

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our mission is to celebrate and share God's love in Jesus Christ

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor," for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.



¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Second Sunday of Advent
December 7, 2025 at 8:15 & 11:00 AM
ELW Setting Three

WELCOME TO ST. MICHAEL'S!

If you are visiting with us for the first time, please share in all that is ours in Christ! We invite you to consider making St. Michael's your church home. Please ask us about our participation in God's mission in the world. By God's grace we celebrate and share Christ. *Our 11:00 worship service this morning is streamed live to St. Michael's Facebook and YouTube pages. Please keep conversation to a minimum in the sanctuary, you may be picked up by our sound system. If you prefer not to be seen on camera please speak to an usher and they will seat you outside of the video frame. Thank you for your understanding.*

DIGITAL SIGN IN

You are welcome to sign in with our digital sign in. Please use the QR Code that can be found here in the bulletin or the iPad in the Narthex.



Ministers: The People of St. Michael's
The Reverend Christopher Bruesehoff, Pastor (pastor@stmlutheran.org)
Mark P. Dishong, Director of Music (markdishong@gmail.com)
601 Kings Highway N., Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
856-667-0973, Fax: 856-755-1247
office@stmlutheran.org www.stmichaelslutheranchurch.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From SundaysandSeasons.com. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #24280

and streamed by permission under OneLicense.net #A-711336.

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide

INTRODUCTION

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"Comfort, Comfort, Now My People"

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The assembly is invited to stand. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide.

We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.

We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.

Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. ☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN :

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

ELW 264

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near! Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear! Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:</p> <p><i>Refrain</i> Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!</p> <p>2 God's people, see him coming: your own eternal king! Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing! God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! <i>Refrain</i></p> | <p>3 Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king! Your king, yet ev'ry nation its tribute too may bring. All lands will bow before him; their voices join your singing: <i>Refrain</i></p> <p>4 His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above. His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love. So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding: <i>Refrain</i></p> |
|---|--|

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship. Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE

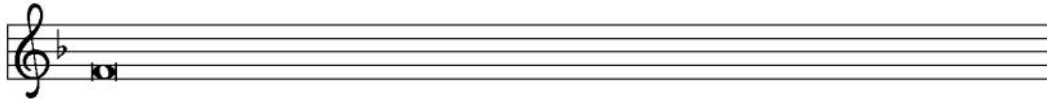
The musical notation for the Kyrie consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written on a five-line staff. The lyrics "In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy." are written below the staff, with the words "In", "peace", "let us pray to the Lord.", "Lord, have", "mer", and "cy." aligned with their respective notes. The second staff also begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody continues on a five-line staff. The lyrics "For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord." are written below the staff, with the words "For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord." aligned with their respective notes.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

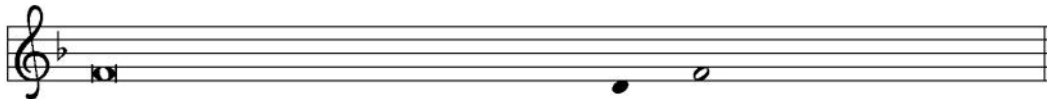
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



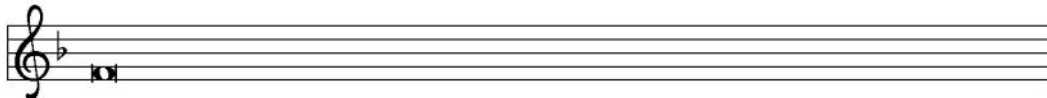
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



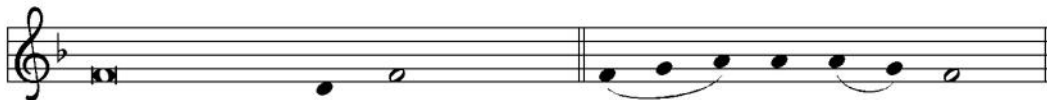
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

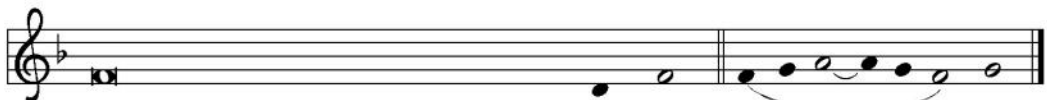


For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and

winter candle-lighting strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

HYMN

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

ELW 257

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

- 4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain*

Text: Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite. Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.. Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**
The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-13

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

A reading from Romans.

