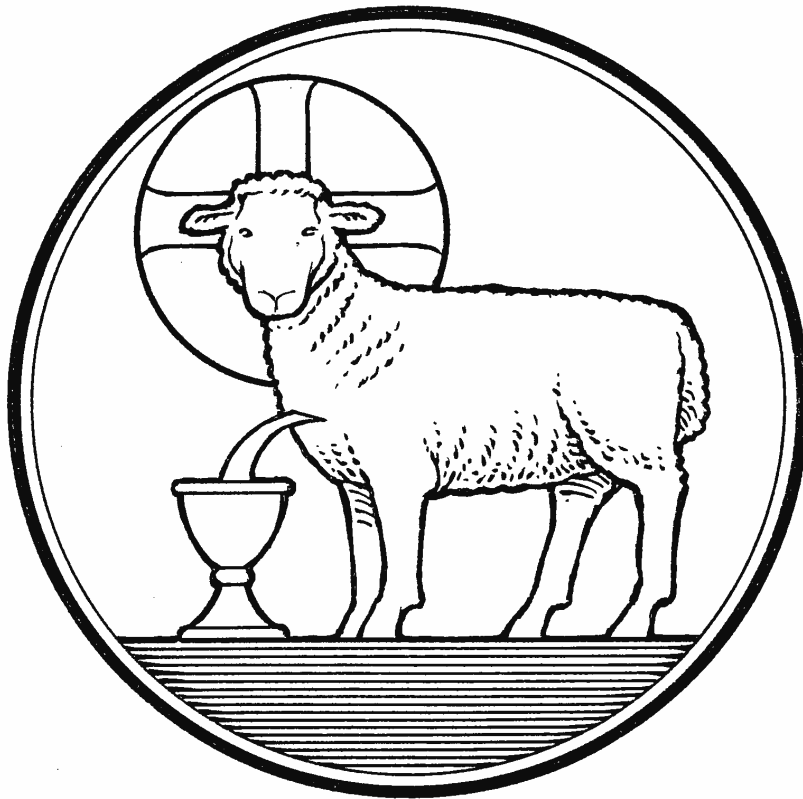


Second Sunday after the Epiphany

January 18th, 2026



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
SMITHVILLE, TEXAS

Divine Service with Holy Communion
10 AM

Bible Class and Sunday School
8:45 AM



Grace Lutheran Church – Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

308 Byrne St. Smithville, TX 78957

512-237-2108 glcs.org

Pastor David Woelmer

**GRACE LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
SMITHVILLE, TX

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church! We give thanks that our gracious Lord Jesus Christ has gathered us together here for his Divine Service. Today again our Lord comes to serve us and lavish us with his gifts of life, forgiveness, and salvation. Rejoicing in those wonderful gifts, we sing with David in Psalm 84: “How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.”

Holy Communion is a sacred gift from Christ to His Church. In this meal, He gives His true body and blood under bread and wine into our mouths in order to forgive our sins and strengthen our union with Him and with one another (Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16-17). Christians receive this Sacrament trusting Jesus’ own words, repenting of all their sin, and confessing the faith taught in Holy Scripture together in unity (Matt. 5:23-24; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:17-26). For this reason, and because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm (1 Cor. 11:27-34), we ask that those who have not yet been instructed and those who are not members of a congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to speak with the pastor before receiving Holy Communion.

In our readings today: “*The LORD, the Redeemer of Israel,*” calls forth “his Holy One” (Is. 49:7), Jesus, the Christ, “from the womb” of His mother (Is. 49:1). The incarnate Son of God is revealed as the Savior, not only for Israel but also “as a light for the nations,” whose salvation reaches “to the end of the earth” (Is. 49:6). John came “baptizing with water” (John 1:31) to reveal Jesus as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), and who glorifies His God and Father by His atoning sacrifice upon the cross. When Jesus was baptized in the waters of the Jordan, the Holy Spirit descended “from heaven like a dove” and “remained on him” (John 1:32). By our Baptism, we are anointed by the same Spirit, adopted by God the Father, and “called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:9). Therefore, we “are not lacking in any gift,” but we can trust Him who promises to sustain us to the end, “guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:7–8).

