FOURTH SUNDAY
IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 22, 2024
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN
CHURCH
Missouri Synod



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Website: lutheranmercedes.com

Rev. Ed Weber, Pastor 956.463.1305 eweber10@aol.com

> Sunday 9:00 A.M. Worship Service

> > 10:30 A.M.

Adult Bible Class/ Sunday School

Holy Communion: Every Sunday

www.facebook.com/lutheranmercedes/

Website: Misionemanuel.com

> Office Hrs., M-F 8 am to 12 pm CCLI # 2585510

"Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her." (Luke1:38)

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 22, 2024

# **WELCOME to IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all our visitors this morning. It is our hope that you will benefit by your worship here with us, and that you will return again soon. We would greatly appreciate it if everyone would fill out an Attendance/Communion card so that we can keep track of our attendance. They are located in the pew racks in front of you.

The Lord's Supper is celebrated every Sunday at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as Christ our Lord says, He gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:26-29). And through this sacrament, He strengthens us for new life in Him (Romans 8:10;1 Peter 2:4). Jesus personally invites weak sinners (Mark 9:24) who trust His words, "This is My body which is given for you... this cup is the new covenant in My blood which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-20), to receive His blessings of forgiveness, life and salvation. (Romans 8:31-32).

Because "he who eats and drinks our Lord's body and blood in an unworthy manner drinks judgement to oneself" (1 Corinthians 11:29), and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith by those gathered at this altar (1 Cor.10:17;11:26), any who have not been instructed, or who hold a confession and church fellowship differing from that of this congregation, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and desire to receive the Sacrament, should first arrange to speak with the pastor. For further study, see Matthew 10:32f.; 18:15–35; 26:26–29; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-20; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:14-21;11:17–34.

A Prayer Upon Entering Church - Into the darkness, You bring light, and into my life, You make known Your perfect and everlasting love. Make me ready for the celebration of my Savior's birth, that I receive Him as He comes to me as a humble infant, bringing to fruition the new covenant of Your love; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and

forever. Amen.

AS WE GATHER - The Advent season of preparing for the promised Savior to be born as one of us soon reaches its climax. Though in our homes and lives we may be wondering if we have done all we have needed to get ready for our own celebrations, we give thanks that at the center of our coming Christmas observations the Lord has prepared all we need. In this last Sunday of Advent and in the days ahead of anticipated Christmas joy, may we find peace in the preparations done freely for us out of grace, mercy, and perfect love centered on the Savior we soon welcome, who was born for us and all the world.

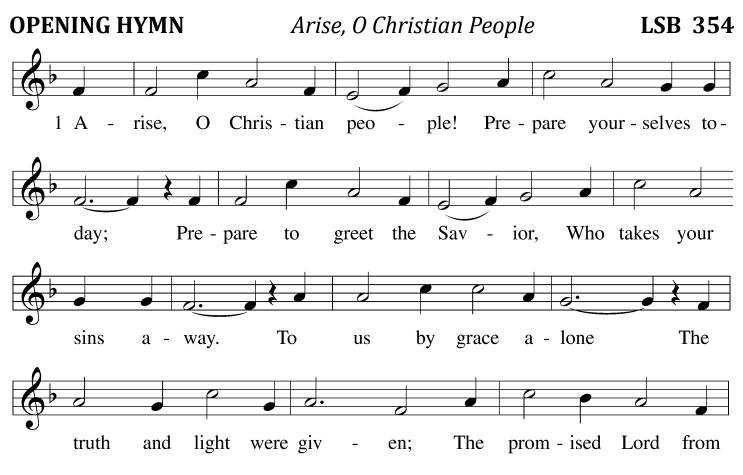
### **DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING THREE**

**PAGE 184** 

**PRELUDE** 

(A quiet time for prayer and meditation)

