

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
7979 Commerce Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48324
Phone: (248) 363-0741; Email: info@stmarkwb.org
Website: www.stmarkwb.org



The Third Sunday in Advent

(Gaudete)

15 December A♣D 2019

Lutheran Service Book - Divine Service, Setting III

✠ Welcome in the name of Jesus! ✠

Today we observe the Third Sunday in Advent. On this day, we hear the proclamation of joy that God sends out to prepare the way of the Lord. Truly, when Jesus arrives it is a time of joy for His people, for He comes to bring to them salvation. Therefore, as we hear the voice of His messengers, sent to us to prepare Jesus' way, we listen to them gladly, knowing that the message they bring to us is one of true, divine comfort and peace.

If you are a VISITOR here, 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.

Confession and Absolution

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 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.

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.

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

Sharing of the Peace

Those who wish may stand and share Christ's Peace with one another by offering a handshake and the words, "Christ's peace be with you."

Hymn of Invocation: 338 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;
2 Born Thy peo-ple to de - liv-er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for-ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
By Thine own e - ter-nal Spir-it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo-rious throne.

Text and tune: Public domain

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 85:1–2, 6, 8; antiphon: Philippians 4:4–5

- P** Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.
- C** **Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.**
The Lord is at hand.
- P** LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
- C** **You forgave the iniquity of your people;**
you covered all their sin.
- P** Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?
- C** **Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,**
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

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** Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.
- C** **Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.**
The Lord is at hand.

Kyrie

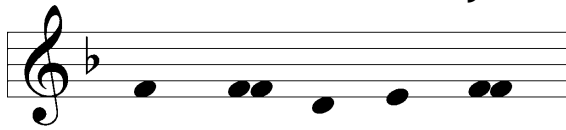
Mark 10:47



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. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:1–8

¹Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

³A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,

and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades

when the breath of the LORD blows on it;

surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual (*spoken responsively*)

Psalm 80:1–2

P You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
Stir up your might and come to save us!

C Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!

Epistle

1 Corinthians 4:1–5

¹This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

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 11:2–10

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



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

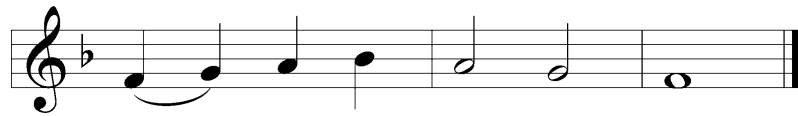
²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead

are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

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

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day: 345 Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is
 2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
 3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with
 4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
 Δ 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the

near," we hear it say. "Cast a - way the
 earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
 par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
 world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
 Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -

works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!"
 sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
 tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n;
 with His mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
 liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Offering

During the Offering, we ask that you please sign a black attendance book located in your pew.

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 Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Brief silence

P For the Church, that she would rejoice in the glad tidings of her coming Savior and be comforted by the Good News of His perfect life and sacrificial death for her salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For our pastors, that they would regard themselves as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, and that they may be found trustworthy as they carry out their duties, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For our congregation, that we would forgive as we have been forgiven, give as we have been given to, and love as we have been loved, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For our president and all those in high positions of authority among us, that they may be guarded from every evil and kept from using their power for selfish gain, serving always with the common welfare of all in mind, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the homeless and the hungry and those who suffer want through unemployment, that they may receive the help that they need, and that we, as God's blessed children, would always stand ready to assist them, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the sick and suffering, [*and especially for _____,*] that the One who gives sight to the blind, heals the lame, cleanses the lepers, gives hearing to the deaf, raises the dead and preaches good news to the poor may sustain them in their trials with His compassion and grant them healing in accord with His perfect will, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who come to Zion's feast today, that they would rejoice in the gracious visitation of their Savior at the holy altar, receiving His very body and blood for the forgiveness of their sins and the strengthening of their faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the prophets and all faithful saints who spoke in the name of the Lord before us, let us give thanks and praise to God; and for steadfastness in faith, that we might look with hope for the revealing of Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior, on the Last Day, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

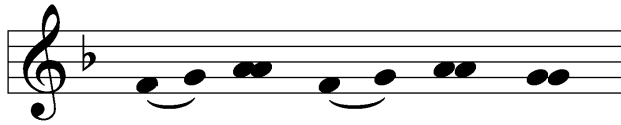
P Into Your hands, dear Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

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



P The Lord be with you.



