



NATIVITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Caring, Witnessing, Serving



3rd Sunday of Advent

10:15 a.m.

December 14, 2025

ORDER OF WORSHIP

ELW - SETTING 1

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INTRODUCTION

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

P: = Pastor

W: = Worship Assistant

A: = All in Attendance

**indicates congregation should stand if able.*

PRELUDE

(During the procession and recession please turn to face the Processional Cross and follow its movements to and from the Altar).

GATHERING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

P: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship:

(a moment of silence for reflection as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.)

***ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

A: Amen

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of mercy,

A: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P: God of might,

A: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

P: God in our midst,

A: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ☩ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

A: Amen.

*GATHERING HYMN: "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" ELW#242



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen

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*GREETING

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

A: And also, with you.

*KYRIE

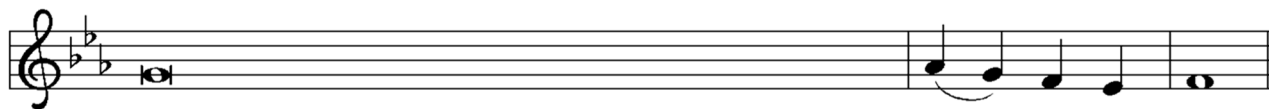
pg.98



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



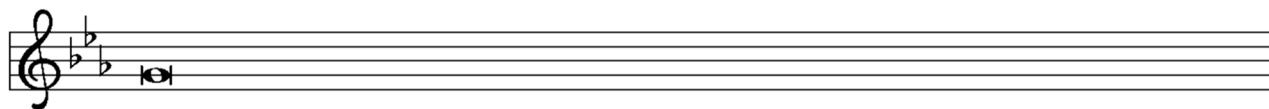
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



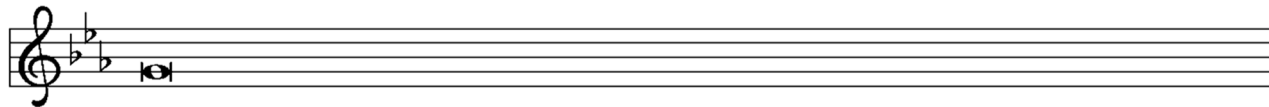
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

A: Amen

***THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

P: Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand.

A: Amen



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,

but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L: The Word of the Lord.

A: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 146:5-10

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)

W: ⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,
whose hope is in the | LORD their God;

**A: ⁶ who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;
who keeps promis- | es forever;**

W: ⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who hunger.
The LORD sets the | captive free.

**A: ⁸ The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who | are
bowed down; the LORD | loves the righteous.**

W: ⁹ The LORD cares | for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of the wicked.

**A: ¹⁰ The LORD shall | reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

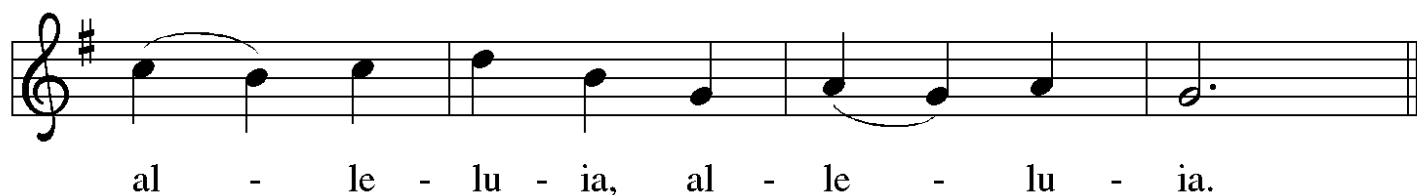
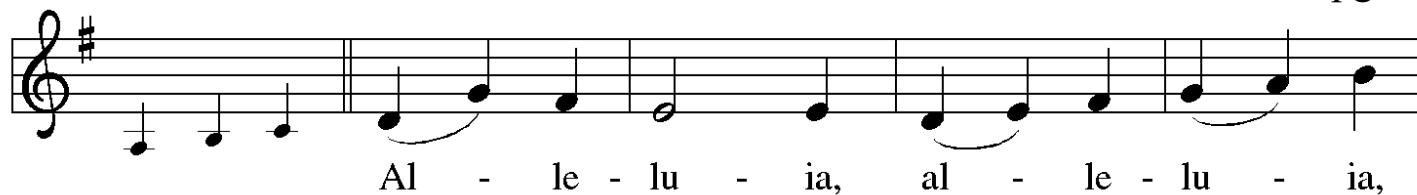
⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

L: The Word of the Lord.