⁴ Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors ⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰ and again he says,

“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹ and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹² and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly is invited to stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL:

Matthew 3:1-12

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’ ”

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**
The assembly is seated.

SERMON

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

PRESENTATION

Candidates for baptism, sponsors, and parents gather with the ministers at the font. The assembly is seated.

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

The Sponsor presents the baptismal candidate:
I present Scottie Marie Keesal for baptism.

The presiding minister addresses parents or others who bring for baptism children who are not able to answer for themselves:

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have your child baptized into Christ?

I do.

As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with them among God's faithful people,
bring them to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in their hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture them in faith and prayer,
so that your children may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,

and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help your child grow in the Christian faith and life?

I do.

The presiding minister addresses sponsors:

Sponsors, do you promise to nurture this child in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help them live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

I do.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

People of God, do you promise to support Scottie Marie and pray for them in their new life in Christ?

We do.

The assembly stands.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The presiding minister addresses candidates for baptism as well as the parents and sponsors of young children. The assembly may join in the responses.

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

The presiding minister addresses the candidates and the assembly.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

BAPTISM

The candidate is immersed into the water, or water is poured on the candidate's head as the presiding minister says:

Scottie Marie, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The presiding minister continues:

Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your children new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain Scottie with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Amen.

The presiding minister marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of the baptized. Oil prepared for this purpose may be used. As the sign of the cross is made, the minister says:

Scottie Marie, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

Amen.

WELCOME

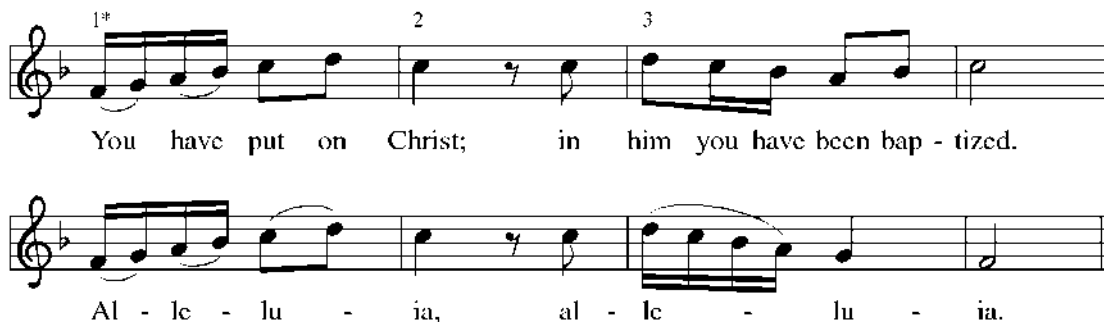
A lighted candle may be given to each of the newly baptized as a representative of the congregation says:

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify God in heaven.

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

BAPTISMAL RESPONSE



Text © 1969 and music © 1977 International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). All rights reserved. Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation, responding with “hear our prayer”.

A brief silence.

With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease, especially...those we name aloud...and those we hold in our hearts. Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith, especially Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today. Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING: 8:15—"Offertory on PUER NOBIS"

