

# ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
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## The First Sunday of Advent

29 November A $\mathbb{X}$ D 2020

*Lutheran Service Book - Divine Service, Setting III*

## ✠ Welcome in the name of Jesus! ✠

Today we observe the First Sunday of Advent. This day marks the beginning of a new Church Year, and it initiates for the Church a season of somber repentance, in which we eagerly look forward to the coming of Jesus. On this First Sunday of Advent, we focus especially on Jesus' role as our King, who comes to save His people and to bestow righteousness upon us, so that we might stand before God's throne in everlasting joy.

If you are a VISITOR here, we offer you our warmest welcome! We pray that your experience among us is blessed, and that you depart filled with God's peace and life.

Also, toward the end of our service today we will be celebrating Holy Communion, in which we will eat and drink Jesus' body and blood, under bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:26-28). Therefore, we ask that you would please see the statement titled "On the Sacrament of Holy Communion," printed below, which describes our beliefs and practices regarding this sacred gift.

O Lord, my creator, redeemer, and comforter,  
as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth,  
I humbly pray that You would open my heart  
to the preaching of Your Word so that I may  
repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my  
only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness.  
Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

**ON THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION:** We believe that receiving Holy Communion together is a sacred expression of Christian unity, which includes unity in doctrine (1 Cor. 10:16-17; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:5). We also believe that if we receive this sacrament in unbelief, we risk God's judgment (1 Cor. 11:27-30).

Therefore, communion at this altar is reserved for those who believe and confess with us the teachings of our church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Those who have not been formally instructed in our teachings should wait to commune until completing a course of instruction with us.

If you are a VISITOR and would like to commune with us today, please speak with the pastor before the service. If you will not be communing, you are welcome to kneel at the altar with your arms folded across your chest to receive a blessing, or you may simply remain in your pew.

*PLEASE NOTE: Due to COVID-19, the Sharing of the Peace that would normally take place at the beginning of the service has been temporarily suspended.*

## Confession and Absolution

*Stand*

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

### Invocation

*Matthew 28:19b; 18:20*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

### Exhortation

*Hebrews 10:22; Psalm 124:8; Psalm 32:5*

**P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C** who made heaven and earth.

**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**C** and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

*Kneel/Stand*

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

### Confession of Sins

**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

*[John 20:19–23]*

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

**C** Amen.

Stand

## Opening Hymn: 348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns



- 1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns And light tri - um-phant breaks,  
2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, To bear and fight and die,  
3 Oh, bright-er than the ris - ing morn When Christ, vic - to-rious, rose  
4 Oh, bright-er than that glo - rious morn Shall dawn up - on our race  
5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns And light and beau - ty brings.



When beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills And life to joy a-wakes.  
But crowned with glo - ry like the sun That lights the morn-ing sky.  
And left the lone-some place of death De - spite the rage of foes.  
The day when Christ in splen-dor comes And we shall see His face.  
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo-ple pray: Come quick-ly, King of kings!

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## Service of the Word

### Introit (*spoken responsively*)

*Psalm 25:4–5, 21–22; antiphon: vv. 1–3a*


- P** To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.  
O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame.
- C** Let not my enemies exult over me.  
Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame.
- P** Make me to know your ways, O LORD;  
teach me your paths.
- C** Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation;  
for you I wait all the day long.
- P** May integrity and uprightness preserve me,  
for I wait for you.
- C** Redeem Israel, O God,  
out of all his troubles.

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

- P** To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.  
O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame.
- C** Let not my enemies exult over me.  
Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame.


## Kyrie

Mark 10:47




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

## Salutation and Collect of the Day



**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And with thy spir - it.

**P** Let us pray. Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

*Sit*

## Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 23:5–8

<sup>5</sup>“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>6</sup>In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’

<sup>7</sup>“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ <sup>8</sup>but ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ Then they shall dwell in their own land.”