### **WELCOME**





Please stand

#### **INVOCATION**

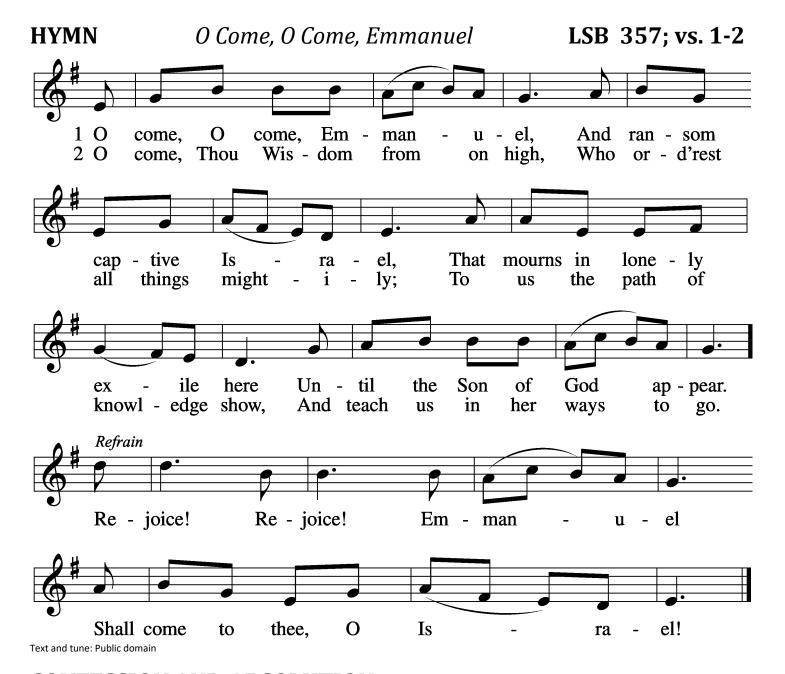
- P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

# LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John 1:5, 9; 3:16; Psalm 36:5-9

- P We light the fourth Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who came to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.
- C The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- P The fourth Advent candle has been known as the angel candle and the candle of love. As our Advent season soon ends, we await the angelic message of the good news of a Savior. We have come to know the love of the one true God this season and always as we have prepared to celebrate His birth. We know God's promises come to fruition in Jesus, who later made known His Father's love in His being born into this world; in His life, ministry, teaching, preaching, healing; and ultimately in His dying and rising. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."
- C The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.
- P Guided by the light of love, we respond with the psalmist: "Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds.
- C Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast You save, O LORD.
- P How precious is Your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.
- C They feast on the abundance of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights.
- P For with You is the fountain of life;
- C in Your light do we see light."

Four Advent candles are lit.



# **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

- 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.
  - Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- who made heaven and earth.  $\mathbf{C}$
- 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)
- O almighty God, merciful Father, P
- $\mathbf{C}$ 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.

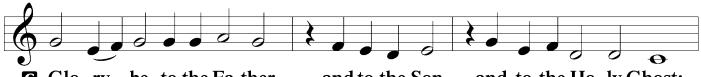
- P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
-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

#### + SERVICE OF THE WORD +

**INTROIT** *1 Samuel 2:1b, 2, 5b–7; antiphon: Luke 1:46b–47* 

- P "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
- C I smile at my enemies, because I rejoice in Your salvation.
- P "No one is holy like the Lord, for there is none besides You, nor is there any rock like our God.
- C Even the barren has borne seven, and she who has many children has become feeble.
- P "The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up.
- C The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up.
- P "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

### **GLORIA PATRI**

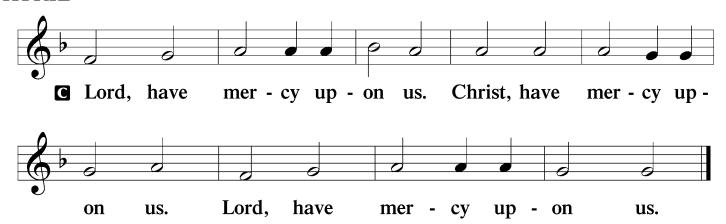


**■** Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost;



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

### **KYRIE**



### **SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY**



P Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



### Please sit

# **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

*Micah 5:2–5a* 

(The coming King born in Bethlehem)

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." 3 Therefore He shall give them up, until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. 4 And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth; 5 and this One shall be peace.

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

**PSALM** Psalm 80:1–7; antiphon: v. 7

- P Restore us, O God of hosts; cause Your face to shine, and we shall be saved!
- C O Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!
- P Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up Your strength, and come and save us!
- C Restore us, O God; cause Your face to shine, and we shall be saved!
- P O Lord God of hosts, how long will You be angry against the prayer of Your people?
- C You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in great measure.
- P You have made us a strife to our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves.
- C Restore us, O God of hosts; cause Your face to shine, and we shall be saved!

