

✠ Holy Cross Lutheran Church ✠

28171 West Highway 64 PO Box 851

Canton, Texas 75103

www.holycrosscanton.com

Pastor Mark Huston

903-603-5071

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21, 2025

Divine Service, Setting Four

As We Gather

Though Matthew is already telling of the birth of Jesus Christ, it is not yet the account we look forward to hearing on Christmas Eve. But this one, lighter on details, is heavy with the promise Jesus' birth fulfills. This Sunday, we hear of Joseph's own angel visit, of the name that shall be given to this child, and of His birth to save His people from their sins. All of this is prefigured in the voice of the Advent prophet Isaiah and framed in the essential message of the church by the words of Paul. Each of the readings appointed for today remind us that God has it all figured out, and even though it all unfolded in time before us, it was appointed by God from the beginning of time. As we remember again all that happened, we also happily remember that God still has it all in hand and that Christ is not only the fulfiller of the past but also the author of the future.

512 At the Name of Jesus



1 At the name of Je - sus Ev - 'ry knee shall bow,
2 At His voice cre - a - tion Sprang at once to sight,
3 Hum - bled for a sea - son, To re - ceive a name
4 Bore it up tri - um - phant With its hu - man light,



Ev - 'ry tongue con - fess Him King of glo - ry now.
All the an - gel fac - es, All the hosts of light,
From the lips of sin - ners Un - to whom He came,
Through all ranks of crea - tures To the cen - tral height,



'Tis the Fa - ther's plea - sure We should call Him Lord,
Thrones and bright do - min - ions, Stars up - on their way,
Faith - ful - ly He bore it Spot - less to the last,
To the throne of God - head, To the Fa - ther's breast,



Who from the be - gin - ning Was the might - y Word.
All the heav'n - ly or - ders In their great ar - ray.
Brought it back vic - to - rious When from death He passed;
Filled it with the glo - ry Of that per - fect rest.

5 In your hearts enthrone Him;
There let Him subdue
All that is not holy,
All that is not true:
Crown Him as your captain
In temptation's hour;
Let His will enfold you
In its light and pow'r.

6 Christians, this Lord Jesus
Shall return again
In His Father's glory,
With His angel train;
For all wreaths of empire
Meet upon His brow,
And our hearts confess Him
King of glory now.

△ 7 Glory then to Jesus,
Who, the Prince of light,
To a world in darkness
Brought the gift of sight;
Praise to God the Father;
In the Spirit's love
Praise we all together
Him who reigns above.

Text: Caroline M. Noel, 1817-77, alt.
Tune: Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958
Text and tune: Public domain

Confession and Absolution

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 Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Kneel/Stand

C Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 130:5–8; antiphon: Isaiah 64:1

P Oh that you would rend the heavens | and come down,*
that the mountains might quake at your | presence.

C I wait for the LORD, my | soul waits,*
and in his | word I hope;

P my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the | morning,*
more than watchmen for the | morning.

C O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is | steadfast love,*
and with him is plentiful re- | demption.

P And he will redeem | Israel*
from all his in- | iquities.

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 Oh that you would rend the heavens | and come down,*
that the mountains might quake at your | presence.



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:10–17

R The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 7.

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father’s house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria.”

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Romans 1:1–7

R The Epistle is from Romans, chapter 1.

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

C These things are writ-ten that you may be - lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 1:18–25

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

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

P ¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, 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

357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



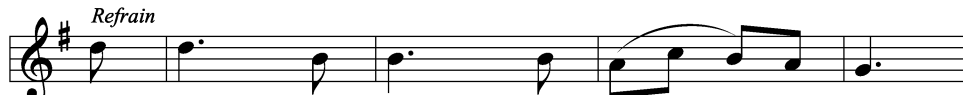
1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
2 O come, Thou Wis - dom from on high, Who or - d'rest
3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy
4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
all things might - i - ly; To us the path of
tribes on Si - nai's height In an - cient times didst
Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny That trust Thy might - y



ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
knowl - edge show, And teach us in her ways to go.
give the Law In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Re - joyce! Re - joyce! Em - man - u - el



Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

- 5 O come, Thou 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, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight. Refrain
- 7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace. Refrain