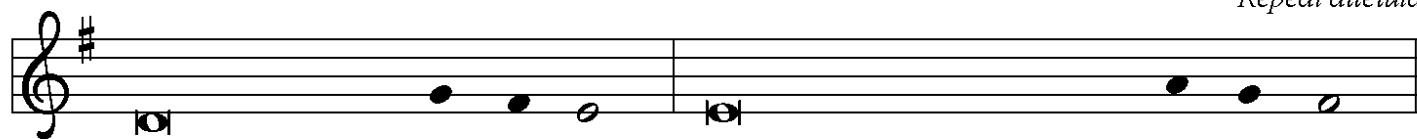
A: Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

pg.102



Repeat alleluia



P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th chapter.

A: Glory to you, O Lord.

***GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11**

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

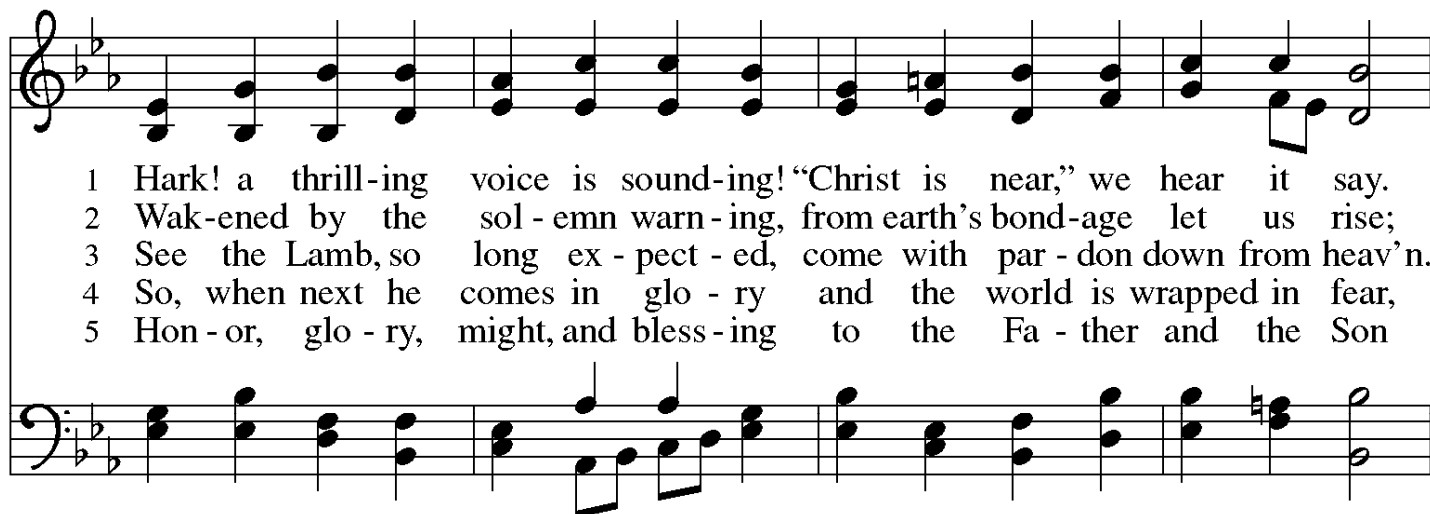
P: The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, O Christ.


SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY:**

“Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding” ELW#246



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! “Christ is near,” we hear it say.
 2 Wak-ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth’s bond-age let us rise;
 3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don down from heav’n.
 4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is wrapped in fear,
 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son



“Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!”
 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
 Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all, to be for - giv’n;
 he will shield us with his mer - cy and with words of love draw near.
 with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878
 Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

***THE NICENE CREED**

P: Let us now confess our faith with the words of the Nicene Creed.

A: We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

W: 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.

A brief silence.

W: God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

W: When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

W: When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. We pray for all those who witness and experience violence and those who live amongst the cruelty and chaos of war. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

W: When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. We especially pray for *Linda Smith, Melanie Herdlick, Ginny Yeager, Pr. Jennifer, Linda Halcoussis* and those we name in our hearts before you. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

W: When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

W: As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

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

A: Amen.

*PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

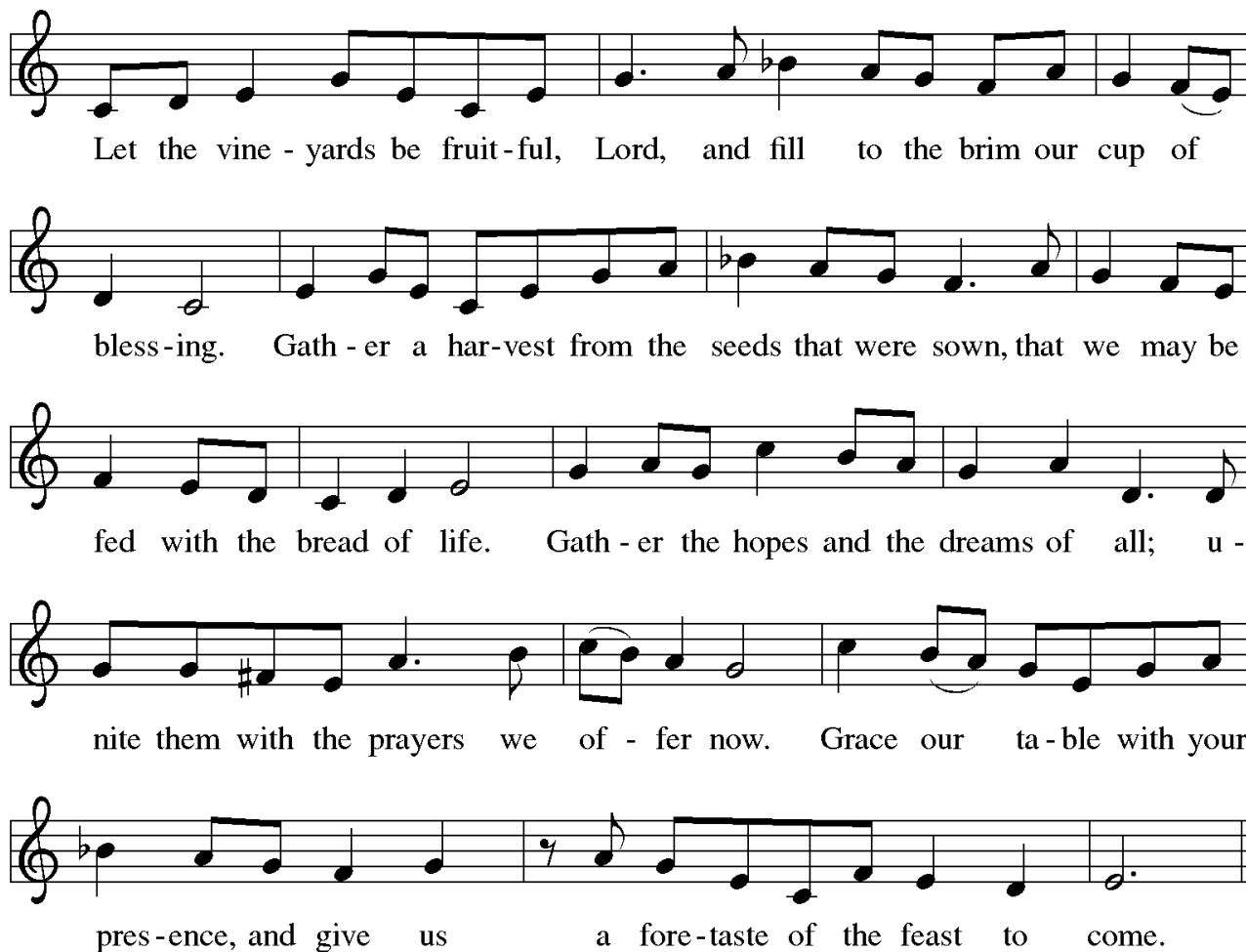
A: And also, with you.