# **EPISTLE** Hebrews 10:5–10

(Jesus comes to do God's will)

- 5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:
  - "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.
- 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.
- 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God.' "
- 8 Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
- P This is the Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

Please stand

### **ALLELUIA**

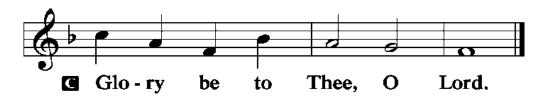


### **HOLY GOSPEL**

Luke 1:26-45

(The angel Gabriel announces Jesus' birth to Mary and Mary visits Elizabeth)

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



26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name

Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

37 For with God nothing will be impossible."

38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



#### **NICENE CREED**

All: 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.

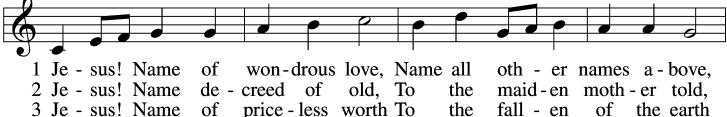
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission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

Please sit



Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love

LSB 900



4 Je - sus! Name of mer - cy mild, Giv - en to the ho - ly Child



Kneel-ing cell, By an - gel Ga - bri - el. in low - ly the her gave, "Je - sus shall His prom - ise that it peo-ple save." For the hu-man woe First He tast - ed here be - low. When the cup of

- 5 Jesus! Only name that's giv'n
  Under all the mighty heav'n
  Whereby those to sin enslaved
  Burst their fetters and are saved.
- 6 Jesus! Name of wondrous love, Human name of God above; Pleading only this, we flee Helpless, O our God, to Thee.

Text and tune: Public domain

# SERMON "Christmas gifts for Mary and for us!"

Luke 1:38

### **OFFERING**

Please stand





Love and re - vere Him—O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

2 His arm now baring,

His strength declaring—

Sing the greatness of the Lord!

The proud He scatters,

Their rule He shatters—

Sing the greatness of the Lord!

Oppression halted;

The meek exalted.

Full are the hungry;

Empty, the wealthy—

O sing the greatness of God the Lord!

Here is the token

All that was spoken

To Abr'ham's offspring

God is fulfilling—

O sing the greatness of God the Lord!

Text: © 1991 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005188

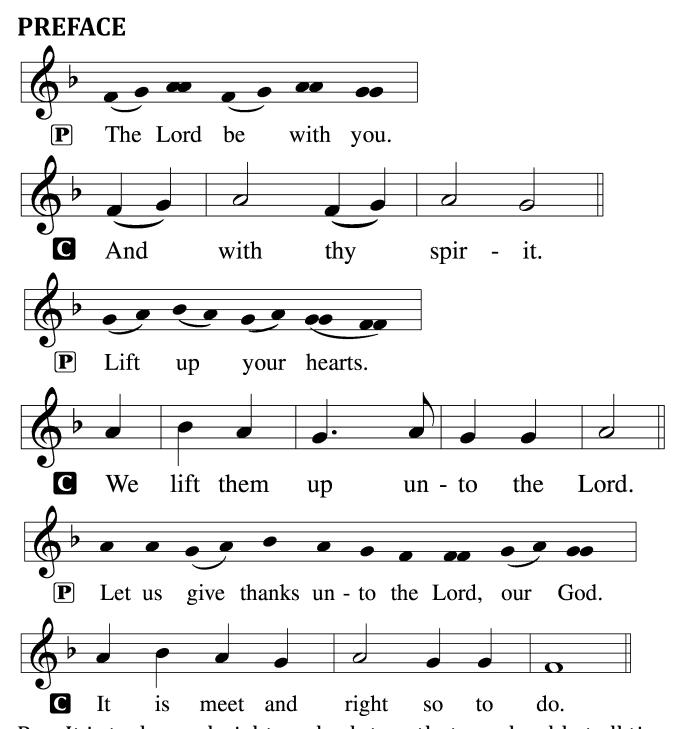
# **SHARING OF THE PEACE** "Peace be with you" [American Sign Language]

# **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH** Response: LSB 348

- P Let us pray for the church, for the people of God, and for all people according to their needs.
  - We await to celebrate our King, who has come, promised to be born among the small clan of Judah in Bethlehem, fulfiller of the old covenant promise, and bringer of life and grace in the new covenant in which we now live. We await our King, who promises to return, to restore and renew what was broken, and to bring life and light everlasting. Be with us as we soon close this Advent season of anticipation and preparation, rejoicing in the everlasting King who has come and will come again.
- C The King shall come when morning dawns and light Triumphant breaks, when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes.