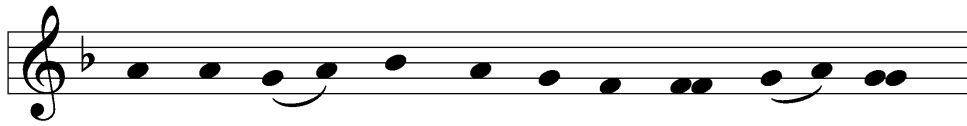
C And with thy spir - it.



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.

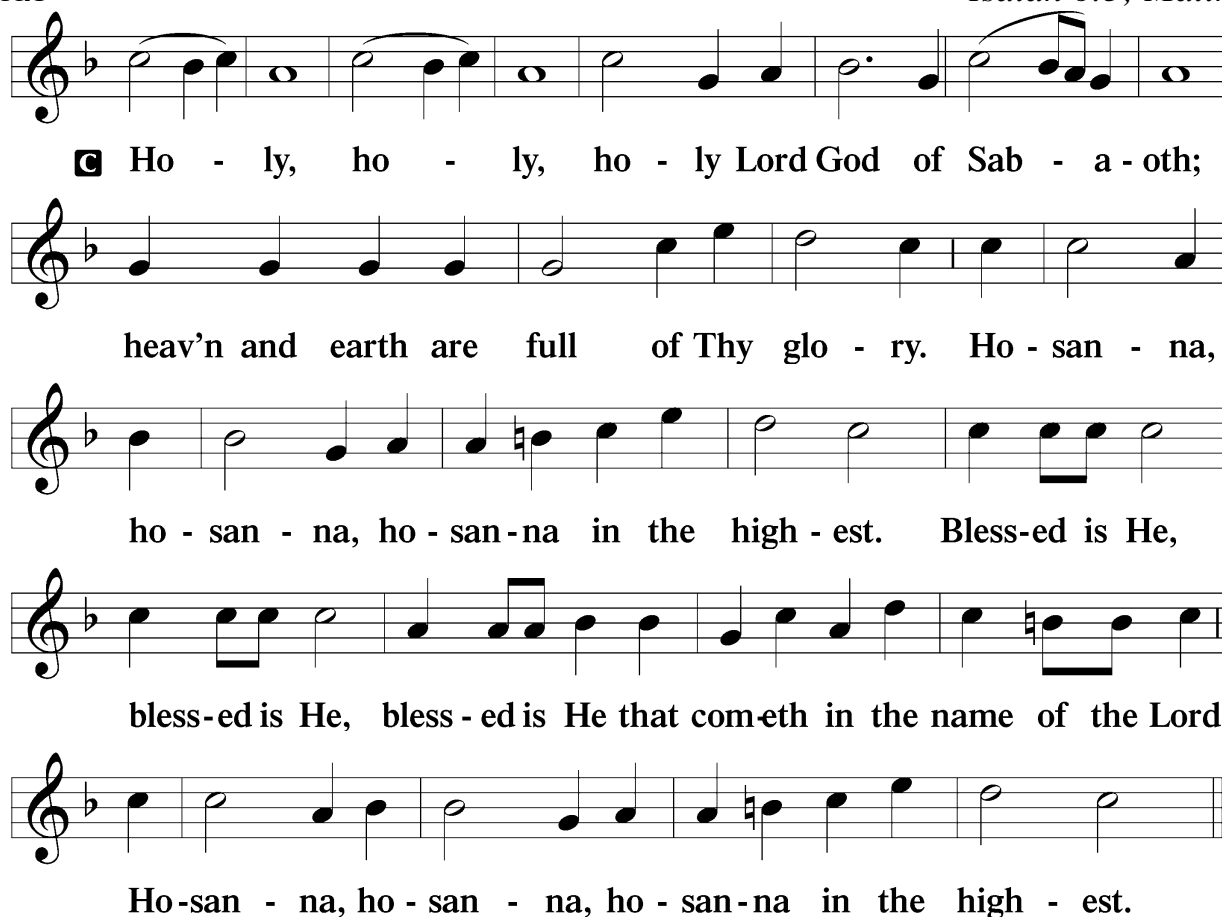


C It is meet and right so to do.

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



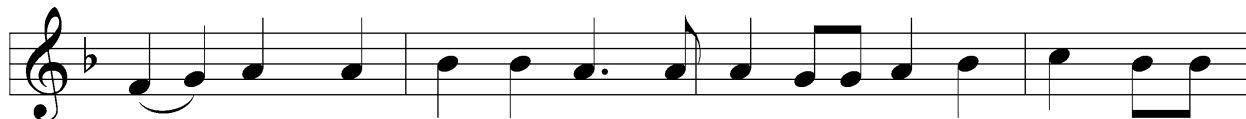
P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

John 1:29



C 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 Holy Communion policy.