let us share that peace with one another

OFFERTORY INTERLUDE

*OFFERTORY HYMN “Let the Vineyards be Fruitful”

ELW #182



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

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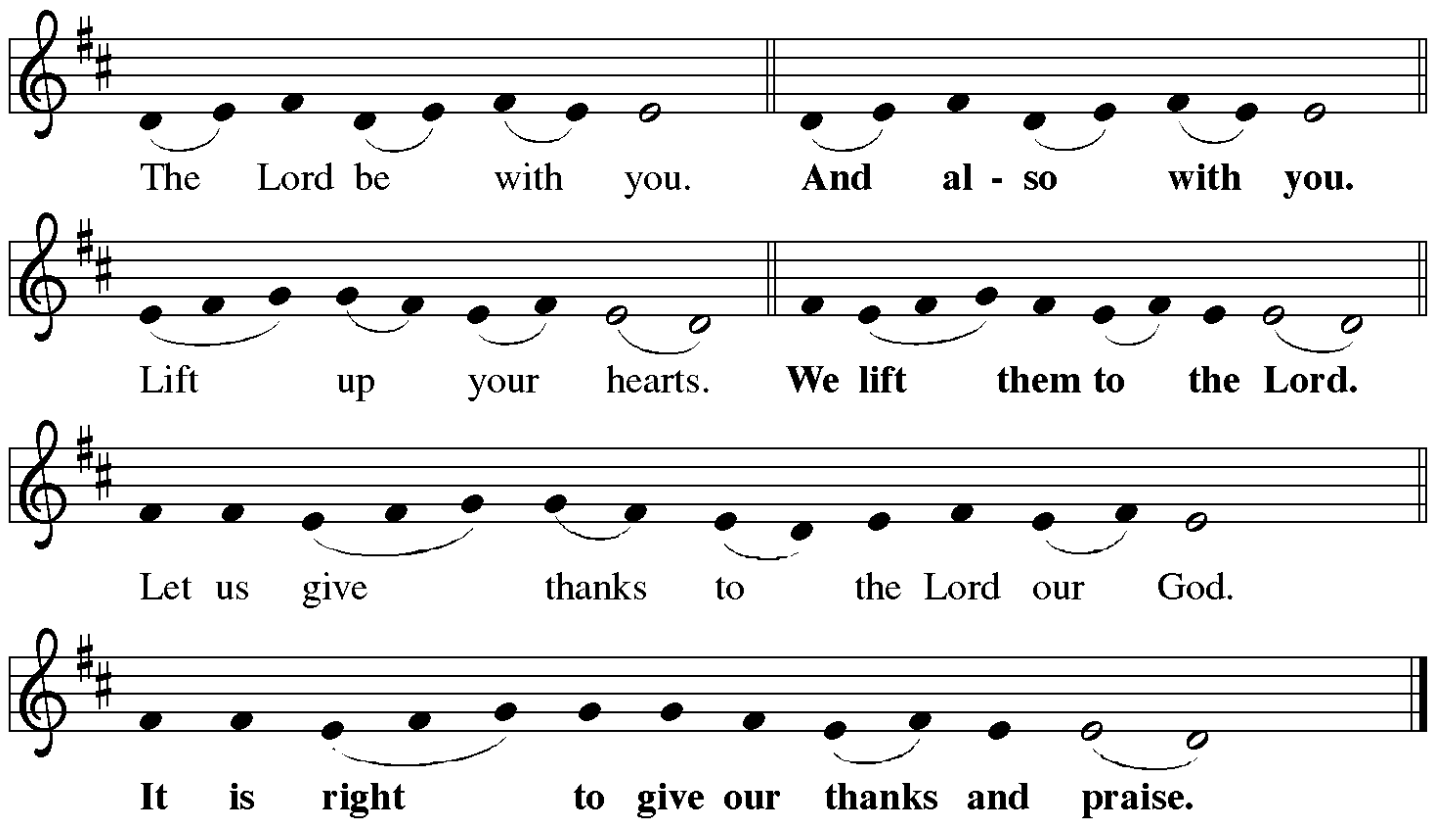
*OFFERTORY PRAYER