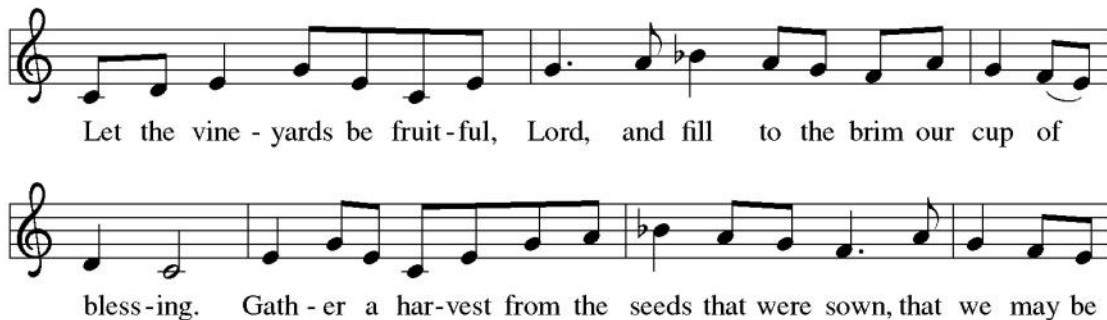
11:00—"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came" Cynthia Tjoa, flute

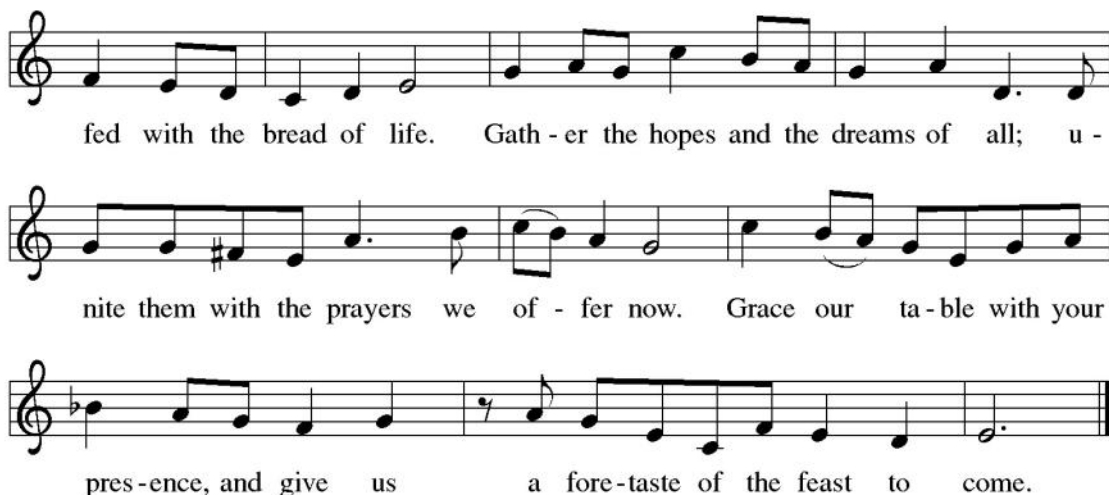
Offering is being gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. You are invited to place your offering in one of the offering plates located in the rear of the Sanctuary or send your offering to the church office through the mail or by having your bank mail a check directly. You can also contribute using any of the electronic giving options found on our church website or app.

The assembly is invited to stand.

OFFERATORY

"Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful"





Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

OFFERING PRAYER

Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

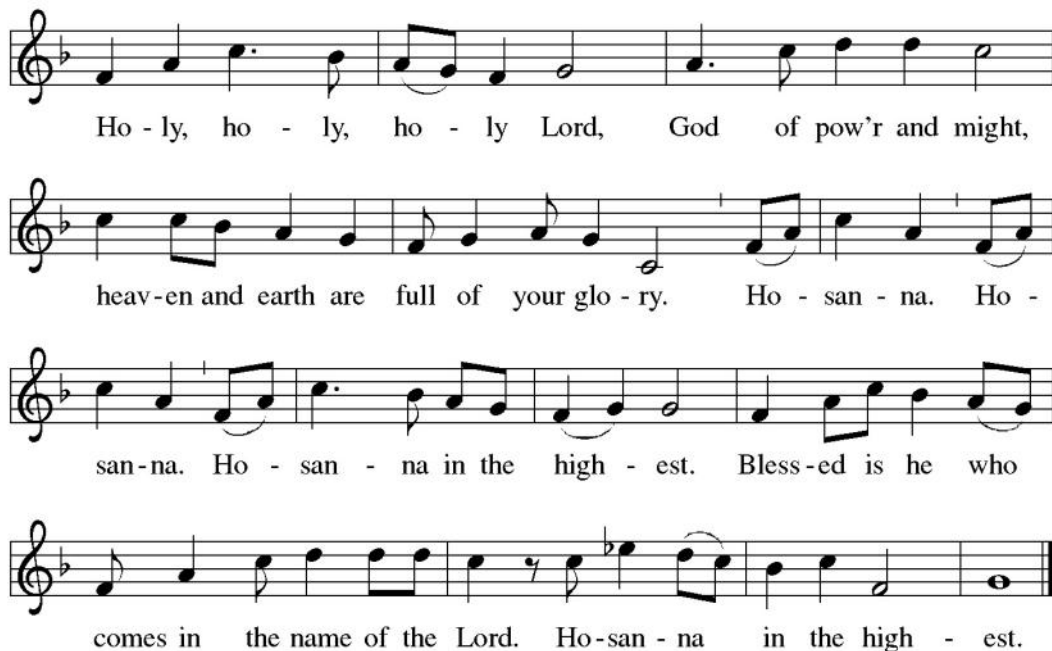
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes
and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your
Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke
it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this
for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This
cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of
sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE 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.

