

The Nativity of Our Lord

December 25,

Year of Our Lord 2025



The Living and Life-Giving Word of God Dwells among Us in the Flesh

In the beginning God created all things through His Word, His Son. But man fell into sin, and with man all creation was cursed. Therefore, God spoke His Word again, this time into the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle of our human nature (Ex. 40:17–21, 34–38). *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"* (John 1:1–14). The Son of God took on our flesh and blood and died on the cross in order that we might receive the right to become the children of God through faith. Baptized into Christ's body, we are made partakers of a new Genesis, *"the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit"* (Titus 3:4–7). In Christ, the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man has truly appeared.



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

**A Church of
The Lutheran Church—
Missouri Synod**

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† Confession and Absolution †

Ringing of the Bells

The congregation is invited to stand and face the cross at the back of the sanctuary.

*While singing, the congregation is invited
to follow the cross, turning as the cross passes.*

Hymn of Invocation: 378 Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light



1. Break forth, O beau - teous heav'n - ly light, And
2. O dear - est Child, whom I a - dore, Whose
3. All bless - ing, thanks, and praise to Thee, Lord
ush - er in the morn - ing. Ye shep - herds, shrink not
grace sur - pass - es mea - sure, My Broth - er, whom I
Je - sus Christ, be giv - en: Thou hast my Broth - er
with af - fright, The day of grace is dawn - ing. This
cher - ish more Than earth with all its trea - sure: Haste
deigned to be, Thou Lord of earth and heav - en. Help
Child, though weak in in - fan - cy, Our con - fi -
from Thy man - ger to de - part, O come and
me through - out this day of grace To praise Thy
dence and joy shall be, The pow'r of Sa - tan
dwell with - in my heart; With joy will I re -
love and seek Thy face; And when I stand be -
break - ing, Our peace with God now mak - ing.
ceive Thee, A cra - dle there will give Thee.
fore Thee For - ev - er to a - dore Thee.

Text: Johann Rist, 1607-67; tr. "Lutheran Hymnal (Australia)", 1973 Tune: Johann Schop, c. 1590-1667

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Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore 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

Psalm 98:1–4; antiphon: Isaiah 9:6

P For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,

C **and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

P Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

C **The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

P He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

C **Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son**

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

P For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
**C and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Kyrie

LSB 204



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 204



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole-be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro- claimed at Je-sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor-shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n-ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat-ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa-ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Micah 5:2–5a

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
 from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
 to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
 in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he shall be their peace.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Psalm 118:26a, 27a, 23

P Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
 The Lord is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us.

C This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

Epistle

Titus 3:4–7

⁴ When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on

us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

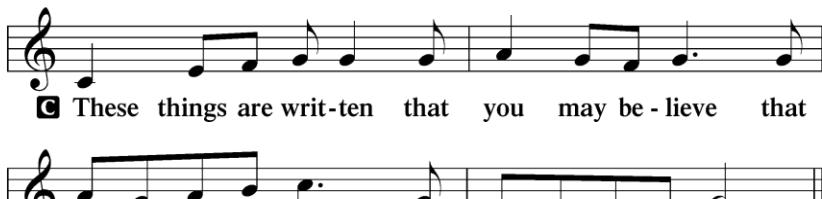
C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Alleluia and Verse



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



C These things are writ-ten that you may be - lieve that
Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1–20

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

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them,

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

C **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 ✝ everlasting. Amen.

Sit

Hymn of the Day: 361 O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-dring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ey - er - last - ing light.
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–93 Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908 Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P In thanksgiving and awe at the Word made flesh, that because He has become our brother we now are His sons and daughters through Baptism; and that God would keep us in true faith and fervent love toward each other, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all pastors, that God would work through their proclamation of Christ to bring the good news of joy and salvation to all who hear them, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For families who gather in this holy season, that they may have patience and be slow to judge and quick to forgive, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the lonely, that they may be comforted with Christ's presence and we may extend to them the welcome of our homes and the friendship of His grace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those in poverty or want, that they may be helped; that God would increase our generosity; and that we would present our bodies as living sacrifices, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the nations of this world, that they would be given a spirit of peace, so that conflicts would cease and all would see in the birth of Jesus the salvation of our God, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the sick, lonely, grieving and poor in spirit, *[especially _____]* that they may find comfort and healing in Jesus Christ, the light no darkness can overcome, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That the Lord would humble our hearts in repentance and give us faith to receive with joy and thanksgiving the precious gift of His body and blood; and that the Lord would grant to His Church unity of faith and harmony of life and practice, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who suffer persecution for the sake of Christ, that they would be kept firm in their faith as they bear witness to the light of the world; and that they would never lose sight of their identity as children of God, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P Hear us, O Lord, for the sake of Your Son, the Word become flesh, the Savior of the nations, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God.

C Amen.

† Service of the Sacrament †

Preface

LSB 208

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life.

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

LSB 208



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



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!
Text: Stephen P. Starke

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In the beginning You created all things by Your Word; and in the fullness of time Your Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

Let Your Word made flesh dwell richly among us that, faithfully eating His body and drinking His blood, we may receive the fullness of Your grace and truth in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,

hallowed be Thy name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;

give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

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

The Words of Our Lord

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 $\text{\tfrac{X}{+}}$ 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 $\text{\tfrac{X}{+}}$ 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

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

LSB 210

1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world a - way;
You take the sin of the world a - way;
O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of Je - sus Christ,
Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Distribution

Those participating in communion are asked to exit the pew on the outer aisle.

When coming forward to receive communion we ask that 7 people from each side approach the altar. The Chalice and Individual Cups are offered at the Supper; you can specify which cup you would like to receive from. Please exit down the center aisle, placing your cup in the bowl near the font.

Distribution Hymn: 368 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;
And the moun-tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

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

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt. Text and tune: French Text and tune: Public domain

Distribution Hymn: 376 Once in Royal David's City

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

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

ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He
heav - en, Set at God's right hand on high. Then like
was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
feels for all our sad-ness, And He shares in all our glad-ness.
leads His chil-dren on To the place where He is gone.
stars His chil-dren, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818-95, alt. Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805-76 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 211

C 1 O Lord, now let to Your ser - vant ther, De - .
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - - ther, De All.

part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the the
glo - ry to the Son, For All glo - ry to the glo - ry
Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
Spir - it, For ev - er Three in One;
A light to lead the be - gin - tiles, Un -
For as in the be - gin - ning, Is
to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benedicamus

LSB 212

P Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C Amen.

Hymn to Depart: 363 Silent Night, Holy Night

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,
all is bright Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face
Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy
peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820–85 Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Four from Lutheran Service Book

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