A Prayer Before Worship: *O Lord, our creator, redeemer, and comforter, as we come together to worship You in spirit and in truth, we humbly pray that You would open our hearts to the preaching of Your Word so that we may repent of our sins, believe in Jesus Christ as our only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear us for His sake. Amen.*

Exchange of Peace: By the second century, it was common for Christians to follow St. Paul’s encouragement to “greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12) during the Church’s worship. Though the place in the worship service and the manner of this greeting have changed throughout the Church’s history, it has always served as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:2-3). It’s more than a simple “holy howdy” or a warm greeting to one another. Instead, it’s an extension of the reconciliation and forgiveness that Jesus has accomplished for us. We greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, “Peace be with you.”

Please stand and remain standing



1 To Jor - dan's riv - er came our Lord, The Christ, whom
 2 The Sav - ior came to be bap - tized— The Son of
 3 As Je - sus in the Jor - dan stood And John bap -
 4 Then from God's throne with thun - d'rous sound Came God's own



heav'n - ly hosts a - dored, The God from God, the
 God in flesh dis - guised— To stand be - neath the
 tized the Lamb of God, The Ho - ly Spir - it,
 voice with words pro - found: "This is My Son," was



Light from Light, The Lord of glo - ry, pow'r, and might.
 Fa - ther's will And all His righ - teous - ness ful - fill.
 heav'n - ly dove, De - scend - ed on Him from a - bove.
 His de - cree, "The one I love, who pleas - es Me."

- 5 The Father's word, the Spirit's flight 6 Now rise, faint hearts, be resolute;
 Anointed Christ in glorious sight This man is Christ, our substitute!
 As God's own choice, from Adam's fall He was baptized in Jordan's stream,
 To save the world and free us all. Proclaimed Redeemer, Lord supreme.

INVOCATION: *(God has given us our beginning in Baptism, so the Divine Service begins in His Name).*

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.

CONFESSION: *(We come into the presence of our holy God, recognizing our sin and pleading for mercy on account of Christ).*

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.

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.

ABSOLUTION: *(God speaks His words of forgiveness to us through His servant, the pastor).*

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.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT: *(We enter God's house with Psalms of praise).*

Psalm 19:1–4a, b; antiphon: v. 14

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,

O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

The heavens declare the glory of God,

and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech,

and night to night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words,

whose voice is not heard.

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.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,

O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

GLORIA PATRI



G Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;



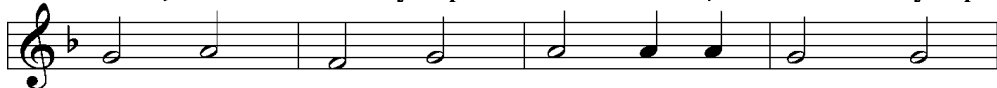
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

KYRIE: *(From the Greek, "Kyrie eleison," meaning "Lord, have mercy").*

LSB 186



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



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



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



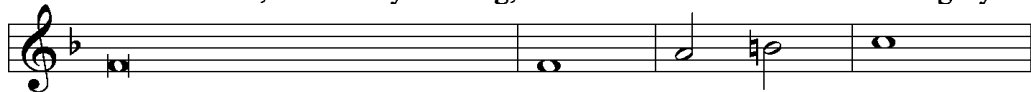
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



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;



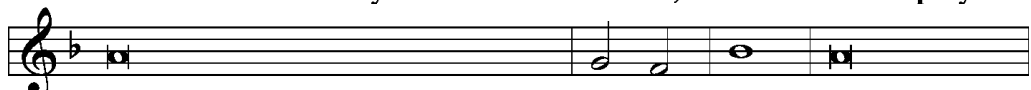
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



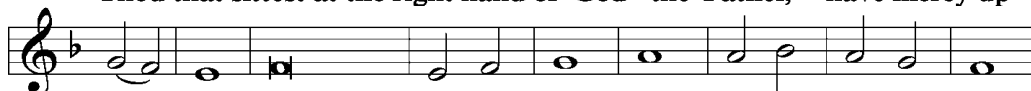
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.



