

# Third Sunday after the Epiphany

January 25<sup>th</sup>, 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](http://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: *By His coming in the flesh and by His preaching and miracles, the Lord Jesus shines the light of His Gospel upon “the people who walked in darkness” and “who dwelt in a land of deep darkness” (Is. 9:2). He also has “multiplied the nation” and “increased its joy” (Is. 9:3) by calling disciples to Himself from the ends of the earth. For this purpose, He calls Peter and Andrew, with James and John, to follow Him and be “fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19). As Jesus did, they also go forth “proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people” (Matt. 4:23). They preach the foolishness of the cross of Christ as the very power and wisdom of God. This word and preaching of the cross divides “those who are perishing” from “us who are being saved” (1 Cor. 1:18), but it unites the Church, the one Body of Christ, “in the same mind and the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10)*

**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 From God the Fa - ther, vir - gin - born To us the  
 2 Be - gin - ning from His home on high, In hu - man  
 3 Glide on, O glo - rious Sun, and bring The gift of  
 4 A - bide with us, O Lord, we pray; The gloom of



on - ly Son came down; By death the font to con - se -  
 flesh He came to die; Cre - a - tion by His death re -  
 heal - ing on Your wing; To ev - 'ry dull and cloud - ed  
 dark - ness chase a - way; Your work of heal - ing, Lord, be -



crate, The faith - ful to re - gen - er - ate.  
 stored, And shed new joys of life a - broad.  
 sense The clear - ness of Your light dis - pense.  
 gin, And take a - way the stain of sin.

5 Lord, once You came to earth's domain                      △ 6 To You, O Lord, all glory be  
 And, we believe, shall come again;                      For this Your blest epiphany;  
 Be with us on the battlefield,                      To God, whom all His hosts adore,  
 From ev'ry harm Your people shield.                      And Holy Spirit evermore.

**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  $\text{✠}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

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

*Psalm 22:27–31; antiphon: v. 22*

*I will tell of your name to my brothers;  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.*

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,  
and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

For kingship belongs to the LORD,  
and he rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;  
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep  
himself alive.

Posterity shall serve him;  
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;  
they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn,  
that he has done it.

*I will tell of your name to my brothers;  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.*

## GLORIA PATRI



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



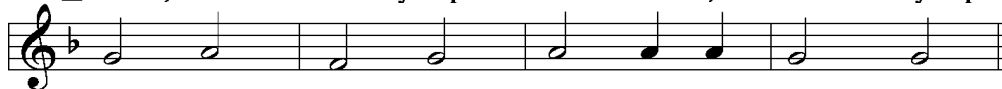
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

**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



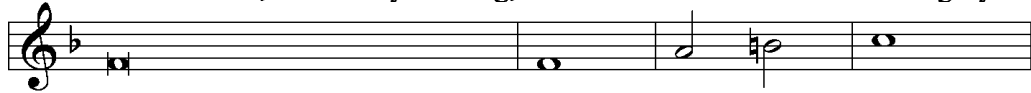
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



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.



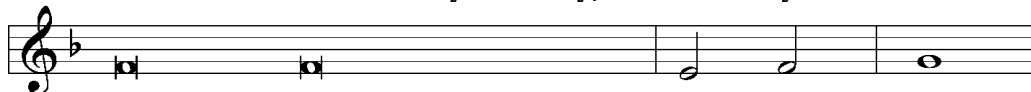
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re - ceive our prayer.



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.

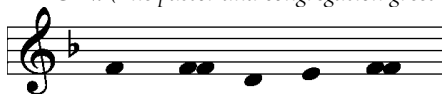


Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,

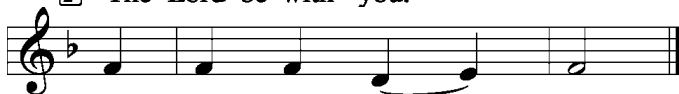


art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

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



**P** The Lord be with you.

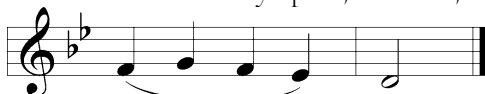


**C** And with thy spir - it.

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, mercifully look upon our infirmities and stretch forth the hand of Your majesty to heal and defend us; 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 9:1-4*

<sup>1</sup> There will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has light shined.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation;  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of his burden,  
and the staff for his shoulder,  
the rod of his oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## PSALM

*Psalm 27:1-9; antiphon: v. 1*

<sup>1</sup> *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?  
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

<sup>2</sup> When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh,  
my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

<sup>3</sup>Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;  
though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

<sup>4</sup>One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after:  
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty  
of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

<sup>5</sup>For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;  
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock.

