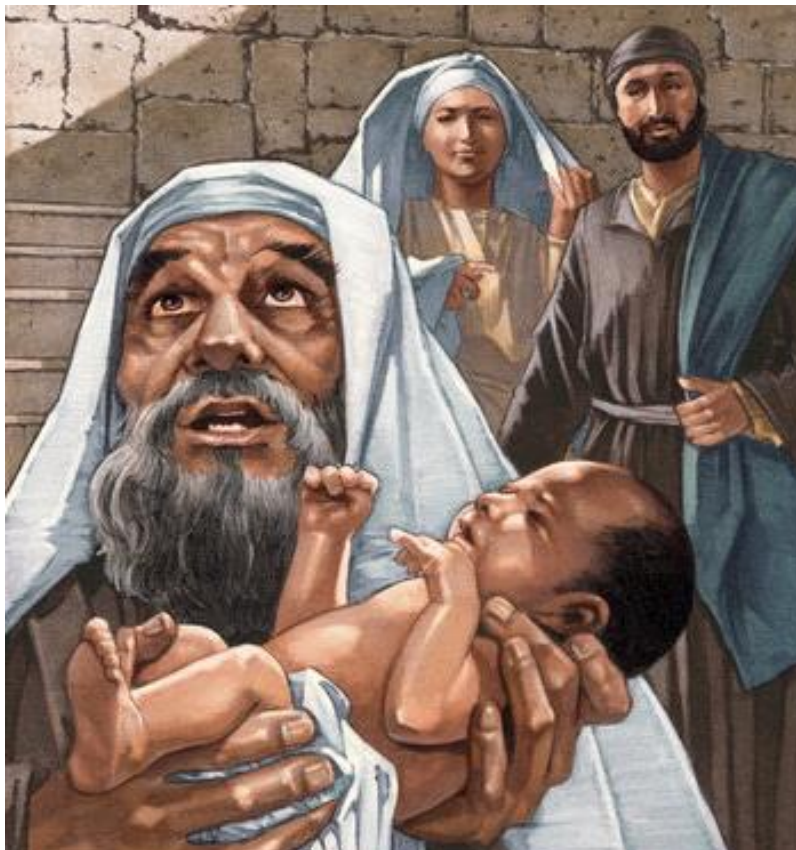


ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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 First Sunday after Christmas

26 December A✠D 2021

Divine Service, Setting III

✠ Welcome in the name of Jesus! ✠

Today we observe the First Sunday after Christmas. On this day, we continue our joyous celebration of Jesus' birth, marveling with Mary and Joseph as we behold true identity of this child and the work that He would do for us, especially His work as our Redeemer King. Indeed, Jesus was born among us to be our King. And as our King, He saves us from every danger—most of all sin, death, and the devil—that we might dwell in everlasting peace.

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 simply 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.

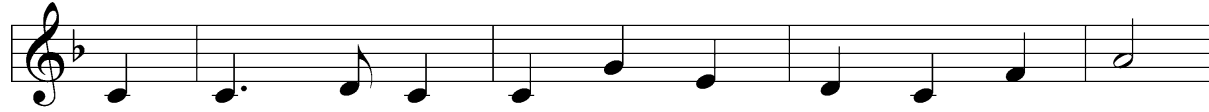
C Amen.

Stand

Hymn of Invocation: 364 Away in a Manger



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay



The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.



The stars in the sky ——— looked down where He lay,
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,



The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Tune and text: Public domain

Service of the Word

Introit (*spoken responsively*)

Psalm 93:1, 3–4; antiphon: vv. 5, 2

- P** Your decrees are very trustworthy;
holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore.
- C** **Your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.**
- P** The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty;
the LORD is robed; he has put on strength as his belt.
- C** **Yes, the world is established;
it shall never be moved.**
- P** The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.
- C** **Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea,
the LORD on high is mighty!**

**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** Your decrees are very trustworthy;
holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore.
- C** **Your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.**

Kyrie

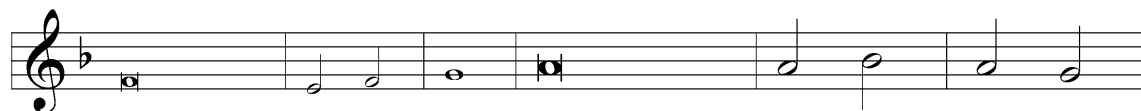
Mark 10:47



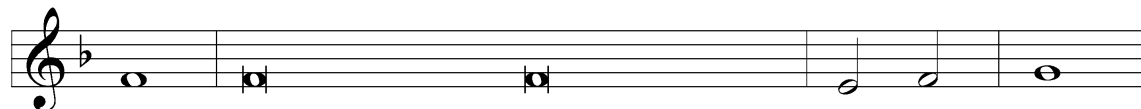
C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Gloria in Excelsis