- P Almighty King, Your ways are not our ways nor are Your thoughts our thoughts. In days of doubts and despair that arise, in cases of confusion, and in times of trial and tribulation, remind us of Your kingdom in which we have been called and Your eternal kingdom to come. Be with those who struggle, [including . . .]. Help us to see Your mighty work even among our wayward world of sin and sorrow and the perfect plan of salvation imparted through the Savior we await.
- C Not as of old a little child, to bear and fight and die, but crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morning sky. Oh, brighter than the rising morn when Christ, victorious, rose and left the lonesome place of death despite the rage of foes.
- P Ever-present King, we lift up those who have been placed in authority over us in our community, state, nation, and world. Guide and direct their decisions that they be pleasing to You and for the benefit of all, including the marginalized, the voiceless, and the outcast. Where there is violence and warfare, grant peace. Where there is distress, bring stability. Where there is terror, bring comfort. Where there are opportunities for us to bring compassion and concern through our voices and actions, compel us to do so faithfully.
- C Oh, brighter than that glorious morn shall dawn upon our race the day when Christ in splendor comes and we shall see His face.
- P King of grace, the one sacrifice needed on our behalf has been given in Jesus, who was born into this world to take upon Himself our sin, burdens, and shame. In the new covenant of grace You have established through Him, help us through Your Spirit to remain faithful to You in Your eternal kingdom.
- C The King shall come when morning dawns and light and beauty brings. Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray: Come quickly, King of kings!
- P Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C Amen.

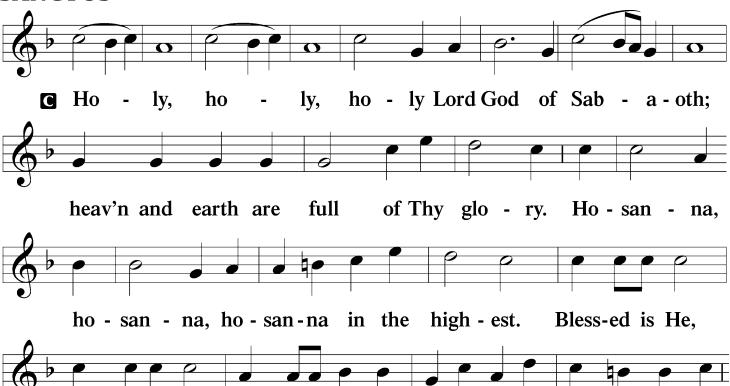
#### + SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +



P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify

Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

## **SANCTUS**



bless-ed is He, bless-ed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

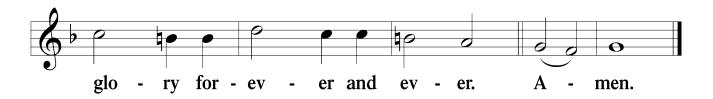


Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.

# **LORD'S PRAYER** (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.

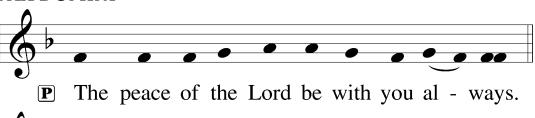




### THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

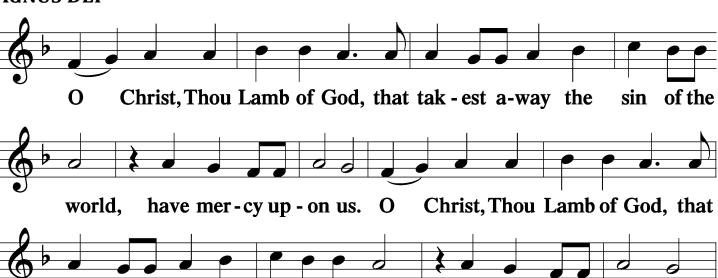
- P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
- P In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when 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."







#### **AGNUS DEI**



tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.