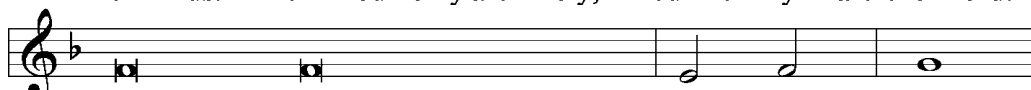
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re - ceive our prayer.



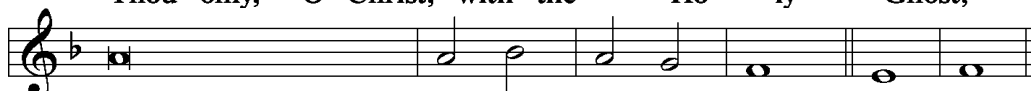
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up -



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



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

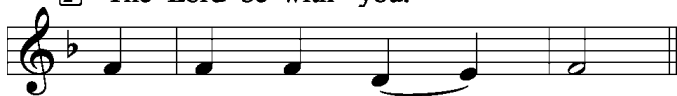


art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

SALUTATION: *(The pastor and congregation greet each other in the Lord's presence).*



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

COLLECT OF THE DAY: *(These prayers have been used for over 1,500 years. They “collect” the Gospel theme for the day).*

P Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; 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.

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 49:1–7

¹Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.
²He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
³And he said to me, “You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”
⁴But I said, “I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God.”
⁵And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶he says:
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;

I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

⁷Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
“Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 40:1–11; antiphon: v. 3

³*He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.*

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

¹I waited patiently for the LORD;

he inclined to me and heard my cry.

²He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,

and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

³He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

⁴Blessèd is the man who makes the LORD his trust,

who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!

⁵You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you!

I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.

⁶Sacrifice and offering you have not desired, but you have given me an open ear.

Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.

⁷Then I said, “Behold, I have come;

in the scroll of the book it is written of me:

⁸I desire to do your will, O my God;

your law is within my heart.”

⁹I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation;

behold, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD.

¹⁰I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;

I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.

¹¹As for you, O LORD, you will not restrain your mercy from me;

your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me!

³*He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.*

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

¹Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

²To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—⁶even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

ALLELUIA

LSB 190



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

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:29-42a

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



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

²⁹The next day [John] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ³¹I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” ³²And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

³⁵The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” ³⁷The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” ³⁹He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). ⁴²He brought him to Jesus.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

NICENE CREED (From the Latin, “Credo,” meaning “I believe.” We say back to God what He says to us).

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.



1 The on - ly Son from heav - en, Fore - told by an - cient seers,
 2 O time of God ap - point - ed, O bright and ho - ly morn!
 3 O Lord, our hearts a - wak - en To know and love You more,
 △ 4 O Fa - ther, here be - fore You With God the Ho - ly Ghost



By God the Fa - ther giv - en, In hu - man form ap - pears.
 He comes, the king a - noint - ed, The Christ, the vir - gin - born,
 In faith to stand un - shak - en, In spir - it to a - dore,
 And Je - sus, we a - dore You, O pride of an - gel host:



No sphere His light con - fin - ing, No star so bright - ly
 Grim death to van - quish for us, To o - pen heav'n be -
 That we, through this world mov - ing, Each glimpse of heav - en
 Be - fore You mor - tals low - ly Cry, "Ho - ly, ho - ly,



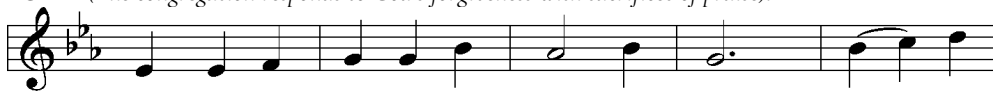
shin - ing As He, our Morn - ing Star.
 fore - us And bring us life a - gain.
 prov - ing, May reap its full - ness there.
 ho - ly, O bless - ed Trin - i - ty!"