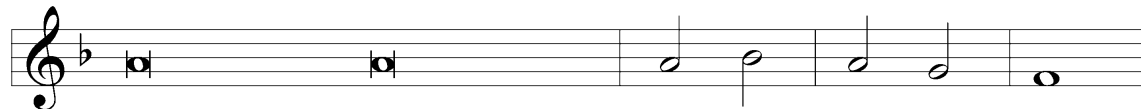
Luke 2:14; John 1:29



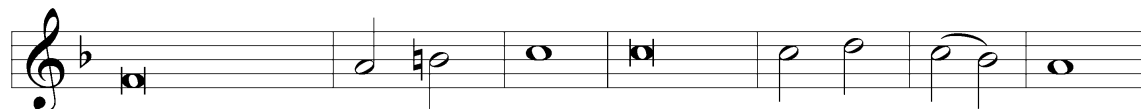
P Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward



men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



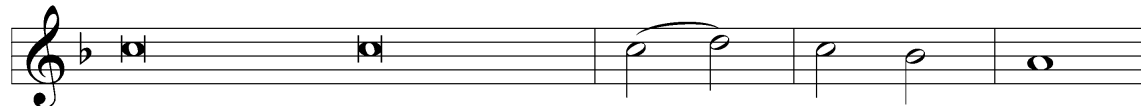
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



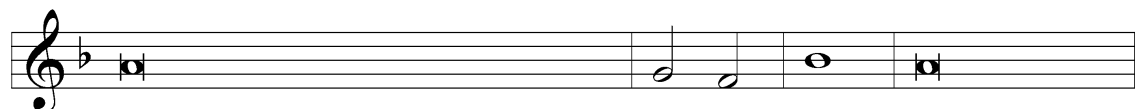
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.



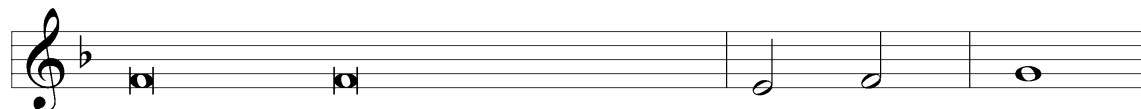
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.



Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-



on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on - ly art the Lord.

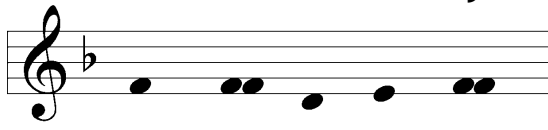


Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,



art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

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



C A - men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 11:1–5

- ¹There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
- ²And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- ³And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
- ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual (*spoken responsively*)

Psalms 45:2a, 1b

- P** You are the most handsome of the sons of men;
grace is poured upon your lips.
- C** I address my verses to the king;
my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.

Epistle

Galatians 4:1–7

¹I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, ²but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. ⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

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

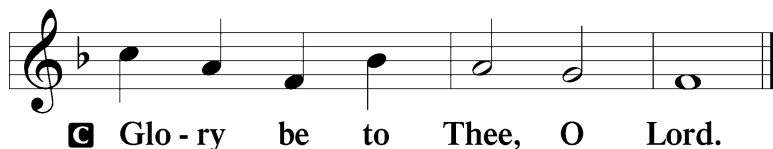
Stand Alleluia



Holy Gospel

Luke 2:22–40

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



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

²⁹“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

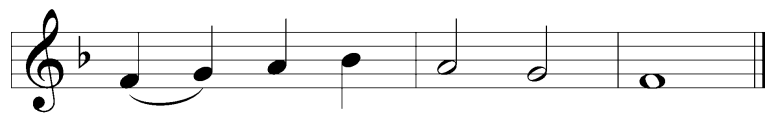
³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

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

³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

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

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: 389 Let All Together Praise Our God



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God Be - fore His
2 He leaves His heav'n - ly Fa - ther's throne, Is born an
3 With - in an earth - born form He hides His all - cre -
4 He un - der - takes a great ex - change, Puts on our



glo - rious throne; To - day He o - pens heav'n a - gain To
in - fant small, And in a man - ger, poor and lone, Lies
at - ing light; To serve us all He hum - bly cloaks The
hu - man frame, And in re - turn gives us His realm, His



give us His own Son, To give us His own Son.
in a hum - ble stall, Lies in a hum - ble stall.
splen - dor of His might, The splen - dor of His might.
glo - ry, and His name, His glo - ry, and His name.