<sup>6</sup>And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent  
sacrifices with shouts of joy;  
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;  
be gracious to me and answer me!

<sup>8</sup>You have said, "Seek my face."  
My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."

<sup>9</sup>Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger,  
O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

<sup>10</sup>*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?*  
*The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

## EPISTLE READING

*1 Corinthians 1:10–18*

<sup>10</sup>I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that  
there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

<sup>11</sup>For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers.

<sup>12</sup>What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow  
Cephas," or "I follow Christ." <sup>13</sup>Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized  
in the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup>I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, <sup>15</sup>so that  
no one may say that you were baptized in my name. <sup>16</sup>(I did baptize also the household of  
Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) <sup>17</sup>For Christ did not send  
me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of  
Christ be emptied of its power.

<sup>18</sup>For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is  
the power of God.

**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.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fourth chapter.



**G** Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

<sup>12</sup>When [Jesus] heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. <sup>13</sup>And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup>“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,  
the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—  
<sup>16</sup>the people dwelling in darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,  
on them a light has dawned.”

<sup>17</sup>From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

<sup>18</sup>While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” <sup>20</sup>Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup>And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them.

<sup>22</sup>Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

<sup>23</sup>And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. <sup>24</sup>So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. <sup>25</sup>And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**G** Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

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

**G** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life T everlasting. Amen.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY:

*O Christ, Our True and Only Light*

LSB 839



1 O Christ, our true and on - ly light, En - light - en  
2 Fill with the ra - dianc of Your grace The souls now  
3 O gent - ly call those gone a - stray That they may  
4 Shine on the dark - ened and the cold; Re - call the  
5 That they with us may ev - er - more Such grace with



those who sit in night; Let those a - far now  
lost in er - ror's maze; En - light - en those whose  
find the sav - ing way! Let ev - 'ry con - science  
wan - d'ers to Your fold. U - nite all those who  
won - d'ring thanks a - dore And end - less praise to



hear Your voice And in Your fold with us re - joice.  
in - most minds Some dark de - lu - sion haunts and blinds.  
sore op - pressed In You find peace and heav'n - ly rest.  
walk a - part; Con - firm the weak and doubt - ing heart,  
You be giv'n By all Your Church in earth and heav'n.

SERMON "A light has dawned"

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

Stand

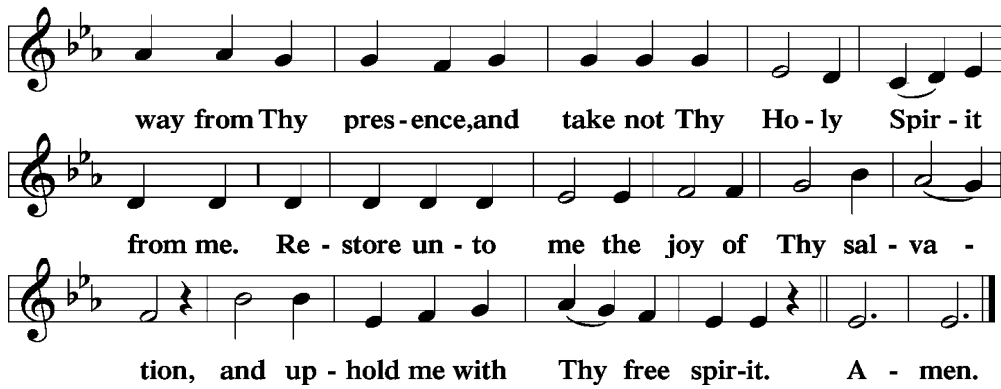
OFFERTORY *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness with sacrifices of praise).*



**☐** 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

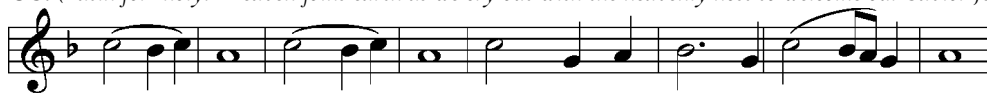
PREFACE AND PROPER PREFACE: *(We praise and thank God for what He does for us in the Lord's Supper).* LSB 194