SERMON "The Lamb of God"

(Based on one of the Scripture readings, the pastor proclaims God's Word of Law and Gospel for our lives today).

Stand

OFFERTORY *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness with sacrifices of praise).*



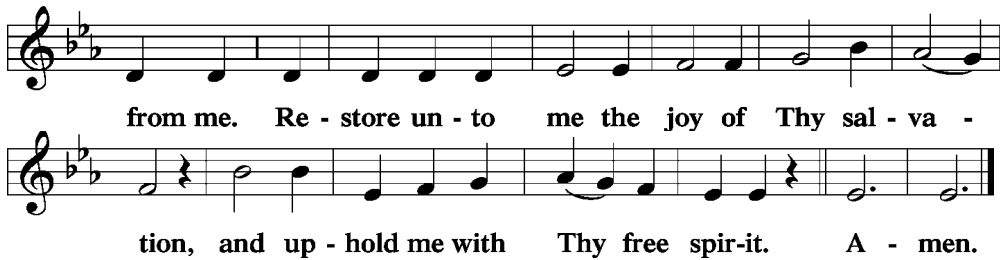
■ Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



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.

Sit

OFFERING: *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness by bringing Him the first fruits of what He has given).*

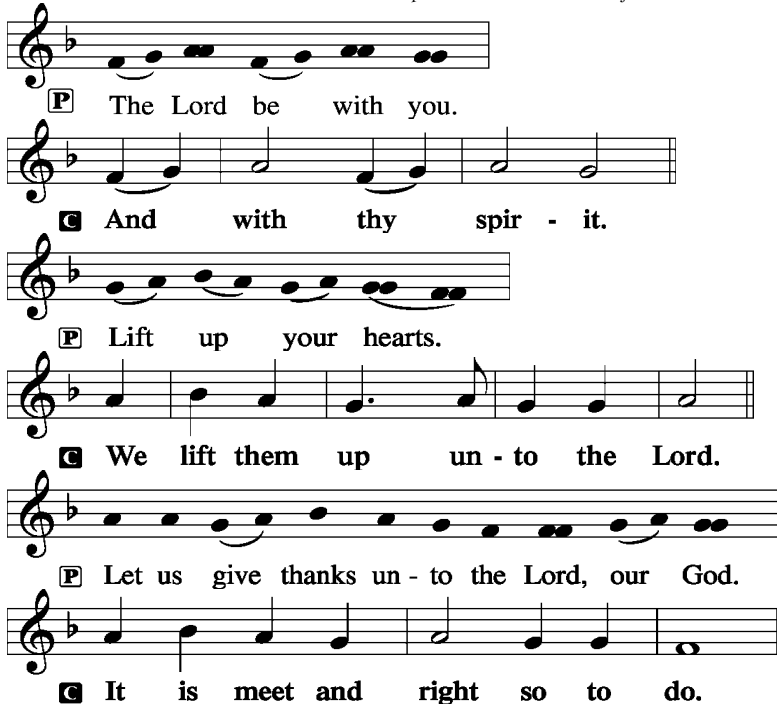
Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: *(The congregation prays for the Church and for all people throughout the world).*

- P** Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

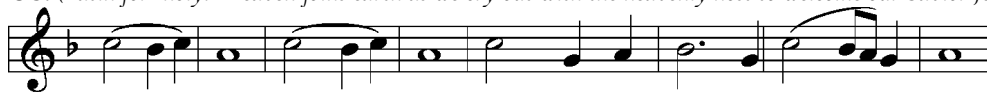
PREFACE AND PROPER PREFACE: *(We praise and thank God for what He does for us in the Lord's Supper).* LSB 194



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 at His Baptism Your voice from heaven revealed Him as Your beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit descended on Him, confirming Him to be the Christ. 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: (Latin for "holy." Heaven joins earth as we cry out with the heavenly host to welcome our Savior Jesus). LSB 195