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Gradual (*spoken responsively*)

*Psalm 25:3–4*

- P** None who wait for you shall be put to shame;  
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
- C** Make me to know your ways, O LORD;  
teach me your paths.

## Epistle

*Romans 13:8–14*

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

<sup>11</sup>Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup>The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

<sup>13</sup>Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## Alleluia



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

## Holy Gospel

*Matthew 21:1–9*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.



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

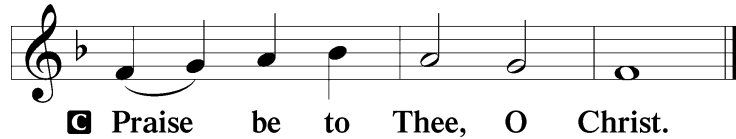
<sup>1</sup>When they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” <sup>4</sup>This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

<sup>5</sup>“Say to the daughter of Zion,

‘Behold, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”

<sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup>Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

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



## Nicene Creed

**C** I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,

**I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**

*Sit*

## Hymn of the Day: 332 Savior of the Nations, Come



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make  
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it  
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a  
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,  
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—  
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:  
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.  
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.  
God was there up - on His throne.  
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

5 God the Father was His source,  
Back to God He ran His course.  
Into hell His road went down,  
Back then to His throne and  
crown.

6 For You are the Father's Son  
Who in flesh the vict'ry won.  
By Your mighty pow'r make  
whole  
All our ills of flesh and soul.

7 From the manger newborn light  
Shines in glory through the night.  
Darkness there no more resides;  
In this light faith now abides.

△8 Glory to the Father sing,  
Glory to the Son, our king,  
Glory to the Spirit be  
Now and through eternity.

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**Sermon**



**NOTE REGARDING THE OFFERING** – Offering plates are located at the sanctuary exit doors where you may leave your weekly offering as you depart today.

*Stand*

### Offertory

*Psalm 51:10–12*



**C** Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

*Stand*

### Prayer of the Church

**P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

*Brief silence*

**P** For a steadfast hope in the Lord's return, that sustained by His Holy Spirit, we may have joy at the advent of Christ, our Savior, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For readiness and watchfulness as we enter another Church Year, knowing that salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For Matthew, our Synod president; David, our district president; Terry, our circuit visitor; and all pastors in Christ, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** That the Lord would renew the faith and quicken the love of all Christians, that we might cast off the works of darkness and put on Jesus Christ, living always as children of the day, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For husbands and wives, that they would live in love and service to each other; for fathers and mothers, that they would bring up their children in the fear and instruction of the Lord; and for all children, that honoring their parents, they would be well equipped for service to their neighbors, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For our governing authorities, that peace and order would be preserved in our nation; for Donald, our president; Gretchen, our governor; our military and police; all other civil servants as well as all newly elected officials; and for a spirit of unity and cooperation among the people of our land and all the nations of the world, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For all those in any danger, trouble, sickness or need [*especially \_\_\_\_\_*]; for an end to the pandemic; and for those who mourn, [*especially \_\_\_\_\_,*] that they would place their hope confidently in Christ and in His resurrection, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the worthy reception of Christ’s body and blood among His people, that as He was once received humbly in Jerusalem to cries of “Hosanna,” we may receive Him now in faith, trusting in His promise of forgiveness and united in a true confession, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

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

**C Amen.**

## Service of the Sacrament

## Preface

*2 Timothy 4:22; Colossians 3:1 Psalm 136*

**P** The Lord be with you.

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



**P** Lift up your hearts.



**C** We lift them up un - to the Lord.



**P** Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.



**C** It is meet and right so to do.

## Proper Preface

**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, 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

*Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9*



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



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



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,



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



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

## Lord's Prayer (*spoken together*)

*Matthew 6:9–13*

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## The Words of Our Lord

*Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

## Pax Domini

*John 20:19*



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



**C** A - men.

## Agnus Dei

John 1:29

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

Sit

## Distribution

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

### ***Directions for Holy Communion:***

- *Ushers will release you in small groups to approach the altar*
- *Please wear a mask as you approach the altar and as you depart (masks may be removed at the communion rail)*
- *Please space yourselves out at the communion rail (households may remain together)*
- *Please temporarily receive the host (wafer) in your hands rather than your mouth*
- *Use of the common cup will be temporarily suspended*
- *When you take an individual cup, please be careful not to touch any adjacent cups*
- *Hand sanitizer will be available on pedestals as you depart the Lord's Table*