**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 what had been hidden from before the foundation of the world You have made known to the nations in Your Son. In Him, being found in the substance of our mortal nature, You have manifested the fullness of Your 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:

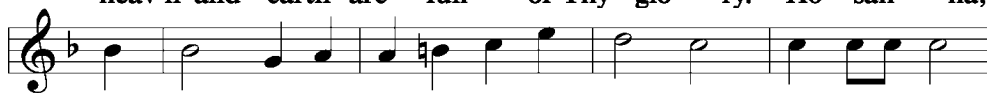
**SANCTUS:** (*Latin for "holy." Heaven joins earth as we cry out with the heavenly host to welcome our Savior Jesus*). LSB 195



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



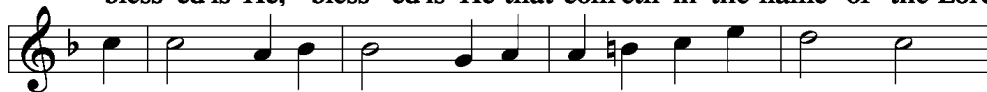
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



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.

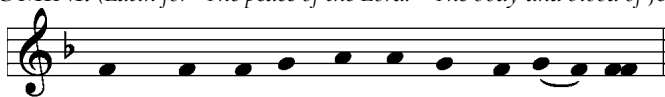
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

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  $\text{✠}$  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  $\text{✠}$  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: (*Latin for “The peace of the Lord.” The body and blood of Jesus gives us peace*). LSB 197



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

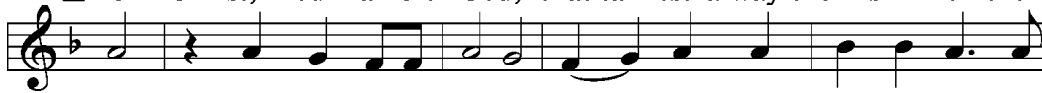


**A** - men.

AGNUS DEI: (*Latin for “Lamb of God.” We cry out to Christ our Lamb who was sacrificed for our sins*). LSB 198



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



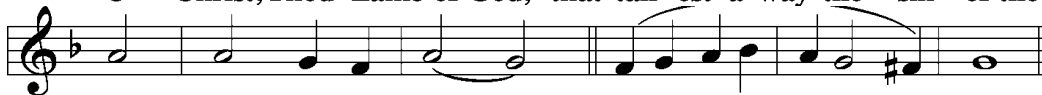
world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that



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 "Come, fol - low Me," the Sav - ior spake, "All in My  
 2 "I am the light, I light the way, A god - ly  
 3 "My heart a - bounds in low - li - ness, My soul with  
 4 "I teach you how to shun and flee What harms your  
 5 Then let us fol - low Christ, our Lord, And take the



way a - bid - ing; De - ny your - selves, the world for - sake,  
 life dis - play - ing; I bid you walk as in the day;  
 love is glow - ing; And gra - cious words My lips ex - press,  
 soul's sal - va - tion, Your heart from ev - 'ry guile to free,  
 cross ap - point - ed And, firm - ly cling - ing to His Word,



O - bey My call and guid - ing. O bear the cross, what -  
 I keep your feet from stray - ing. I am the way, and  
 With meek - ness o - ver - flow - ing. My heart, My mind, My  
 From sin and its temp - ta - tion. I am the ref - uge  
 In suf - f'ring be un - daunt - ed. For those who bear the



e'er be - tide, Take My ex - am - ple for your guide.  
 well I show How you must so - journ here be - low.  
 strength, My all, To God I yield, on Him I call.  
 of the soul And lead you to your heav'n - ly goal."  
 bat - tle's strain The crown of heav'n - ly life ob - tain.



1 Rise, shine, you peo - ple! Christ the Lord has en - tered  
 2 See how He sends the pow'rs of e - vil reel - ing;  
 3 Come, cel - e - brate, your ban - ners high un - furl - ing,  
 4 Tell how the Fa - ther sent His Son to save us.



Our hu - man sto - ry; God in Him is cen - tered.  
 He brings us free - dom, light and life and heal - ing.  
 Your songs and prayers a - gainst the dark-ness hurl - ing.  
 Tell of the Son, who life and free-dom gave us.



He comes to us, by death and sin sur -  
 All men and wom - en, who by guilt are  
 To all the world go out and tell the  
 Tell how the Spir - it calls from ev - 'ry



round - ed, With grace un - bound - ed.  
 driv - en, Now are for - giv - en.  
 sto - ry Of Je - sus' glo - ry.  
 na - tion His new cre - a - tion.