Distribution Hymn: 352 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has tru - ly
2 What the Fa - thers most de - sired, What the proph - ets'
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
4 As Your com - ing was in peace, Qui - et, full of



kept His word And at last to us did send
heart in - spired, What they longed for man - y a year,
Ja - cob's Lord— Him of two - fold race be - hold—
gen - tle - ness, Let the same mind dwell in me



Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
Stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
Tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
Which is Yours e - ter - nal - ly.

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith,
Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again
As the glorious king to reign,
I with joy will see Your face,
Freely ransomed by Your grace.

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Distribution Hymn: 334 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You



1 O Lord, how shall I meet You, How wel - come You a - right?
 2 Your Zi - on strews be - fore You Green boughs and fair - est palms;
 3 I lay in fet - ters, groan - ing; You came to set me free.
 4 Love caused Your in - car - na - tion; Love brought You down to me.



Your peo - ple long to greet You, My hope, my heart's de - light!
 And I too will a - dore You With joy - ous songs and psalms.
 I stood, my shame be - moan - ing; You came to hon - or me.
 Your thirst for my sal - va - tion Pro - cured my lib - er - ty.



O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, Your lamp with - in my breast
 My heart shall bloom for - ev - er For You with prais - es new
 A glo - rious crown You give me, A trea - sure safe on high
 Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, That led You to em - brace



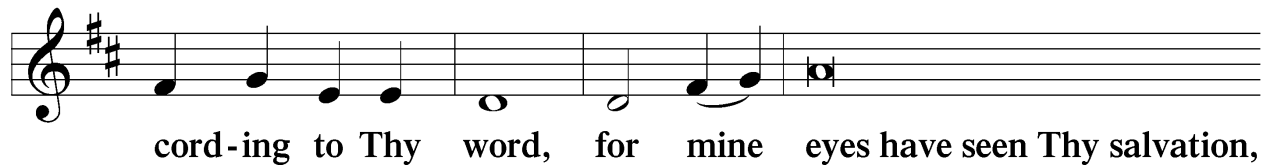
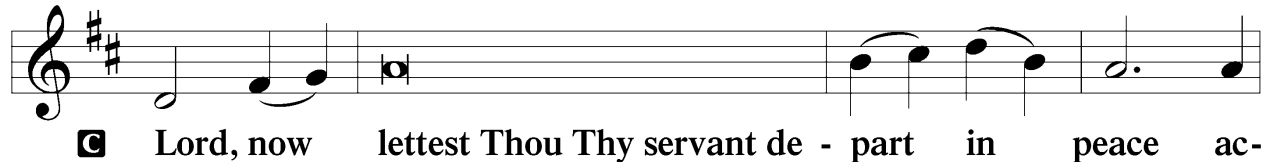
To do in spir - it low - ly All that may please You best.
 And from Your name shall nev - er With - hold the hon - or due.
 That will not fail or leave me As earth - ly rich - es fly.
 In love, all love ex - cel - ling, Our lost and fall - en race.

- 5 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
 Cannot His love erase;
 Your guilt the Lord will pardon
 And cover by His grace.
 He comes, for you procuring
 The peace of sin forgiv'n,
 His children thus securing
 Eternal life in heav'n.
- 6 He comes to judge the nations,
 A terror to His foes,
 A light of consolations
 And blessèd hope to those
 Who love the Lord's appearing.
 O glorious Sun, now come,
 Send forth Your beams so cheering,
 And guide us safely home.

Tune and text: Public domain

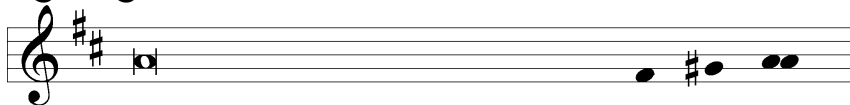
Stand
Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29–32

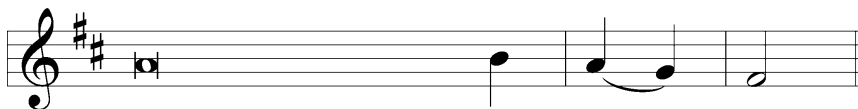


Thanksgiving

Psalm 107:1



A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



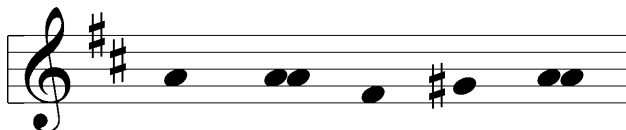
C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

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.