## Distribution Hymn: 343 Prepare the Royal Highway



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!  
2 God's peo - ple, see Him com - ing: Your own e - ter - nal king!  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom-ised king!  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!  
Palm branch-es strew be - fore Him! Spread gar-ments! Shout and sing!  
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.  
His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
All lands, bow down be - fore Him! All na - tions, now a - dore Him!  
So let your praise be sound-ing For kind-ness so a - bound-ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

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# Distribution Hymn: 341 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates



1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates! Be - hold, the  
 2 A righ - teous Help - er comes to thee; His char - iot  
 3 How blest the land, the cit - y blest, Where Christ the  
 4 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; Make it a  
 5 Re - deem - er, come and o - pen wide My heart to



King of glo - ry waits. The King of kings is draw - ing  
 is hu - mil - i - ty, His king - ly crown is ho - li -  
 rul - er is con-fessed! O peace - ful hearts and hap - py  
 tem - ple set a - part From earth - ly use for heav'n's em -  
 Thee; here, Lord, a - bide! O en - ter with Thy grace di -



near; The Sav - ior of the world is here. Life and sal -  
 ness, His scep - ter, pit - y in dis - tress. The end of  
 homes To whom this King in tri - umph comes! The cloud - less  
 ploy, A - dorned with prayer and love and joy. So shall your  
 vine; Thy face of mer - cy on me shine. Thy Ho - ly



va - tion He doth bring; There-fore re - jice and glad - ly sing.  
 all our woe He brings; There-fore the earth is glad and sings.  
 sun of joy is He Who comes to set His peo - ple free.  
 Sov - 'reign en - ter in And new and no - bler life be - gin.  
 Spir - it guide us on Un - til our glo - rious goal is won.

