

✠ Holy Cross Lutheran Church ✠

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Pastor Mark Huston

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Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

Divine Service, Setting Three

As We Gather

Advent is the season of waiting! As we wait, we have a special job to do. We joyfully get ready for Jesus' arrival by remembering the ministry of John the Baptist, who came as a witness to Christ, the light of the world. John himself was not the light, nor was he the centerpiece of God's plan to save the world; no, John's life was dedicated to preparing the way before the Lord and to get people ready for Jesus coming to the rescue of His people. In many ways, we are invited to be like John. Through our personal witness to Christ in our interpersonal relationships with others, God is working through us so that others will come to know His Son. Our goal is not only to trust in Jesus for ourselves but also to let the world know that He is coming to save them too. And His soon-to-come arrival will be well worth the wait!

354 Arise, O Christian People



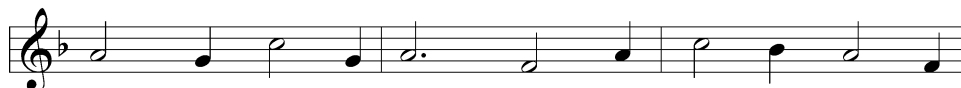
1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre - pare your - selves to -  
2 Pre - pare the way be - fore Him; Pre - pare for Him the  
3 The hum - ble heart and low - ly God rais - es up on  
4 Pre - pare my heart, Lord Je - sus; Turn not from me a -



day; Pre - pare to greet the Sav - ior, Who takes your  
best. Cast out what would of - fend Him, This great, this  
high; Be - neath His feet in ter - ror The haugh - ty  
side, And help me to re - ceive You This bless - ed



sins a - way. To us by grace a - lone The  
heav'n - ly guest. Make straight, make plain the way: The  
soul shall lie. The heart sin - cere and right, That  
Ad - vent - tide. From stall and man - ger low Come



truth and light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from  
low - ly val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -  
heeds God's in - vi - ta - tion And makes true prep - a -  
now to dwell with - in me; I'll sing Your prais - es



heav - en To all the world is shown.  
bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.  
ra - tion— It is the Lord's de - light.  
glad - ly And forth Your glo - ry show.

Text: Valentin Thilo, 1607-62; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806-74, alt.  
Tune: New Catechismus Gesangbüchlein, 1598, Hamburg, alt.  
Text and tune: Public domain

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.

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.

## Service of the Word

### Introit

*Psalm 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: v. 7*

**P** Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,\*  
and grant us your sal- | vation.

**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.

**P** Surely his salvation is near to those who | fear him,\*  
that glory may dwell | in our land.

**C** Yes, the LORD will give | what is good,\*  
and our land will yield its | increase.

**P** Righteousness will go be- | fore him\*  
and make his foot- | steps a way.

**C** Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

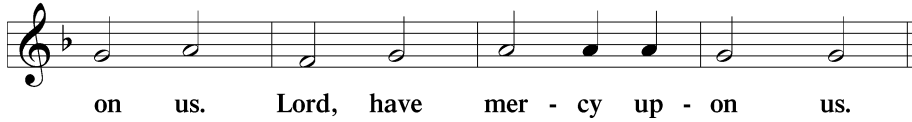
**P** Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,\*  
and grant us your sal- | vation.

### Kyrie

LSB 186



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



### Salutation and Collect of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And with thy spirit.

**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** Amen.

*Sit*

### Old Testament Reading

*Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11*

**R** The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 61.

<sup>1</sup>The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor;  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

<sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;

<sup>3</sup>to grant to those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;  
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

<sup>4</sup>They shall build up the ancient ruins;  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations. . . .

<sup>8</sup>For I the LORD love justice;  
I hate robbery and wrong;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

<sup>9</sup>Their offspring shall be known among the nations,  
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge them,  
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.

<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;  
my soul shall exult in my God,  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

<sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,

so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to sprout up before all the nations.

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Epistle

*1 Thessalonians 5:16–24*

**R** The Epistle is from 1 Thessalonians, chapter 5.

<sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup>but test everything; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup>Abstain from every form of evil.

<sup>23</sup>Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## Alleluia

*LSB 190*



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

## Holy Gospel

*John 1:6–8, 19–28*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.



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

**P** <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. . .

<sup>19</sup>This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” <sup>20</sup>He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” <sup>22</sup>So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” <sup>23</sup>He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

<sup>24</sup>(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) <sup>25</sup>They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” <sup>26</sup>John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, <sup>27</sup>even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” <sup>28</sup>These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

**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  $\dagger$  of the world to come. Amen.**

*Sit*

### 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  
 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: Latin, c. 5th–10th cent.; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–78, alt.  
 Tune: William H. Monk, 1823–89  
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

## Offertory

LSB 192

**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.

## Prayer of the Church

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

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the Church, preparing to celebrate the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that remembering John the Forerunner's preaching of the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, we, too, may die to sin and rise to new life, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the Church, that the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world would richly and daily forgive our sins and the sins of all believers; and for Matthew, our Synod president; Michael, our district president; Shawn, our circuit visitor; and all pastors in Christ, that they would remain faithful to not deny but confess Him, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the children of our families, that every darkness would be lightened by Christ's gracious visitation; and that God would preserve them from dangers to body and soul, guide them by His Word in wise paths, and keep them firm in the faith until life's end, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For all in authority, that they would be given wisdom and insight until the day when Christ comes again in glory to usher in His kingdom, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For those afflicted with pain, sickness, trials and difficulties, [*especially* \_\_\_\_\_,] that they may be granted health and the certainty that our bodies will be incorruptible and immortal when Christ returns to make all things new, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the Church, as she eagerly awaits the return of her Bridegroom, that we would not grow weary, but be strengthened through the Word and Sacraments to ever hold fast to Christ's promise of salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

#### Welcome to our Visitors

**The Lord's Supper** is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder.

For further study, see Matthew 5:23f.; 10:32f.; 18:15–35; 26:26–29; and 1 Corinthians 11:17–34.