Please sit

## **DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

#### SILENT PRAYER before COMMUNING

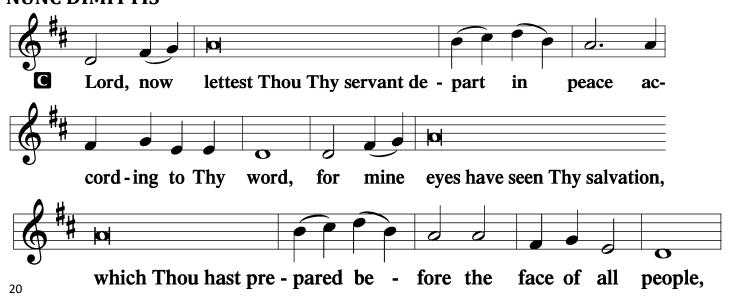
Heavenly Father, in my Holy Baptism you have called me to be Your own possession. Prepare my heart to receive the most holy body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of all my sins. Strengthen my faith, increase my love and hope, and assure me a place at Your heavenly table, where I will eat eternal manna and drink of the river of the water of life freely, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

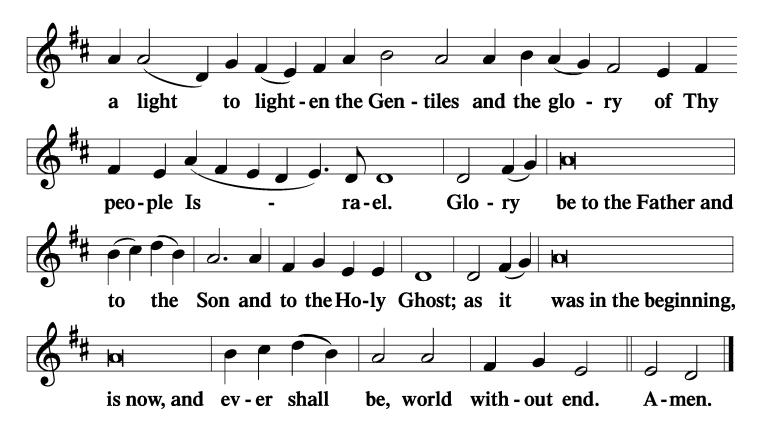




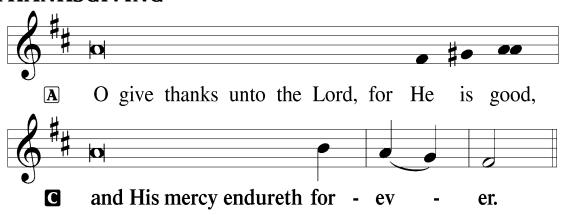
#### Please stand

#### **NUNC DIMITTIS**





#### **THANKSGIVING**



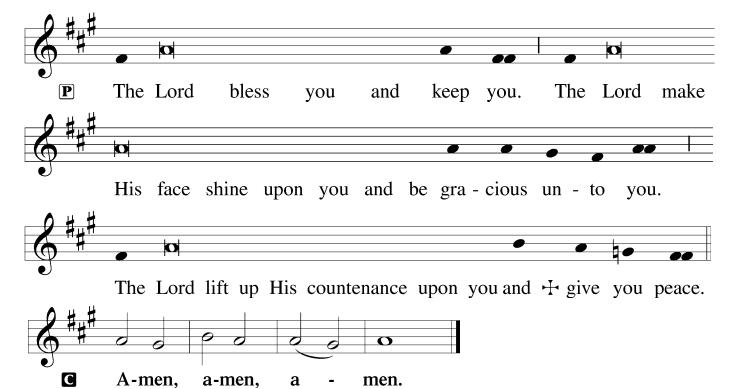
P Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



# **BENEDICAMUS**



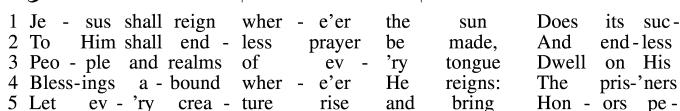
## **BENEDICTION**

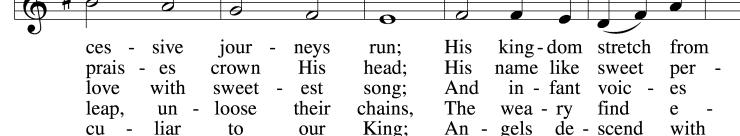


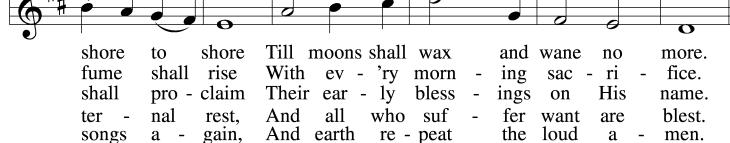
# SENDING HYMN 1 Je To Peo - ple 4 Bless-ings 5 Let

Jesus Shall Reign

LSB 832







Text and tune: Public domain

### **DISMISSAL**

- P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

### **POSTLUDE**



### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Portals of Prayer** for October to December 2024 are available in the Narthex or office.