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



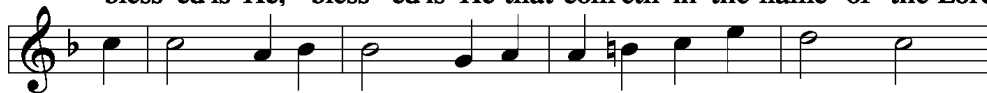
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



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: (We pray the words that Jesus gave us to pray, trusting that our Father will hear and answer us). LSB 197

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,

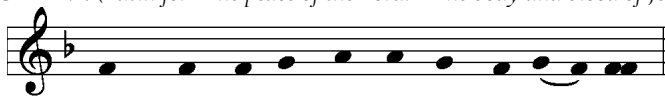
but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

WORDS OF OUR LORD (Jesus tells us that He gives us His body and blood under the bread and the wine). LSB 197

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."



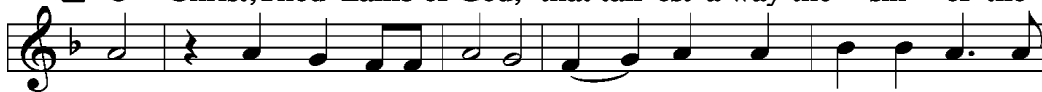
P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



G A - men.



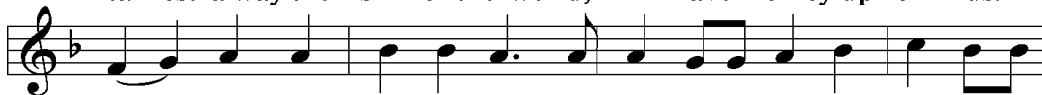
G O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the



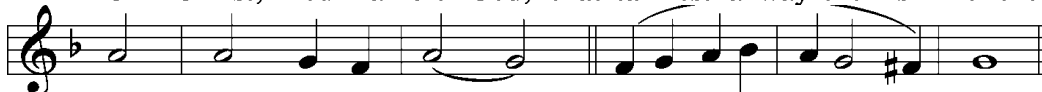
world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that



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

Silent Prayer before Communing:

Dear Savior, at your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul at the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, Great Da - vid's great - er Son!
 2 He comes with res - cue speed - y To those who suf - fer wrong,
 3 He shall come down like show - ers Up - on the fruit - ful earth;
 4 Kings shall fall down be - fore Him And gold and in - cense bring;
 5 O'er ev - 'ry foe vic - to - rious, He on His throne shall rest,



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, His reign on earth be - gun!
 To help the poor and need - y And bid the weak be strong;
 Love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, Spring in His path to birth.
 All na - tions shall a - dore Him, His praise all peo - ple sing.
 From age to age more glo - rious, All bless - ing and all - blest.



He comes to break op - pres - sion, To set the cap - tive free,
 To give them songs for sigh - ing, Their dark - ness turn to light,
 Be - fore Him on the moun - tains Shall peace, the her - ald, go;
 To Him shall prayer un - ceas - ing And dai - ly vows as - cend;
 The tide of time shall nev - er His cov - e - nant re - move;



To take a - way trans - gres - sion And rule in eq - ui - ty.
 Whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, Were pre - cious in His sight.
 And righ - teous - ness in foun - tains From hill to val - ley flow.
 His king - dom still in - creas - ing, A king - dom with - out end.
 His name shall stand for - ev - er— That name to us is Love.

The Star Proclaims the King Is Here



1 The star pro - claims the King is here; But, Her - od,
 2 The east - ern sa - ges saw from far And fol - lowed
 3 With - in the Jor - dan's sa - cred flood The heav'n - ly
 4 And oh, what mir - a - cle di - vine, When wa - ter
 5 For this Thy glad e - piph - a - ny All glo - ry,



why this sense - less fear? For He who of - fers heav'n - ly
 on His guid - ing star; And, led by light, to light they
 Lamb in meek - ness stood That He, of whom no sin was
 red - dened in - to wine! He spoke the word, and forth it
 Je - sus, be to Thee, Whom with the Fa - ther we a -