## Songs of Thankfulness and Praise



1 Songs of thank - ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to Thee we raise,  
 2 Man - i - fest at Jor-dan's stream, Proph-et, Priest, and King su-preme;  
 3 Man - i - fest in mak-ing whole Pal - sied limbs and faint - ing soul;  
 4 Sun and moon shall dark-ened be, Stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;  
 5 Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord, Pres - ent in Thy ho - ly Word—



Man - i - fest - ed by the star To the sa - ges from a - far,  
 And at Ca - na wed - ding guest In Thy God-head man - i - fest;  
 Man - i - fest in val - iant fight, Quell - ing all the dev - il's might;  
 Christ will then like light - ning shine, All will see His glo - rious sign;  
 Grace to im - i - tate Thee now And be pure, as pure art Thou;



Branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem In Thy birth at Beth - le - hem:  
 Man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, Chang - ing wa - ter in - to wine;  
 Man - i - fest in gra - cious will, Ev - er bring - ing good from ill;  
 All will then the trum - pet hear, All will see the Judge ap - pear;  
 That we might be - come like Thee At Thy great e - piph - a - ny



An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.  
 An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.  
 An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.  
 Thou by all wilt be con - fessed, God in man made man - i - fest.  
 And may praise Thee, ev - er blest, God in man made man - i - fest.

**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  $\text{✠}$  in peace.

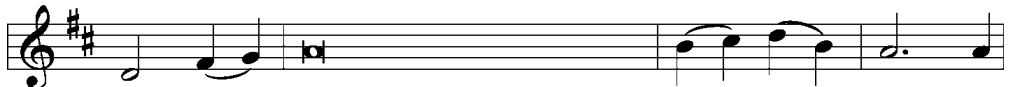
**C** Amen.

*Stand*

**POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE:** *(Having received Christ in the Sacrament, we give thanks and go forth in peace).*

**Nunc Dimittis**

*LSB 199*



**C** Lord, now letteth 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

**A** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
**C** 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).*

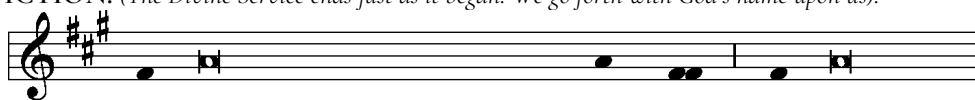
**P** Let us pray.

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.

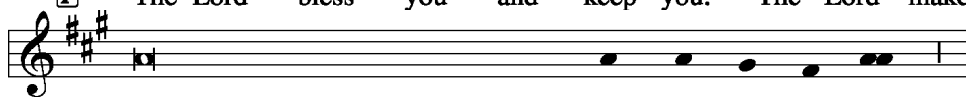
**C** A - men.

BENEDICAMUS

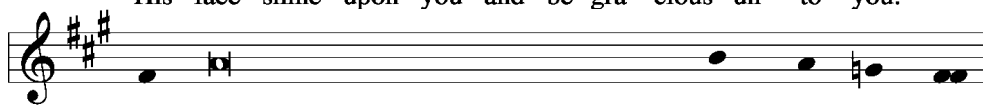
**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And with thy spir - it.  
**A** Bless we the Lord.  
**C** Thanks be to God.



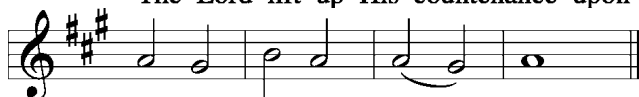
**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



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

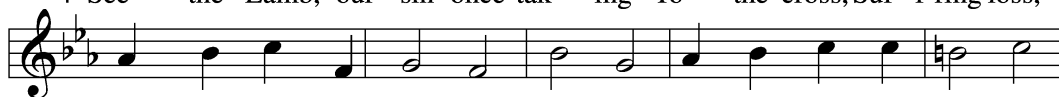
CLOSING HYMN:

*All My Heart Again Rejoices*

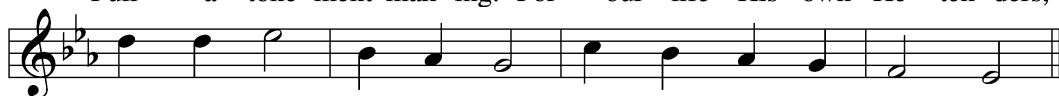
LSB 360



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!*”