Join us for **Sunday School and Bible Study** at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Goetz is leading the class.

# December Activities

Family Confirmation Class on Thursdays @ 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

# January Activities

German Polka Fest, Saturday, January 18, 2025 at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. (Sign up sheet posted on the church door.)

January 2025 Women's Retreat Chosen: A Study of Esther

Friday, January 24th - 6-9 p.m. and Saturday, January 25th - 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

@ St. Paul Lutheran Church; 602 Morgan Blvd.; Harlingen, TX
Registration is \$50.00 Includes: Retreat materials, snacks, coffee and tea, &
Friday night - catered dinner; Saturday - breakfast crumpets and catered
lunch. For more info go to: splch.breezechms.com/form/2025retreat

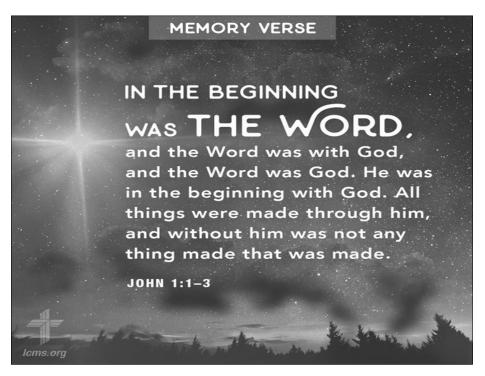


Welcome back! You have been missed!



# Memory Verse Challenge:

This week's:



Sermon Notes				
P C L C L OV E				
H S W J W				



# FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Exodus 13:1–3a, 11–15
Psalm 111
Colossians 3:12–17

Luke 2:22–40

12/11/2024			Envelopes:
			<b>Envelopes-Othe</b>
Mid-Week 2 Advent Service	39		Envelopes-Othe <b>Thanksgiving</b> Donation: <b>Churc</b>
Plate:	\$	51.00	Donation: <b>Churc</b> l
Envelopes:	\$	155.00	Baseball field for School
Memorial:			for School
Edgar & Ruth Neuhaus	\$ 22,000.00		1
Total:	\$ 22	2,206.00	Bible Class: <b>17</b>

12/15/2024		
Sunday Worship	<b>51</b>	
Plate:	\$	472.00
Envelopes:	\$	948.00
Envelopes-Other:		
Thanksgiving	\$	200.00
Donation: Church Rental	\$	150.00
Baseball field	\$	75.00
for School	\$	50.00
Total:	\$ 2	2,100.00
Bible Class: <b>17</b>		\$ 15.00

### The Lord Comes to Visit Us in Peace

The Fourth Sunday in Advent turns our attention toward the nativity of our Lord. With Mary, we await the coming of the Christ, her Son, conceived in her womb by the Spirit of God. As the Lord dealt graciously with her and did great things for her (Luke 1:48–49), so also He manifests Himself and His glory to us in mercy and gentleness. He comes to rule His people in peace, to "shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord." He comes forth not from the great capital city of Rome or Jerusalem, but from lowly little Bethlehem (Micah 5:2, 4). He comes to sacrifice Himself, in fulfillment of His Father's will, for the salvation and sanctification of His people (Heb. 10:10). He who once visited Elizabeth while hidden in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:39–45) now comes to visit us today, hidden in the lowliness of simple water, bread and wine.

	Bi-Weekly Church Activity Schedule				
	<b>December Sunday Servants</b>	January Sunday Servants			
Elder:	Ken Eilers	Don Vogel			
Altar Guild:	L Marchant/I Aguilera/ D Jackso	n BJ Neuhaus/ M Weber			
Music:	Doris Pickering				
This Week	Fourth Sunday in Advent				
Usher:	Dan Wehling				
Sunday:	Holy Communion Worship Service	ce 9:00 am			
	Sunday School & Adult Bible Stud	dy 10:30 am			
Next Week	First Sunday after Christmas				
Usher:	Don Vogel				
Sunday:	Holy Communion Worship Service	ce 9:00 am			
	Sunday School & Adult Bible Stud	dy 10:30 am			