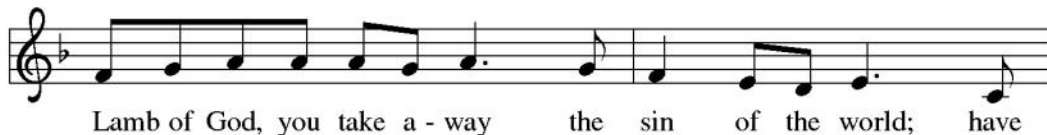
DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

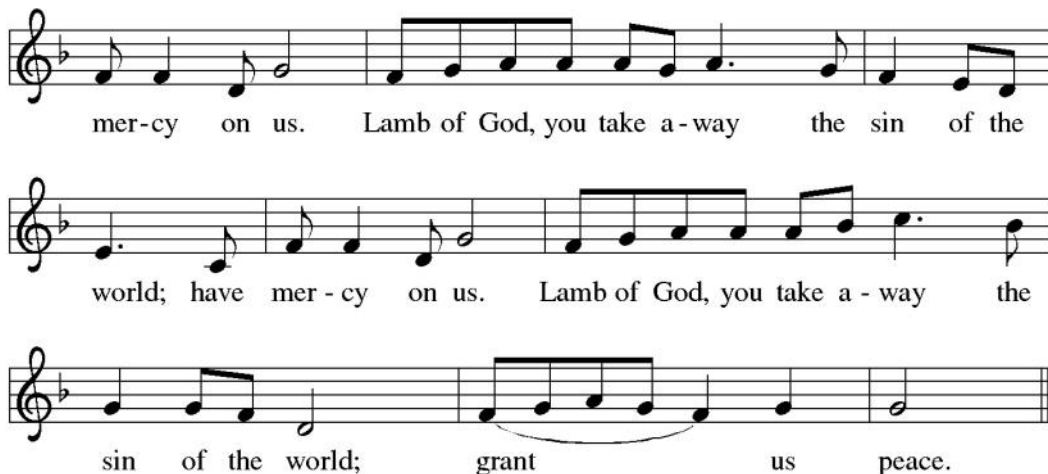
We give thanks as we receive the real presence of our resurrected Lord in, with, and under the bread and the wine. Communion will be distributed continuously under the direction of the ushers. Take an empty cup to receive from a pouring chalice (let the communion assistant know if you prefer grape juice). Please let the pastor know if you require a gluten free host. When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say "The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you." and each person may respond, "Amen". Worshippers who are not yet communing are invited to come forward for a blessing.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

LAMB OF GOD





The assembly is seated.

COMMUNION HYMN

"All Earth Is Hopeful"

ELW 266

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last! Furrows lie open for God's creative task: this, the labor of people who struggle to see how God's truth and justice set ev'ry-body free.</p> | <p>3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared; new highways opened, new protocols declared. Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace! All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!</p> |
| <p>2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell: "A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel"; she conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth restores hope and courage to children of this earth.</p> | <p>4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib. This same Lord Jesus today has come to live in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.</p> |

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946. Spanish text © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213. Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

After all have communed the assembly is invited to stand.