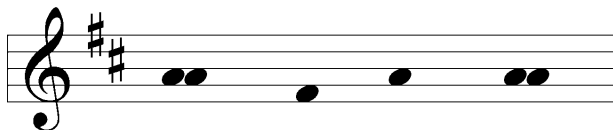
P The Lord be with you.



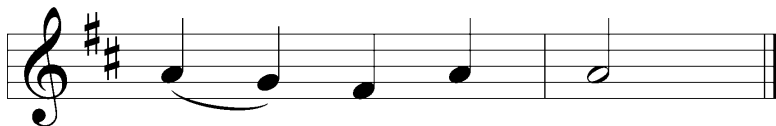
C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

Psalm 103:1



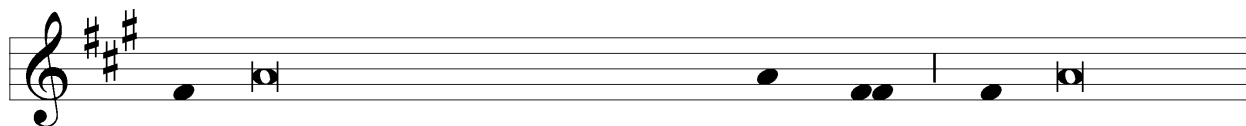
A Bless we the Lord.



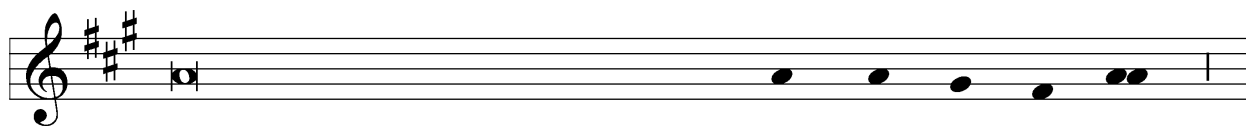
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

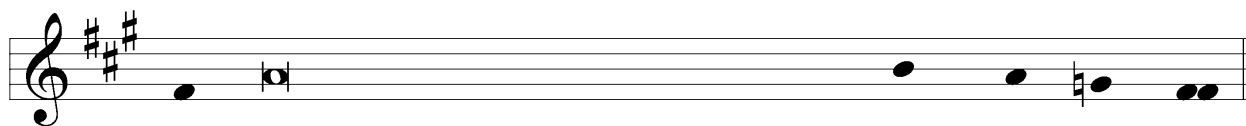
Numbers 6:24-26



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: 347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People



1 "Com - fort, com - fort ye My peo - ple, Speak ye peace," thus
2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, Blot - ting out each
3 Hark, the her - ald's voice is cry - ing In the des - ert
4 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed; Make the rough - er



saith our God; "Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, Mourn - ing
dark mis - deed; All that well de - served His an - ger He no
far and near, Call - ing sin - ners to re - pen - tance, Since the
plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be -



'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem
more will see or heed. She hath suf - fered man - y a day,
King - dom now is here. O that warn - ing cry o - bey!
fits His ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



Of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her
Now her griefs have passed a - way; God will change her
Now pre - pare for God a way; Let the val - leys
Now o'er earth is shed a - broad, And all flesh shall



sins I cov - er And her war - fare now is o - ver."
pin - ing sad - ness In - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.
see the to - ken That His Word is nev - er bro - ken.

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Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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THIS WEEK'S CHURCH CALENDAR

Sun. 12/15 The Third Sunday in Advent

- **Divine Service** 9:30 a.m.
 - **Adult Bible Study** 10:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall (basement)
 - **Youth Bell Practice** 10:45 a.m., Choir Loft
 - **Sunday School** 11:15 a.m., Library
- Christmas Caroling** 6:30 p.m., West Lake Nursing Health Campus 10735
Bogie Lake Road, White Lake

Mon. 12/16 Pastor's Day Off

Adult Handbell Practice 7:30 p.m., Choir Loft

Tue. 12/17 Pastor out of office in p.m.