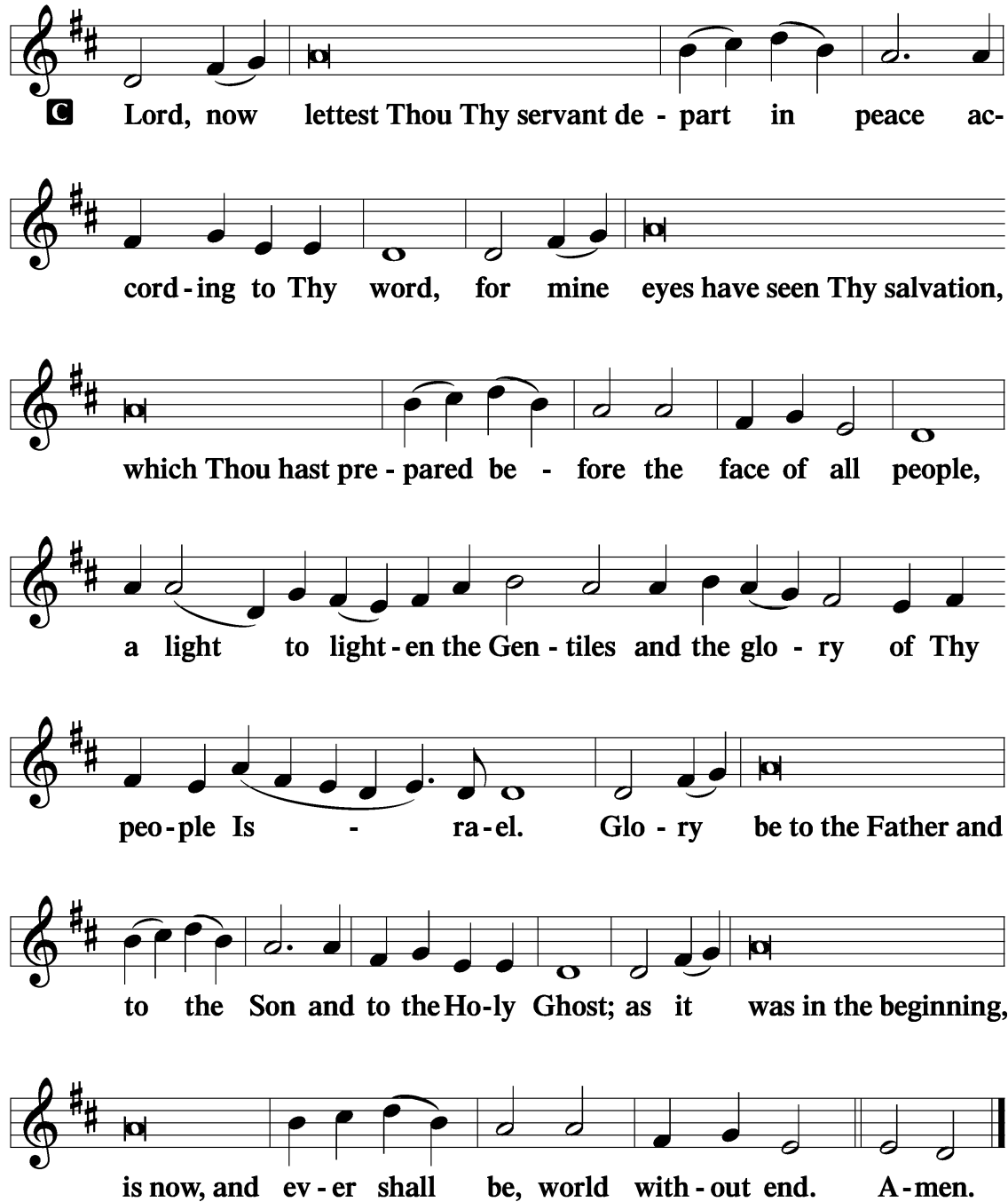


To God the Fa - ther raise Your joy - ful songs of praise.  
 To Christ the Sav - ior raise Your grate - ful hymns of praise.  
 To God the Spir - it raise Your hap - py shouts of praise.  
 To God a - lone be praise For word and deed and grace!  
 E - ter - nal praise and fame We of - fer to Thy name.

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*Stand*  
**Nunc Dimittis**

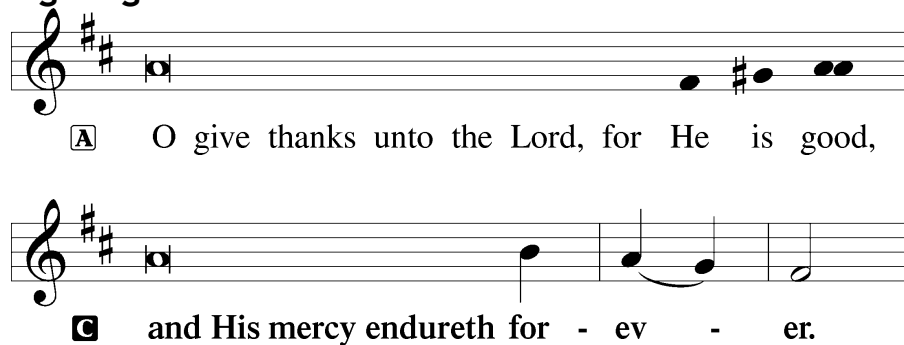
*Luke 2:29–32*



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

**Thanksgiving**

*Psalms 107:1*



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



## Post-Communion Collect

**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.

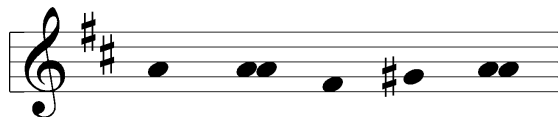


**C** A - men.

## Farewell and Godspeed (8:30 a.m. service): *Scott Miller*

### Salutation

*2 Timothy 4:22*



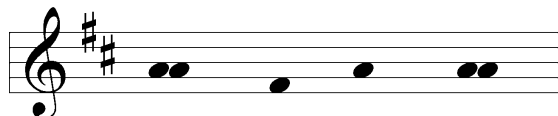
**P** The Lord be with you.