TABLE BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in Christ's Grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING

May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding"

ELW 246

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding! "Christ is near," we hear it say. "Cast away the works of darkness, all you children of the day!" | 4 So, when next he comes in glory and the world is wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mercy and with words of love draw near. |
| 2 Wakened by the solemn warning, from earth's bondage let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling, shines upon the morning skies. | 5 Honor, glory, might, and blessing to the Father and the Son with the everlasting Spirit while unending ages run! |
| 3 See the Lamb, so long expected, come with pardon down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of sorrow, one and all, to be forgiv'n; | |

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878. Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep Awake.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Blest Be the God of Israel"

The Eternal Candle is given by Paul Schrenk in memory of his Beloved Husband, David Vreeland, on the anniversary of their marriage.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, died 397

Sunday, December 7, 2025

While a governor of northern Italy, Ambrose was elected bishop of Milan on the same day he was baptized. He was a famous preacher, a writer of hymns we still sing today, and helped lead St. Augustine to faith.

Lucy, martyr, died 304

Saturday, December 13, 2025

Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will be taking a winter recess and will resume on January 7, 2026 at 11:00 AM & 6:00 PM. If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact the office.

MARTHA CIRCLE

The next meeting of Martha's Circle will be Tuesday, December 9th at 12:00PM in the Social Hall. Holly Zahradnick's group will be in charge of desserts and drinks.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation class will meet on an irregular schedule. The class schedule for the next few weeks is as follows:

- Sunday, December 7
- Sunday, December 14

All classes start at 7:00 PM. If you have any questions about confirmation or are interested in being a presenter for this years program please contact Pastor Chris.

CHRISTIAN ED

Check out our bulletin board for full details and schedules for our groups. The schedule for the next few weeks is as follows:

- **Faith in Conversation** will meet in the Choir Room on 12/7
- **MichaelLights** (6-12th grade) meets in the Youth Room on 12/7
- **Pray & Grow** (K-5th grade) meets in the Lower Sunday School Room on 12/14
- **Little Ones & Loved Ones** (Birth-4 y/o with a loved one) meets on 12/21

All groups meet at 9:30 AM. Please see Pastor Chris, or Kim Billet with questions.

ADVENT FAITH IN CONVERSATION SERIES: LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM

Have you ever wondered what lies at the heart of Lutheran faith and teaching? Whether you're a regular visitor, a new member, or a lifelong participant, this four-week Adult Forum course is designed to help you discover, reflect, and deepen your understanding of Lutheran teaching through studying Martin Luther's Small Catechism.

- **Visitors & New Members:** Learn what we believe and teach as Lutherans.
- **Members:** Dive deeper into the foundations of our faith and teaching.

Join us during the Sundays of Advent, December 7, 14 and 21 at 9:30am in the Social Hall as we explore Luther's Small Catechism together — a timeless guide to living and believing with clarity and conviction. All are welcome. Come ready to learn, share, and grow!

RENTING SPACE AT ST. MICHAEL'S

St Michael's is blessed to have a beautiful place for worship, fellowship and Christian education! We welcome opportunities to share our space with St Michael's family members and friends in our community. There are a variety of rooms available for social gatherings, such as bridal or baby showers, birthday and retirement celebrations and memorial events. We have hosted music lessons, recitals, auditions and rehearsals. Our social hall stage is well-suited to support students or performers at all levels. Civic groups or social / hobby clubs are also invited. Flexible office space is available for those who work from home but occasionally need a site for meetings or interviews. Honorariums for the use of church spaces vary based on event details. Please note that the church building and grounds are smoke and alcohol free. Help us spread the word and contact the church office for more information.