Wed. 12/18 Confirmation Class A 4 p.m., Library

Midweek Dinner at 6 p.m. **followed by Advent Service** at 7 p.m., Peace
Lutheran Church, Waterford

Fri. 12/20 Deadline to submit January newsletter articles

Confirmation Class B 4 p.m., Library

Sat. 12/21 Distribute Adopt-a-Family gifts to families 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. & 2 - 5 p.m.
First Day of Winter

Sun. 12/22 The Fourth Sunday in Advent

- **Divine Service** 9:30 a.m.
- **Youth Bell Practice** 10:45 - 11 a.m., Choir Loft
- **Special Voters' Meeting** 11 a.m., Fellowship Hall (basement)

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADULT BIBLE STUDY THIS MORNING will take place right after the Divine Service (around 10:45 a.m.) in our Fellowship Hall in the basement. We welcome all adults to join Pastor Vergin as he continues to teach on the Book of Joshua.

YOUTH HANDBELL PRACTICE – Handbell practice for our youth will take place **today** from 10:45 – 11:15 a.m. in the Choir Loft. **SUNDAY SCHOOL** will then follow immediately after in the Library.

ADULT HANDBELL PRACTICES will continue on Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. **through December 23**. The bell choir will then be ringing during our Christmas Eve Service at 6 p.m. We look forward to hearing them play!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING TONIGHT – All are welcome to join us **this evening** starting at 6:30 p.m. at West Lake Health Campus, 10735 Bogie Lake Road (just north of Cooley Lake Road) in White Lake to sing some favorite Christmas carols to the residents there. (Once you pull in, pass the first building, pass the first large parking lot, and you'll see the second building. Go in the center entrance of the second building.) West Lake provides assisted living, skilled nursing, short-term care, memory care and more to the seniors. We caroled for them last year, and not only did the residents appreciate our efforts, but our carolers had a great time too!

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES – Our final Midweek Advent service will take place this **Wednesday, December 18**, at Peace Lutheran Church on Elizabeth Lake Road (east of Williams Lake Road) in Waterford starting at 7 p.m. A dinner (\$3 per person) provided by the members of Peace will precede the service from 6-7 p.m. **If you will be attending the dinner, please list your name(s) on the sign-up sheet located on the pedestal at the top of the basement stairs.**

SPECIAL VOTERS' MEETING HAS BEEN SCHEDULED – St. Mark's President, Tom LoCascio, has called for a Special Voters' Meeting to be held on **Sunday, December 22** starting at 11 a.m. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the latest developments in the merger research between St. Mark's and Peace Lutheran Church. All members ages 18+ are strongly encouraged to attend.

ACCEPTING POINSETTIAS ORDERS THROUGH DECEMBER 17 – We are now accepting orders for beautiful, red poinsettias that will adorn the altar area for Christmas. Each plant costs \$8.50 and you may purchase one or more in honor, or in memory, of a loved one. If you're interested, complete a pink order form found in the Sunday bulletins, place it and your payment (checks made payable to St. Mark's Lutheran Church) in a pink flower envelope (located in the pews), then place the pink envelope in an offering plate (or get it to the church office) by **Tuesday, December 17**. The names of those honored or remembered will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. You will be free to take your poinsettia home with you (if you wish) on Sunday, December 29.

OPEN DOOR'S ADOPT-A-FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM - St. Mark's Board of Human Care is working with the Open Door Outreach Center in Waterford again this year to help with their Adopt-A-Family Christmas program. There are three ways that our congregation can assist in this effort:

- Those not affiliated with St. Mark's who will be sponsoring a family on their own will be dropping off their gifts at the Open Door on **December 17, 18 and 19**. St. Mark's will then pick up these items from the Open Door during those dates and bring them back to our building for storage until they are distributed to the families on December 21. If anyone would like to help with gift pick-up at Open Door, a sign-up sheet is now posted on an easel in the lobby where you can sign up.
- Recipients of the gifts will be told to pick up their gifts at St. Mark's on Saturday, **December 21** between the hours of 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. We will be seeking help during these times for check-in and distribution of the gifts. Again, if you can help, please sign up on the easel sheet in the lobby.