5 He is a servant, I a lord:
How great a mystery!
How strong the tender Christ Child's love!
No truer friend than He,
No truer friend than He.

6 He is the key and He the door
To blessèd paradise;
The angel bars the way no more.
To God our praises rise,
To God our praises rise.

△7 Your grace in lowliness revealed,
Lord Jesus, we adore
And praise to God the Father yield
And Spirit evermore;
We praise You evermore.

Text (st. 2) and tune: Public domain

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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 In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For grace to rejoice in Christ's incarnation; that, in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us and to give us the adoption as Your sons and heirs; and that, filled with this joy, the Lord would grant us a glad new year, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the Church, that all who have been baptized into Christ may embrace the Christ Child by Word and faith, and so be ready to depart whenever they are called; and for all missionaries, especially Joe Boway, that the Lord would work through them to fill every heart with the joy of Christ, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the families of all Christians, that the heavenly Father from whom all fatherhood on earth is named would bless them with His promises; for parents, that they would be diligent and take delight in their work; for children, that by God's favor they would grow in strength and wisdom; and for all widows, orphans and broken families, that God would comfort them with His mercy and give them joy in the redemption won for them in Christ, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For delight in the fear of the Lord, that we may entrust ourselves only to Christ, who alone judges all matters in equity and righteousness; for princes and leaders of this world, who must judge by what they see and hear, that they would be blessed with health and wisdom; and for discernment, that we may honor them for the sake of conscience before our Lord, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the sick and suffering, [*especially those who desire our prayers* _____], that according to God's gracious will, they would be healed; and also for those who mourn, that God would fill their hearts with the certain hope of the resurrection of the faithful to everlasting life, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who commune this day, that they would see their salvation in the very body and blood of Christ given them to eat and to drink and thus, with Simeon, be prepared to depart in peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

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

C Amen.

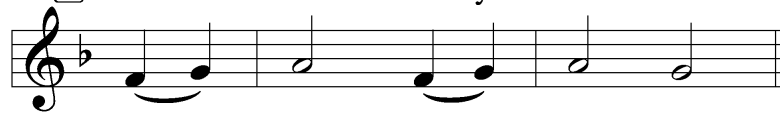
Service of the Sacrament

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; 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 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



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



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

John 1:29

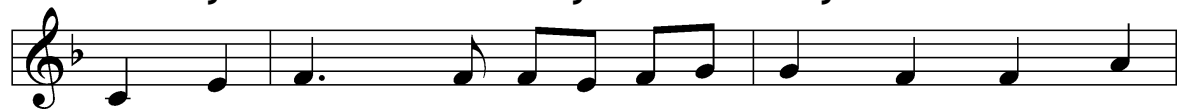
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the
world, have mer - cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that
tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the
world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sit

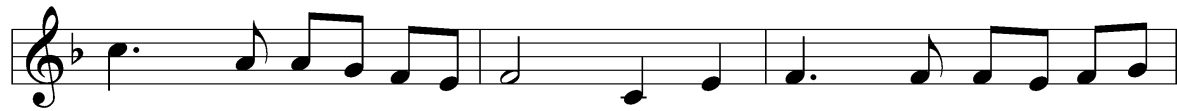
Distribution

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

Distribution Hymn: 376 Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
 3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by
 4 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His
 5 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble With the



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



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
 sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
 help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
 gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He
 heav - en, Set at God's right hand on high. Then like



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

Text and tune: Public domain

Distribution Hymn: 375 Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising



1 Come, your hearts and voices raising, Christ the
 2 Christ, from heav'n to us de - scend - ing And in
 3 Ja - cob's star in all its splen - dor Beams with
 4 From the bond - age that op - pressed us, From sin's



Lord with glad - ness prais - ing; Loud - ly sing His love a -
 love our race be - friend - ing; In our need His help ex -
 com - fort sweet and ten - der, Forc - ing Sa - tan to sur -
 fet - ters that pos - sessed us, From the grief that sore dis -



maz - ing, Wor - thy folk of Chris - ten - dom.
 tend - ing, Saved us from the wi - ly foe.
 ren - der, Break - ing all the pow'rs of hell.
 tressed us, We, the cap - tives, now are free.

5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing
 When by faith we grasp this blessing,
 And to You we come confessing
 That Your love has set us free.

6 Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
 From Your lowly manger cheer us,
 Gently lead us and be near us
 Till we join Your choir above.