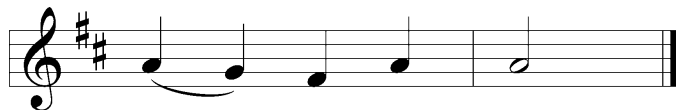
**C** And with thy spir - it.

### Benedicamus

*Psalms 103:1*



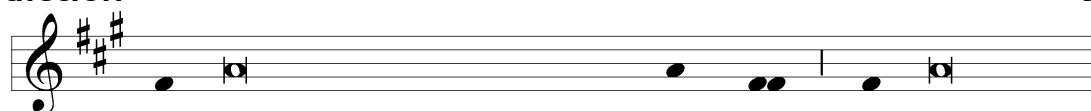
**A** Bless we the Lord.



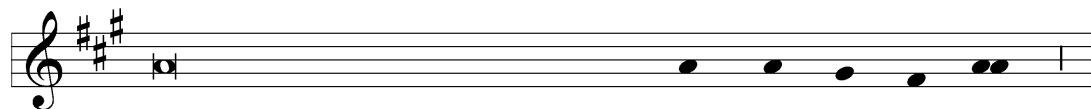
**C** Thanks be to God.

## Benediction

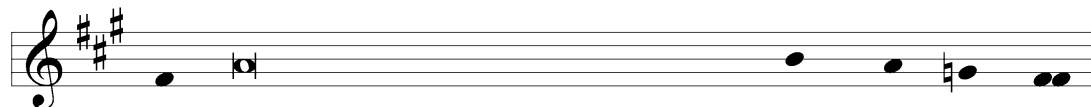
Numbers 6:24–26



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



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



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



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

## Closing Hymn: 331 The Advent of Our King



1 The ad - vent of our King Our prayers must now em - ploy,  
2 The ev - er - last - ing Son In - car - nate deigns to be,  
3 O Zi - on's daugh - ter, rise To meet your low - ly King,  
4 As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come a - gain



And we must hymns of wel-come sing In strains of ho - ly joy.  
Him-self a ser-vant's form puts on To set His ser - vants free.  
Nor let your faith-less heart de-spise The peace He comes to bring.  
And His true mem-bers all u - nite With Him in heav'n to reign.

5 Before the dawning day  
Let sin's dark deeds be gone,  
The sinful self be put away,  
The new self now put on.

△6 All glory to the Son,  
Who comes to set us free,  
With Father, Spirit, ever one  
Through all eternity.

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## THIS WEEK'S CHURCH CALENDAR

**Sun. 11/29 First Sunday in Advent**

- **Divine Services** at 8:30 & 10 a.m.

**Mon. 11/30 Pastor's Day Off**

**Tue. 12/1 Pastor out of office in p.m.**

**Board of Elders' Meeting** 7 p.m.

**Wed. 12/2 Midweek Advent Worship Service** 7 p.m.

**Sat. 12/5 Men's Bible Study** 9 – 10:30 a.m.

**Decorate the Church** 10 a.m.

**Sun. 12/6 Second Sunday in Advent**

- **Divine Services** at 8:30 & 10 a.m.
- **Semi-Annual Voters' Meeting** 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

## TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

1. Hand sanitizer will be distributed at the entryway, as well as before and after Communion.
2. We ask that people wear masks when moving about the building.
3. Certain pews will be closed to maintain spacing between congregants.
4. The "Sharing of the Peace," the passing of offering plates, and the common cup will be temporarily suspended.
5. Holy Communion will be distributed at the altar, but in smaller groups (the Pastor and elder will wear masks during distribution).