W: Let us pray together.

A: 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.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING:

Pg. 107



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

*THE PREFACE

P: 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:

Pg. 108

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

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

pg.110

P: 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:

A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: 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.

A: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: 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.

A: Come, Holy Spirit.

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

A: Amen.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Pg. 112

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

A: 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 PRESENTATION:** The gifts of God for the people of God. Come for all is now ready.


Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION


There is a grape juice option in cups located in the communion trays for those who wish to abstain from wine. If you desire a gluten free wafer in lieu of the bread for communion, please let Pastor know.



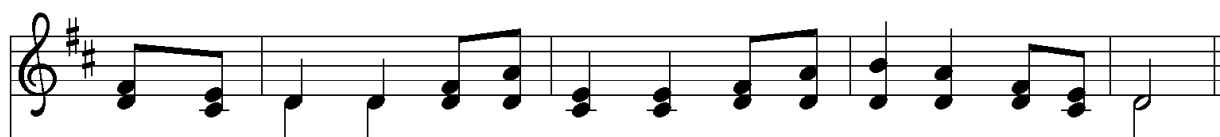
1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;
2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;
3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;



praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners, turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight.
praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.
Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.



Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,
Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;
Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.



calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.
from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955

Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

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*TABLE BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

A: Amen

*POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

pg.113



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -



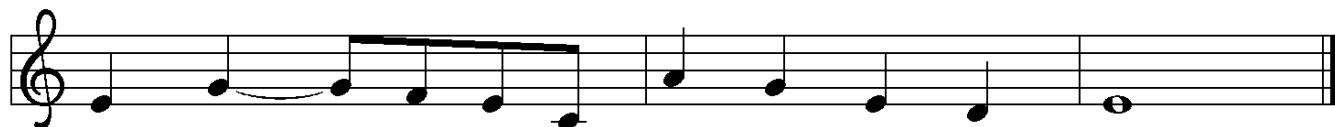
filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre-pared in the



sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions



and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.



Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace.

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

W: Let us Pray. 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.

A: Amen.


*BLESSING

P: 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.

A: Amen.