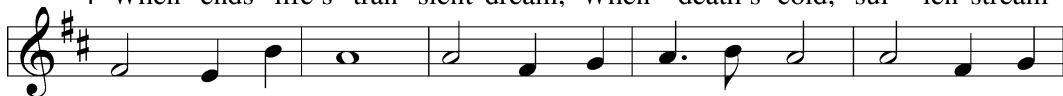
birth Seeks not the king - doms of this earth.
 trod And by their gifts con - fessed their God.
 known, Might cleanse His peo - ple from their own.
 flowed In streams that na - ture ne'er be - stowed.
 dore, And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

LSB 702



1 My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
 2 May Thy rich grace im - part Strength to my faint - ing heart;
 3 While life's dark maze I tread And griefs a - round me spread,
 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, When death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine. Now hear me while I pray; Take all my
 My zeal in - spire! As Thou hast died for me, Oh, may my
 Be Thou my guide; Bid dark - ness turn to day, Wipe sor - row's
 Shall o'er me roll, Blest Sav - ior, then, in love, Fear and dis -



guilt a - way; O let me from this day Be whol - ly Thine!
 love to Thee Pure, warm, and change - less be, A liv - ing fire!
 tears a - way, Nor let me ev - er stray From Thee a - side.
 trust re - move; O bear me safe a - bove, A ran - somed soul!

Silent Prayer after Communing:

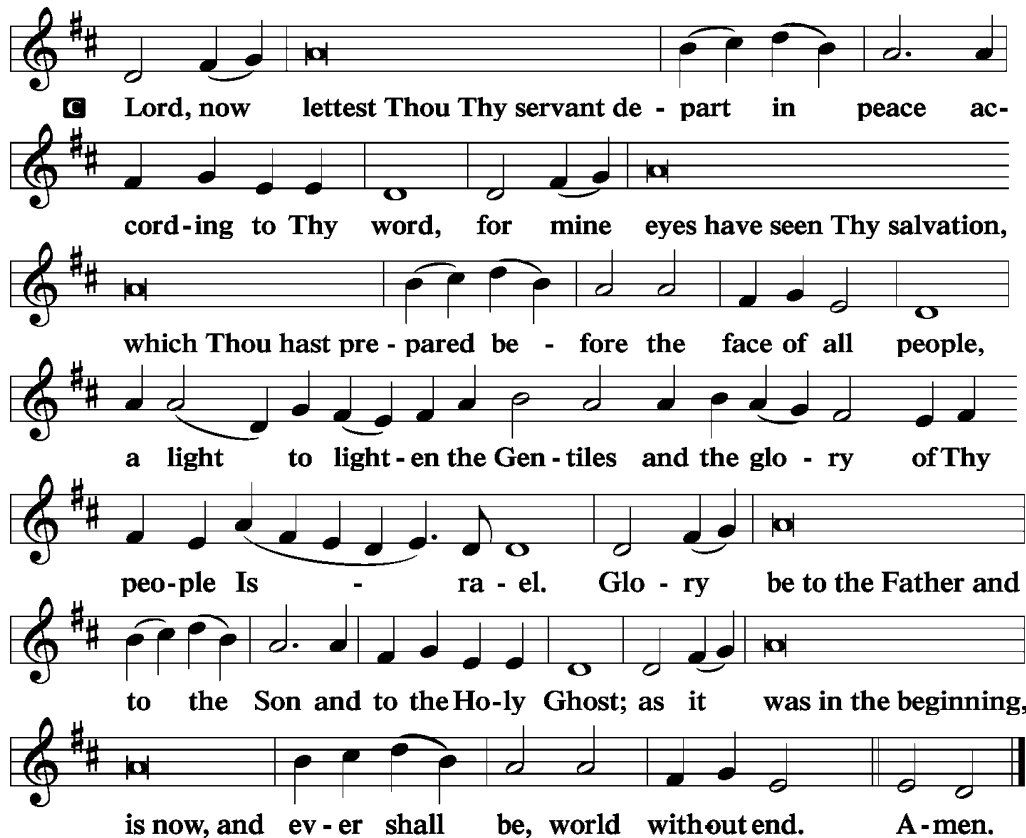
Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of my sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