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Stand
Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29–32

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-
cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

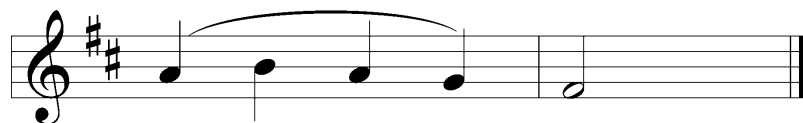
Thanksgiving

Psalms 107:1

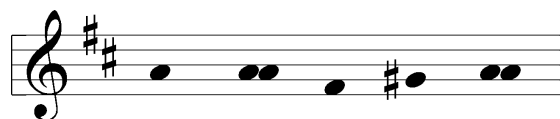
A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

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.



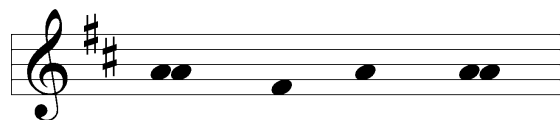
P The Lord be with you.



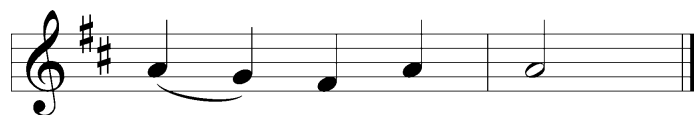
C And with thy spir - it.

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.

Closing Hymn: 368 Angels We Have Heard on High

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

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

Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a

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

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

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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THIS WEEK'S CHURCH CALENDAR

Sun. 12/26 The First Sunday after Christmas

- **Divine Service** 9:30 a.m.
- **Adult Bible Class** 10:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall
- **Sunday School for Kids** 10:45 a.m., Upstairs Youth Room

Mon. 12/27 Church Office closed

Tue. 12/28 Church Office closed

Wed. 12/29 Church Office closed

Fri. 12/31 New Year's Eve
Church Office closing at 3:00 p.m.

Sat. 1/1 New Year's Day

Sun. 1/2 The Second Sunday after Christmas

- **Divine Service** 9:30 a.m.
- **Adult Bible Class** 10:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall
- **Sunday School for Kids** 10:45 a.m., Upstairs Youth Room

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR EFFORTS TO HELP MITIGATE CORONAVIRUS – Here's what you can expect for our Sunday morning Divine Services:

1. Hand sanitizer and face masks will be available on the table in the entryway if you decide to use them.
2. Those who wish may request a squirt of hand sanitizer from the usher before Holy Communion, and sanitizer will also be sitting on small tables in the side altar rooms for your use following Communion.
3. The "Sharing of the Peace" has been temporarily suspended.

Pastor's sermons will still be posted on St. Mark's Facebook page a day or two after each service. Thank you for your gracious cooperation and your flexibility!

ADULT BIBLE STUDY TODAY – All adults are welcome to join Pastor for Adult Bible Study in the basement fellowship hall **this morning** directly following the Divine Service (**around 10:45 a.m.**) as he continues to teach on the book of Genesis. Coffee and snacks will be available too.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY – Preschool through Elementary-age school kids are welcome to join Mrs. Kaufman in the upstairs youth room (behind the choir loft) right after the Divine Service for Sunday School. Sunday School **from 10:45 – 11:45 a.m.** Kids will hear a different Bible story each week; what a great way for them to learn about Jesus! And kids are certainly welcome to bring friends and/or family with them also!

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON COMMUNION SERVICES - We rejoice that even in the midst of the current surge in COVID cases, many have continued to come to church and receive God's Word and Sacrament among His people. However, we also understand that among our brothers and sisters in Christ, there are special cases which prohibit attendance at the gathered assembly. Therefore, so that we might all be able to receive the strength of Christ in the Sacrament, we are now offering special **midweek communion services**. These services will take place weekly on **Wednesday afternoons at 4:30 p.m.** and are meant for those who are unable to attend, or are uncomfortable attending, the Divine Service on Sunday morning. The service will be brief (~15 minutes) and those who attend will be asked to wear masks. This will be a temporary part of our worship schedule.

(Please note that Pastor will NOT hold this midweek communion service this Wednesday, December 29.)

ADVENT PLEDGE DRIVE - When we give offerings to Church, we do it because we love the Word of God and want to see it proclaimed in our community for years to come. Indeed, such giving is our Christian duty. Therefore, in the season of Advent, St. Mark's will be holding a Pledge Drive. Here, we are asking all congregation members to consider whether the Lord has positioned them to increase their giving going forward, and to pledge to give accordingly as long as circumstances allow. Pledge forms, with accompanying instructions, can be found at church near the elevator door across from the sanctuary exit. All received pledges will be presented to the Lord with thanksgiving on **Sunday, January 2**. Please consider participating, as we await our coming Savior, who has freed us to be generous by His blood!