## Service of the Sacrament

### Preface

LSB 194

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And with thy spirit.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

**P** Let us give thanks unto 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

LSB 195



**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**

LSB 196

**P** 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.

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

**The Words of Our Lord**

LSB 197

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

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\text{✠}$  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**

LSB 197

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**C** Amen.

**Agnus Dei**

LSB 198

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

### 636 Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness



1 Soul, a - dorn your - self with glad - ness, Leave the  
2 Has - ten as a bride to meet Him, And with  
3 He who craves a pre - cious trea - sure Nei - ther  
4 Now in faith I hum - bly pon - der O - ver



gloom - y haunts of sad - ness, Come in - to the day - light's  
lov - ing rev - 'rence greet Him. For with words of life im -  
cost nor pain will mea - sure; But the price - less gifts of  
this sur - pass - ing won - der That the bread of life is



splen - dor, There with joy your prais - es ren - der.  
mor - tal He is knock - ing at your por - tal.  
heav - en God to us has free - ly giv - en.  
bound - less Though the souls it feeds are count - less:



Bless the One whose grace un - bound - ed This a - maz - ing  
O - pen wide the gates be - fore Him, Say - ing, as you  
Though the wealth of earth were prof - fered, None could buy the  
With the choic - est wine of heav - en Christ's own blood to



ban - quet found - ed; He, though heav'n - ly, high, and  
there a - dore Him: Grant, Lord, that I now re -  
gifts here of - fered: Christ's true bod - y, for you  
us is giv - en. Oh, most glo - rious con - so -



ho - ly, Deigns to dwell with you most low - ly.  
ceive You, That I nev - er - more will leave You.  
riv - en, And His blood, for you once giv - en.  
la - tion, Pledge and seal of my sal - va - tion!

5 Jesus, source of lasting pleasure,  
Truest friend, and dearest treasure,  
Peace beyond all understanding,  
Joy into all life expanding:  
Humbly now, I bow before You;  
Love incarnate, I adore You;  
Worthily let me receive You  
And, so favored, never leave You.

6 Jesus, sun of life, my splendor,  
Jesus, friend of friends, most tender,  
Jesus, joy of my desiring,  
Fount of life, my soul inspiring:  
At Your feet I cry, my maker,  
Let me be a fit partaker  
Of this blessed food from heaven,  
For our good, Your glory, given.

7 Lord, by love and mercy driven,  
 You once left Your throne in heaven  
 On the cross for me to languish  
 And to die in bitter anguish,  
 To forego all joy and gladness  
 And to shed Your blood in sadness.  
 By this blood redeemed and living,  
 Lord, I praise You with thanksgiving.

8 Jesus, bread of life, I pray You,  
 Let me gladly here obey You.  
 By Your love I am invited,  
 Be Your love with love requited;  
 By this Supper let me measure,  
 Lord, how vast and deep love's treasure.  
 Through the gift of grace You give me  
 As Your guest in heav'n receive me.

Text: Johann Franck, 1618-77; (sts. 1, 4-5): tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978; (sts. 2-3, 6-8): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.  
 Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598-1662  
 Text (sts. 1, 4-5): © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110017219  
 Text (sts. 2-3, 6-8) and tune: Public domain

Stand

**Nunc Dimittis**

LSB 199

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

**Thanksgiving**

LSB 200

**P** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
**C** and His mercy endureth forever.

**P** Let us pray.  
 O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And with thy spirit.

## Benedicamus

LSB 202

- P** Bless we the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

## Benediction

LSB 202

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and  $\text{✠}$  give you peace.



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

## 346 When All the World Was Cursed



1 When all the world was cursed By Mo-ses' con-dem-na-tion,  
2 Be-fore he yet was born, He leaped in joy-ful meet-ing,  
3 Be-hold the Lamb of God That bears the world's trans-gres-sion,  
4 O grant, dear Lord of love, That we re-ceive, re-joic-ing,



Saint John the Bap-tist came With words of con-so-la-tion.  
Con-fess-ing Him as Lord Whose moth-er he was greet-ing.  
Whose sac-ri-fice re-moves The dev-il's dread op-pres-sion.  
The word pro-claimed by John, Our true re-pen-tance voic-ing,



With true fore-run-ner's zeal The great-er One he named,  
By Jor-dan's roll-ing stream, A new E-li-jah bold,  
Be-hold the Lamb of God, Who takes a-way our sin,  
That glad-ly we may walk Up-on our Sav-ior's way



And Him, as yet un-known, As Sav-ior he pro-claimed.  
He tes-ti-fied of Him Of whom the proph-ets told:  
Who for our peace and joy Will full a-tone-ment win.  
Un-til we live with Him In His e-ter-nal day.

Text: Johann Gottfried Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Paul E. Kretzmann, 1883–1965, alt.  
Tune: Ahasverus Fritsch, 1629–1701  
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## Announcements

**Adult Sunday School** at **9am** on Sunday mornings is studying Leviticus.

The **Flowers** that beautify our altar this morning are given to God's glory.

The **Ladies Bible Study** meets on Wednesday at **10am**, studying the book of 1 Samuel.

**Midweek Advent Services** are **Dec 20**. There will be a light meal on Wednesday nights at **6:30pm**, followed by Vespers at **7pm**.

**Church Council** next meeting is **Jan 14** at **8am**.

December has a **Fifth Sunday!** Get your hymn ideas to Pastor Huston by Christmas Eve.

## **Acknowledgments**

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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