Please note that due to technology and time limitations, our online services will now be recorded **on Sundays**, so the services will not be available online until later Sunday afternoon or early the next week. Thank you for your gracious cooperation and your flexibility!

**NOTE REGARDING OUR CURRENT WORSHIP SERVICES:** During this time of COVID-19, some of our church members might feel it's better in their personal situations to wait a bit longer before returning to church. And we totally understand. Because of this, Pastor Vergin will continue to post an abbreviated version of our worship service online. Pastor is also available for private pastoral visits where Holy Communion will be given individually and COVID-19 safety precautions will be used (these can be held either at your home or at the church). Please call the church office if you would like to schedule a private visit with Pastor.

ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES BEGIN THIS WEDNESDAY - Our traditional Advent Midweek services will begin **this Wednesday at 7 p.m.** Subsequent midweek Advent services will take place on December 9 & 16. We hope you will join us for this extra opportunity to receive the Lord's Holy Word during this penitential season!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY THIS SATURDAY – Our next Men's Bible Study will be held here at St. Mark's in the Fellowship Hall this **Saturday, December 5** from 9 – 10:30 a.m. Breakfast will be served, as well. Bring your Bibles and a friend or two!

LET'S DECORATE OUR CHURCH THIS SATURDAY! We are seeking volunteers to help decorate St. Mark's for the Christmas holidays. Toward that end, our Decorate the Church event will be held this **Saturday, December 5** starting at 10 a.m. Many hands make for light work, so if you are available to help that morning to help, please wear a face mask and join us!

SEMI-ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING – All members of St. Mark's ages 18+ are encouraged to attend our upcoming Semi-Annual Voters' Meeting next **Sunday, December 6, in the sanctuary** directly following the late service. Items on the Agenda will include voting on the Election Slate, 2021 Budget, an update on the split and sale of the two back lots, and various board and financial reports. As always, for safety's sake, attendees are asked to space themselves out in the pews and wear face masks.

NOW ACCEPTING SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE LUTHERAN WITNESS – We are now accepting subscriptions to *The Lutheran Witness* (LW), the official periodical of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The LW is published 11 times per year and it provides laypeople with stories and information that complement congregational life, fosters personal growth in faith, and helps interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective. Each issue of LW includes the *Michigan in Touch* supplement from our Michigan District LCMS offices in Ann Arbor. The subscription year runs from March 2021 through February 2022. Yearly subscriptions are \$11.60 each when ordered through St. Mark's. If you'd like to subscribe, please place your check, made payable to St. Mark's Lutheran Church, into a pink flower envelope (found in the pew racks), write "LW Subscription" on the front of the envelope, and place it into our offering plate **no later than Sunday, December 6**. You will then receive your first copy of LW in February some time.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS – We are now accepting donations to help purchase Christmas poinsettias that will be used to adorn the altar area for Christmas. Since our flower coordinator, Nancy Salo, has to order a set number of poinsettias anyway to fill the tree stands, monetary donations of any amount are welcome. We ask that all donations be turned in **no later than December 13**. See today's pink flower insert for instructions on how to donate. Thank you!

THE OPEN DOOR NEEDS OUR HELP! They still need peanut butter and soups for their Needy Family Pantry, and are asking for donations of these items ASAP! If you'd like to help, please leave your donations in the plastic bins marked "Open Door" that are located at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs.