Thanks so much for your support! Gail Hardy & Karen Kaufman - Board of Human Care

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES – One and all are welcome to attend our Christmas worship services this year! Our Christmas Eve service will take place on **Tuesday, December 24** at 6 p.m. and will include some of your favorite Christmas hymns, youth and adult handbell choirs, and the candlelight version of Silent Night at the end of the service. Our Christmas Day Divine Service will take place on **Wednesday, December 25** at 10 a.m. and will feature more of your favorite Christmas hymns, youth handbells, and some additional special music. The Sunday after Christmas Pastor Vergin will be out of town, and we will be blessed with the preaching and teaching of our wonderful brother in Christ, the Reverend Doctor Frank Pies, Emeritus pastor at Our Savior Lutheran, Hartland. We hope to see you at all of our Christmas services this year!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY FOR JANUARY – All men are invited to meet with Pastor Vergin for Men's Bible Study class on **Saturday, January 4** from 9-10:30 a.m. at the Greek Jalapeno Restaurant on Cooley Lake Road in Waterford. This is always a great opportunity to gather as brothers in Christ to hear God's Word and enjoy fellowship (and breakfast on your own if you happen to be hungry). Please attend, if you can!

WE'LL NEED HELP TO UNDECORATE ST. MARK'S – We had such a wonderful turnout of people to help decorate St. Mark's for Christmas! Now we're asking for help to UNdecorate St. Mark's on **Saturday, January 4** starting at 10:30 a.m. (following the Men's Bible Study) as we'll begin making preparations for the green season of Epiphany. Bring the entire family to help, if you'd like!

LADIES' QUILTING GROUP SEEKING SHEETS & BLANKETS – Our Missionary League is continuing to make more blankets for Lutheran World Relief, but they could use some help. If you have any gently-used sheets, or blankets, that you are no longer using, please consider donating them to this cause! Items can be left in the Quilt Donations Box in the lobby.

ST. MARK'S "WELCOME BASKET" OUTREACH PROGRAM – Our Board of Gospel Outreach has expanded their Welcome Basket program to include not only the neighborhood behind church, but also the Golf Manor Subdivision as well. Anyone who would like to help offset the cost of these baskets can place their donation in a pink envelope (found in the pew racks), write "Welcome Baskets" on the front, and place the envelope into our offering plates. An example of a filled basket is now located on the shelf at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs.

EYEGLASS AND POSTAGE STAMP DONATIONS – The small, plastic bins used to collect eyeglasses for M.O.S.T. Ministries, and postage stamps for Wycliffe Bible Translators, are located on the bookshelves at the bottom of the sanctuary stairs. M.O.S.T. Ministries (Mission Opportunities Short Term) provides recycled eyeglasses to people living in the developing nations around the world. Wycliffe Bible Translators provide Bibles that are written in peoples' native languages so that they can fully understand God's Word and, hopefully, come to faith in Christ. Used postage stamps should be cut out with ¼" of space around them and placed into the donation bin so they can be mailed to Wycliffe once a year and sold on auction websites. The proceeds are used to help with Bible translation projects.

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.**

ANNUAL BENEFIT CHRISTMAS PROGRAM FOR EVERGREEN LUTHERAN SCHOOL – On **Friday, December 20** at 2:30 p.m., all are welcome to attend a benefit for Evergreen Lutheran School in Detroit as they work to raise money to help keep their school going. Evergreen Lutheran is located at 8680 Evergreen Road (1/4 block south of Joy Road) in Detroit. The program will feature the students of the school, Creative Kidz group, Irvin Smith (steel drummer) & guests. A free will offering will be received.

LEGACY CONFERENCE: *RECLAIMING A LOST GENERATION* – On **Saturday, February 1, 2020**, the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is hosting a conference for lay people called *Legacy: Reclaiming A Lost Generation*. The conference will take place at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Lansing from 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., and the cost is \$15 (student) or \$20 (general). Christians in general, and Christian families in particular, are under spiritual and cultural attack. As a result, more families are being broken and more individuals, especially the young, are leaving the Church. The goal of the conference is to examine the Apostle Paul’s method of reaching the lost by engaging the culture (and our relatives) by “speaking the truth in love.” In this way, we seek to retain our young people (and people of all ages) through healthy interactions under the blessing of our Lord. If interested, you can register online at: michigandistrict.org/theological20.



SERVING THE LORD WITH GLADNESS THIS MORNING

Presiding Minister

Rev. Aaron Vergin

Altar Guild

Sharon Williams & Julie Kosmalski

Acolyte

Sophie Hurley

Elder on Duty

Darryl Swainson

Greeter(s)

Tom & Debbie LoCascio

Offering Counters

Jennie & Karen Kaufman

Organist

Rob Wheeler

Trumpeter

Chris Gerard

Ushers

John Reardon

Video Technician

Jim O’Brien