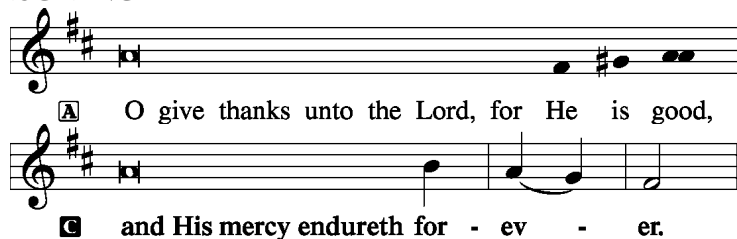
C Amen.

Stand



■ Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -
 cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
 which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
 a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
 peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
 to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

THANKSGIVING



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

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT: *(We thank God for what He has done and ask that it would show forth in our lives).*

■ 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.

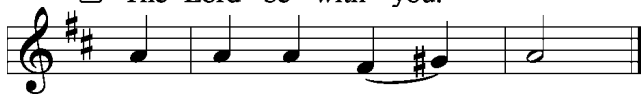


■ A - men.

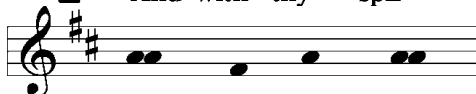
BENEDICAMUS



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



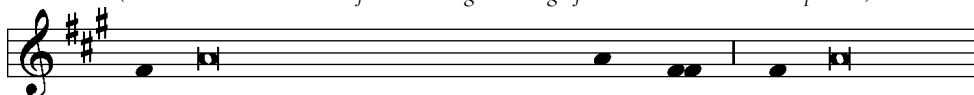
A Bless we the Lord.



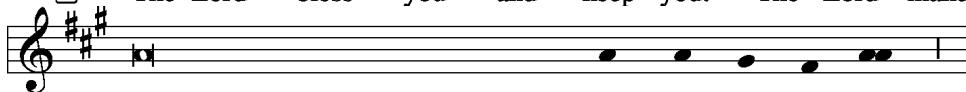
C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION: *(The Divine Service ends just as it began. We go forth with God's name upon us).*

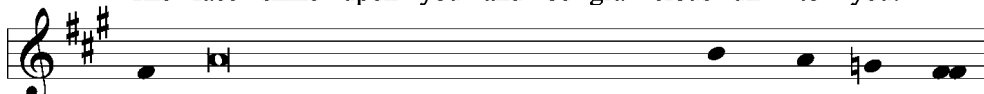
LSB 202



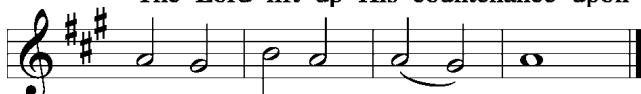
P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

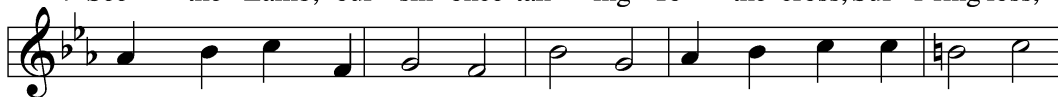


C A-men, a-men, a - men.

Sit



1 All my heart a - gain re - joic - es As I hear Far and near
 2 Hear! The Con - quer - or has spo - ken: "Now the foe, Sin and woe,
 3 Should we fear our God's dis - plea - sure, Who, to save, Free - ly gave
 4 See the Lamb, our sin once tak - ing To the cross, Suf - f'ring loss,



Sweet - est an - gel voic - es. "Christ is born!" their choirs are sing - ing
 Death and hell are bro - ken!" God is man, man to de - liv - er,
 His most pre - cious trea - sure? To re - deem us He has giv - en
 Full a - tone - ment mak - ing. For our life His own He ten - ders,



Till the air Ev - 'ry - where Now with joy is ring - ing.
 And the Son Now is one With our blood for - ev - er.
 His own Son From the throne Of His might in heav - en.
 And His grace All our race Fit for glo - ry ren - ders.