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2022! The Board of Elders is leading a reading program in which we will be going through the entire Bible in the year 2022. We hope you will participate! There's nothing more important for us than the Word of Christ, for His Word is "Spirit and Life" (John 6:63)! **The readings for Week 1 (Jan 1-8) are: Genesis 1-4 (Jan 1); Genesis 5-8 (Jan 2); Genesis 9-12 (Jan 3); Genesis 13-17 (Jan 4); Genesis 18-20 (Jan 5); Genesis 21-23 (Jan 6); Genesis 24-25 (Jan 7); Genesis 26-28 (Jan 8).** Yearly reading plans are available on the back table in the sanctuary.

THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT IS SPONSORING A THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE called *Beyond the Walls with Jesus* on **Saturday, February 5** from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 7910 W. St. Joseph Highway in Lansing, Michigan. The conference will focus on ways we can make our faith shine as we engage with the culture outside the walls of the church in a world where the church is often marginalized and ridiculed. For more information, or to register, go to: michigandistrict.org/theological22. The cost is \$20 per person.

FUNDRAISERS TO SUPPORT LIBERIAN LUTHERAN SCHOOL – St. Mark’s Board of Human Care will be hosting several different fundraisers over the next year in an effort to raise the \$3,000 that is needed to install a new well at the Liberian Lutheran School that we support. Please watch for additional fundraising details in our Sunday bulletins. **We are only \$600 short of having the entire \$3,000 now!** You may also choose to give a cash donation by placing any amount (checks made payable to St. Mark’s Lutheran Church) in a green pew envelope (write “Joe Boway” on the front of the envelope), or you can visit St. Mark’s website and click on our online giving button where you can donate to the fund called “Joe Boway/Liberian School.” Check the fundraising poster at the top of the basement stairs for dollar updates.

ST. PAUL, PONTIAC SEEKING FOOD DONATIONS - The Food Pantry at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Pontiac is getting low on the items listed below.

1. Rice
2. Tuna
3. Green beans
4. Baked beans (we are set for pinto, black and kidney)
5. Soups
6. Spaghetti noodles
7. Other plain pastas
8. Canned fruits
9. Family sized bars of soap (Dollar stores have best deal on personals)
10. Family sized toothpaste
11. Deodorants
12. Razors
13. Hand sanitizers
14. Diapers (newborn and size 5 and 6) we are set for other sizes
15. Diaper wipes
16. Family sized shampoo
17. Laundry detergent
18. Canned chicken and meat
19. 1# packs of chicken or hamburger
20. Dried or packages milk

These items can be purchased either at a local store or on Amazon for delivery to St. Paul. Local store-bought donations should be dropped off at St. Paul, Pontiac. Their address is: 1133 Joslyn Ave., Pontiac, MI.

JANUARY MEN’S BIBLE STUDY – All men are welcome to join Pastor Vergin for Bible Study & Breakfast here at St. Mark’s on **Saturday, January 8** from 9 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. This is a great way to gather as men of Christ to delve deeper into scripture. Bring a friend or two also, if you’d like! **For those who’d like to stay after the Bible Study to help UNDECORATE THE CHURCH, your assistance would be greatly appreciated!**

HELP NEEDED TO UNDECORATE OUR CHURCH – Volunteers will be needed to help undecorate St. Mark's on **Saturday, January 8** starting at 10 a.m. Let's work together to gently put away our congregation's Christmas decorations so that we can be prepared to observe the festival of the Epiphany of our Lord on Sunday, January 9. Can we count on you to help?

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.**

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.

DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR *INVISIBLE DAD* FUNDRAISER where you can donate your extra coins or cash into the jar on the rear table in the sanctuary in order to help provide lunches to underprivileged students at Keith Elementary School. We will continue to receive donations year round, and will deliver a check for the accumulated donations to Keith sometime during March of 2022. Thanks in advance for helping students in need in our community!



SERVING THE LORD WITH GLADNESS THIS MORNING

Presiding Minister

Pastor Aaron Vergin

Acolyte

TBD

Altar Guild

Jennie Kaufman

Elder on Duty

John Sidelinker

Greeter(s)

Gail Fitzgerald

Offering Counters

Jennie & Karen Kaufman

Organists

Rob Wheeler

Percussionist

David Drake

Usher

Trent Johnson

Video Technician

Debbie Sidelinker