CHRISTMAS ADOPT-A-FAMILY UPDATE – Due to COVID-19, the Open Door Outreach Center in Waterford will only be accepting, and giving, store gift cards this year. Area churches will not be given a “Wish List” and shopping for families as in the past. Instead, if you’d like to help a needy family or two this Christmas, please provide a \$25 gift card from Meijer, Target or Walmart. This way, the recipients can purchase food, clothing or toys. Please place the gift cards in the box located on the table at the back of the sanctuary **no later than December 13**. Thank you for helping families in need! (St. Mark’s Board of Human Care)

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES – This Christmas, due to COVID-19, St. Mark’s will be offering *two* identical Christmas Eve worship services on **Thursday, December 24**--one at 4 p.m. and the other at 6 p.m. Our Christmas Day Divine Service on **Friday, December 25** will take place at the usual time, 10 a.m. We hope you will make plans now with your family to attend one or more of these special services as we remember, and celebrate, the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus!

IF YOU SHOP AT A KROGER STORE, please consider participating in their Community Rewards program and **link your shopper’s bonus card to St. Mark’s** so that our congregation will receive free cash each quarter! There is no cost to you! Kroger will send a percentage of what you spend to our congregation as a way of supporting the community. If interested (and we hope you will be!), please click on this URL below to see how you can link your Shopper’s Bonus Card to our congregation: <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>. In order to locate St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, search for business # 82449. Thanks so much!

TOILETRY/HYGIENE DONATIONS FOR THE OPEN DOOR OUTREACH CENTER – We continue to receive hygiene & toiletry products year around for the Open Door Outreach Center in Waterford. There are two bins located on the shelves at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs where you can place product donations. The Open Door is a non-profit organization that assists needy families in the Lakes Area. They are ALWAYS in need of toiletry and hygiene items, so **if you can provide any of these throughout the year, it would be appreciated.**

*INVISIBLE DAD LUNCH PROGRAM AT KEITH ELEM.* – Although area schools will not be resuming in-person classes until sometime down the road, St. Mark’s will continue to receive coin donations to help support Keith Elementary’s “Invisible Dad” lunch program. This helpful program, started by a dad at Keith, keeps extra money in the school’s Invisible Dad Lunch Fund so that if a student’s personal lunch account falls too low, or if a student forgets to bring a lunch (or can’t afford to bring a lunch), money is available for them to have the same lunch as other students at no cost. This saves the student the embarrassment of being offered only a sandwich wrap and/or cheese/cracker package (the state mandated free items that the school can provide). A clear, glass jar is located on the table at the back of the sanctuary where you can deposit any spare change you might have in order to help support this program. When school starts up again, the contents of the jar will be brought to the principal’s office at Keith Elementary. Thanks in advance for your support!

WE CONTINUE TO COLLECT used postage stamps for Wycliffe Bible Translation Ministries, and used eyeglasses for MOST Ministries in the two plastic bins on the shelves at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs. Wycliffe sells the stamps to stamp collectors and then uses the proceeds to fund Bible translation projects throughout the world. MOST Ministries repairs/refurbishes used eyeglasses and distributes them via eyeglass clinics to the needy around the world. If you donate postage stamps, please be sure to leave ¼” of the envelope paper around the stamp so that the stamp isn’t damaged. Thank you.

REMINDER: Don’t forget to periodically check out the BUDGET THERMOMETER located on the bulletin board outside of the church office to see how we’re doing financially for 2020! Thanks SO MUCH to all of you for continuing to regularly provide your offerings to St. Mark’s either by mailing in your contributions, or participating in our Kindrid online giving program.





## SERVING THE LORD WITH GLADNESS THIS MORNING

Presiding Minister

Rev. Aaron Vergin

Acolyte (*either service*)

TBD

Altar Guild

Jennie Kaufman

Elder on Duty (*both services*)

Darryl Swainson

Greeters (*either service*)

Gail Fitzgerald

Offering Counters (*after late service*)

Debbie & John Sidelinker

Organist (*both services*)

Rob Wheeler

Trumpeter (*either service*)

Chris Gerard

Ushers (*see right*)

**8:30 a.m.** – Mel Maier; **10 a.m.** – Matt Maier

Video Technician (*either service*)

Kim Olsen