5 Softly from His lowly manger
 Jesus calls
 One and all,
 "You are safe from danger.
 Children, from the sins that grieve you
 You are freed;
 All you need
 I will surely give you."

6 Come, then, banish all your sadness!
 One and all,
 Great and small,
 Come with songs of gladness.
 We shall live with Him forever
 There on high
 In that joy
 Which will vanish never.

Silent Prayer After Worship

Almighty and merciful God, we have again worshiped in Your presence and received both forgiveness for our many sins and the assurance of Your love in Jesus Christ. We thank You for this undeserved grace and ask You to keep us in faith until we inherit eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

Hymn of the Month: “All My Heart Again Rejoices” (LSB 360)

Text Background

This Christmas hymn of Paul Gerhardt (1607-76) was published in 1653. The original hymn has fifteen stanzas, but our *Lutheran Service Book* has kept these six stanzas that beautifully proclaim the heart of the hymn: what the incarnation means for us. Given that Gerhardt lived through suffering and death during the Thirty Years’ War and witnessed the death of five members of his family (four of them died as infants), his devotion to the Christ child and his confident faith in the significance of the incarnation make this hymn all the more moving.

In this hymn, as well as all seven of Gerhardt’s Christmas hymns, you will notice how Gerhardt is not afraid to speak of sin, guilt, death, blood, suffering, the bearing of crosses, and even dying, even on Christmas! Gerhardt weaves the atonement into the incarnation, highlighting the mystery, richness, and depth of what it means that God should become flesh and blood, a man like one of us: “*God is man, man to deliver, and the Son now is one with our blood forever.*”

Stanzas 1 & 2

The song of the angelic hosts at Christ’s birth still fills the air with joy. Indeed, “*all my heart rejoices*” as I hear them, far and near, proclaim Christ’s birth. “*Unto you,*” the angel says, “*is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*” And who is He? He is the “Conqueror” of the old evil foe, that ancient serpent, the devil. He is the “Conqueror” of my sin and woe, all my transgressions. He is the “Conqueror” of the death I deserve to die and the hell that I have earned. He is the Christ child, both divine and human, both a helpless babe and the ruler of the universe. In Him, God becomes man, the divine puts on humanity, the Creator appears as a creature, and the eternal Son of God is incarnate as the Son of Man. He is “*one with our blood forever*” to redeem us by his precious blood.

Stanzas 3 & 4

An unbelieving heart only sees God as a vengeful judge who is displeased with humanity and angered by its ruin. To be sure, God hates sin and takes no pleasure in the wicked. Yet has He abandoned us in our sin? Has He left us to wallow in the mire of our own making? Should we fear our God’s displeasure? Look at what He has done: “*To redeem us He has given His own Son from the throne of his might in heaven.*” See the Lamb, exchanging our sin for His glory, suffering loss to win us heaven, giving up His life for ours! See Him leaving heaven’s radiance for earth’s ruins, exchanging a crown for a cross, serving as your substitute, and enduring the agony and death you should have suffered! He paid the penalty of your own transgression. Should you fear God’s displeasure? Behold His wondrous love! It gives itself freely, seeking no payment in return. It excludes no one. It leaves nothing in uncertainty, nothing incomplete, but offers you, through faith, a sure salvation.

Stanzas 5 & 6

The *manger* of Christ shows up repeatedly in Gerhardt’s Christmas hymns. The manger not only includes the “once-upon-a-time” event in Bethlehem, but Christ’s continual presence with His people, especially in Holy Communion, where the same incarnate Savior, Jesus Christ, is cradled and presented to His people. The shepherds and Magi found Him once in Royal David’s City, but we hasten to meet Him in the Sacrament. Here is where Jesus calls His children, keeps them from danger, frees them from sin, cheers their hearts, and leads them safely at His side until they join the choirs above. “*Come, then, banish all your sadness... come with songs of gladness!*”