***SENDING HYMN:** “Prepare the Royal Highway”

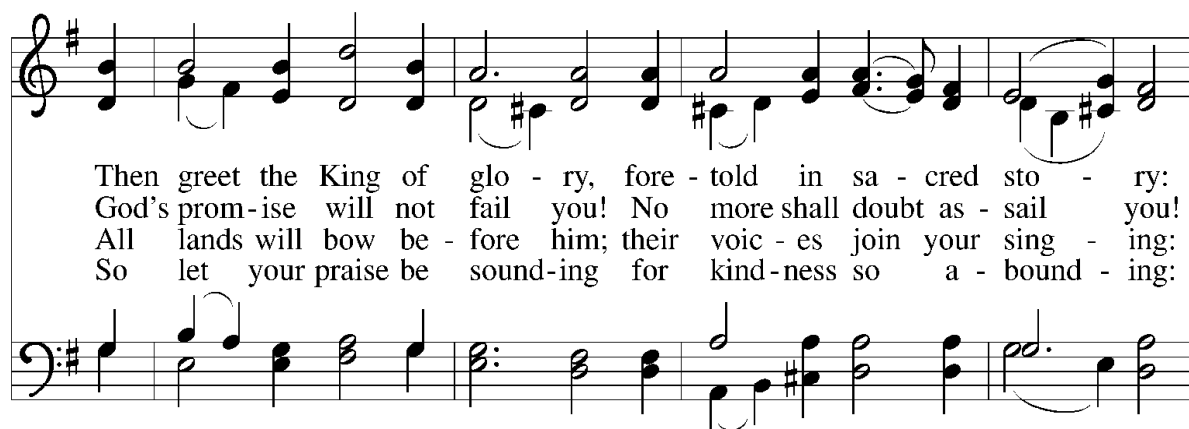
ELW#264



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.

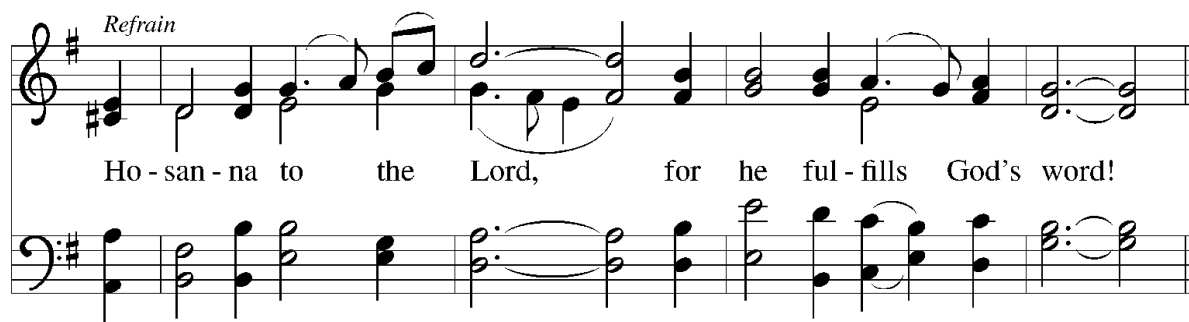


Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



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 will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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***DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

A: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

*** Announcements ***

We welcome with us today, **Pastor Blair Morgan**, who will lead us in worship while Pastor Jennifer continues her recuperation.

Advent Calendars and Devotionals are available in the Narthex for you to take home.

Join us NEXT Sunday, Dec 21 for our annual **Christmas Brunch** after worship. There will also be a short children's program that day during worship. We hope to see you there!

Social Ministry is looking for volunteers in 2026 to deliver donations collected for the NHCO food pantry and sharing projects. The sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board across from the kitchen and on Sign-Up Genius. Please see Carol Huffman with any questions, or if you would like to assist in other ways.

Christ in Our Home devotionals are available for Jan-Feb-March 2026. Large print versions are also available!

The 2026 Flower chart is now available across from the nursery and on-line. Please remember to fill out a flower card indicating the reason when signing up.

Please consider signing up for one of the weekly **Worship Helper or Offering Counter** positions. See the On-Line Signup or the paper one at church.



NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.nativitylutheranchurch15101.org

The Rev. Jennifer Soltis, Pastor



Organist: Alex Bednar
Worship Assistant: Alisa Michael
Lector: Margie Radebaugh
Usher: Merlinda Bisese
Greeter:
Videographer: Kim Brandt
Altar Guild: Kim Brandt
Offering Tellers: Merlinda Bisese

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The flowers in the chancel this morning are presented by Ken & Traci Saunders in  
honor of Traci's birthday.  
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For the Week of December 14 - 20

MONDAY

Art Group – 1p

TUESDAY

AA meeting – 7p

WELCA – 10:30a

NA meeting– 6:30p

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|       | <u>In Person</u> | <u>YouTube</u> | <u>Offering</u> |
|-------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Dec 7 | 38               | 35             | \$ 3,477        |

For Pastoral care please contact the church office to be put in touch with the  
emergency pastor on call.

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