RECONCILING IN CHRIST: GRACEFUL ENGAGEMENT

Becoming a truly welcoming and affirming faith community starts with listening deeply and seeing God's presence in one another. This practice, called graceful engagement, is about holy conversations where every person is honored as a beloved child of God. It means sharing stories, hearing different perspectives, and discovering common ground as we grow together as the body of Christ. Jesus modeled this grace-filled love, and we are called to do the same. Our Reconciling Works Core Team will soon begin reaching out for one-on-one conversations, about 30 minutes each, where we can connect in meaningful ways. These chats aren't debates or arguments; they're opportunities to listen, learn, and build relationships rooted in compassion and understanding. You might meet at a coffee shop, in your home, or wherever feels comfortable. We're excited to walk this journey with you—feel free to ask any questions along the way!

FESTIVAL CHOIR 2025

The Festival Choir is a seasonal ensemble available to all SMLC members and non-members. It is designed to provide an opportunity for singers whose schedules prevent them from making the weekly commitment to sing in the Vocal Choir. The Festival Choir will sing for the Christmas Eve 10:00 p.m. Liturgy. Weekly rehearsals will be offered on Sundays directly following the 11:00 worship service from about 12:10 -12:45pm. MP3 files will be given to help singers learn the music on their own at home. Rehearsals will be Sundays: December 7th, 14th, & 21st. To find out more information about the Festival Choir please see Mark Dishong or contact him at markdishong@gmail.com.

PARISH FELLOWSHIP MEETING TODAY AT 9:30AM

Parish Fellowship will be meeting today to finalize Christmas Luncheon plans. Join us!

ST. MICHAEL'S CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

It's time again for the annual Christmas Luncheon, hosted by the Parish Fellowship team here at St. Michael's! Expect a casual, festive catered lunch plus holiday music on Sunday, December 14th after the second service in the Social Hall. To reserve your space, see any Parish Fellowship committee member after worship, or use the ChurchTrac app. Cost is \$10/per person. Please bring along some Christmas cookies to share as part of our dessert spread.

FELLOWSHIP AND COFFEE SUNDAY

Join us after both services TODAY, December 7th for coffee, tea, treats, and fellowship! Catch up with friends and make new ones. All are welcome to join us in the narthex this morning.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

In continuation with our tradition, we will once again be decorating the sanctuary with poinsettias on Christmas Eve. Flowers cost \$11 each, and dedication forms can be found in the narthex or through Constant Contact. Forms and payment are due **Wednesday, December 17th**. If you have any questions, please reach out to the office.

MIDWEEK HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Advent is a busy time of year for so many of us. While so much of our society is gearing up for Christmas we are also trying to prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child. Our Midweek Holden Evening Prayer Service can help provide an opportunity for that preparation. Join us Wednesdays during Advent (December 3, 10, 17) at 7:30 PM.

UN-TRIM A TREE

The tree in the Narthex is decorated with tags for gift ideas for a child living in Lutheran Social Ministries' affordable housing. If you would like to provide a gift for one or more of these children, please select a tag from the tree, and add you name and phone number to the sign-up sheet next to the matching name. Please return **UNWRAPPED** gifts (in gift bags, placed under the tree) by **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH**. Gifts should be valued between \$30-\$35. Thank you in advance for your generosity. See Ruth Morgenroth with questions.

PARISH CALENDAR

Sunday, December 7

Fellowship & Coffee Sunday

8:00 AM JH Casserole Drop-off

8:15 AM Worship In-Person

9:30 AM Faith in Conversation

9:30 AM Michael Lights

11:00 AM Worship In-Person, Facebook,
YouTube

12:00 PM Festival Choir Rehearsal

6:00 PM NA Meeting

7:00 PM Confirmation Class

Monday, December 8

7:00 PM Finance Meeting

Tuesday, December 9

7:30 PM Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 10

9:30 AM Weight Watchers Meeting

7:30 PM Mid-Week Advent

Thursday, December 11

7:30 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 12

Saturday, December 13

Sunday, December 14

8:15 AM Worship In-Person

9:30 AM Faith in Conversation

9:30 AM Pray & Grow

11:00 AM Worship In-Person, Facebook,
YouTube

12:15 PM SMLC Christmas Luncheon

4:30 PM Compassionate Friends Candle
Lighting Service

6:00 PM NA Meeting

7:00 PM Confirmation Class



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.