Sermon

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all pastors, that they may faithfully preach and teach the Gospel; for the hearts of young men to be opened to hear and heed the Lord's call to His ministry; and for all church workers in their various vocations, that they may serve us well in God's name, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For faith and humility to receive the virgin-born Son of God in the signs where He is promised to be found: His Holy Word and Sacraments, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For fathers, that like Joseph, they may be honorable and just men; that God would give them wisdom, patience, pride of duty and, above all, faith and loyalty to His Word; and that, knowing the heavenly Father's true Guardianship, they may head their households with godly forbearance, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For our nation and its rulers, that the Lord would bear patiently with this land despite its tiresome flattery and unbelief; that God would clear away all empty shows of piety; and that He would renew genuine faith in the Virgin's Son, that His return may not be a sign against us, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For healing for the sick, relief to the suffering, peace to the dying and comfort to those who mourn, [*especially _____ and those we name in our hearts,*] that they would be sustained in all adversity and given patience and courage as they await the unfolding of the Lord's healing grace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all who eat today this feast of joy, that in the Savior's body and blood we may be granted a blessed foretaste of the feast to come for the strengthening of our faith and the growth of our love, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P Lord God, heavenly Father, we give You thanks for Your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, who is the Dayspring from on high and the splendor of light everlasting. By His coming in the flesh and by His blessed Word, enlighten our hearts with the Gospel, enlighten the hearts of those who sit in the darkness of unbelief with the light of saving faith, and enlighten those who dwell in the shadow of death with the certain hope of the resurrection through Him. Grant that, as we recall with thanksgiving His advent in the flesh, we may always confess Him and remain watchful for His advent in glory at the Last Day; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Offering

339 Lift Up Your Heads, You Everlasting Doors sts. 1-2

956 Create in Me

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.

Text: Psalm 51:10–12
Tune: Johann Georg Winer, 1583–1651, adapt.
Text and tune: Public domain

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

Stand

Preface

LSB 208

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

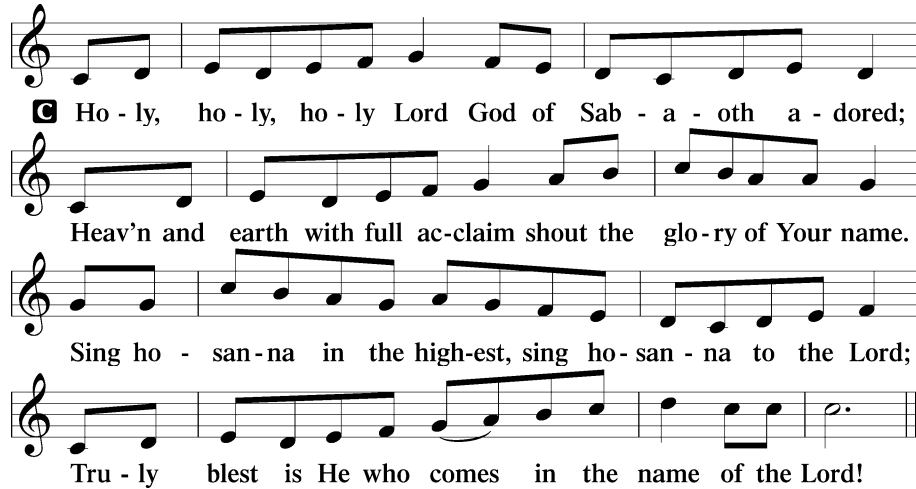
P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;
 Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.
 Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;
 Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your boundless mercy You sent Your servant, John the Baptist, to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of heaven draws near.

With thankful hearts we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus," confident that in His body and blood, given us to eat and drink, we receive the forgiveness of sins and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

C 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

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

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

Agnus Dei

LSB 210

1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 You take the sin of the world a - way;
 You take the sin of the world a - way;
 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,
 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
 And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Sit

Distribution

810 O God of God, O Light of Light

1 O God of God, O Light of Light, O Prince of Peace and
 2 For deep in proph-ets' sa - cred page, And grand in po - ets'
 3 That life of truth, those deeds of love, That death so steeped in
 4 Then raise to Christ a might - y song, And shout His name, His
 King of kings: To You in heav-en's glo - ry bright The song of
 wing-ed word, Slow - ly in type, from age to age The na - tions
 hate and scorn— These all are past, and now a - bove He reigns, our
 mer-cies tell! Sing, heav'n-ly host, your praise pro-long, And all on
 praise for - ev - er rings. To Him who sits up - on the throne,
 saw their com - ing Lord; Till through the deep Ju - de - an night
 King once crowned with thorn. Lift up your heads, O might - y gates!
 earth, your an - them swell! All hail, O Lamb for sin - ners slain!
 The Lamb once slain but raised a - gain, Be all the glo - ry
 Rang out the song, "Good-will to men!" Sung once by first - born
 So sang that host be - yond our ken. Lift up your heads, your
 For - ev - er let the song as - cend! Wor - thy the Lamb, en -
 He has won, All thanks and praise! A - men, a - men.
 sons of light, It ech - oes now, "Good - will!" A - men.
 King a - waits. We lift them up. A - men, a - men.
 throned to reign, All glo - ry, pow'r! A - men, a - men.

Text: John Julian, 1839–1913, alt.
 Tune: Johann Störks . . . Schlag- Gesang- Und Noten-Buch, 1744, Stuttgart
 Text and tune: Public domain

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

Stand

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 211

1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
 2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All
 part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
 glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the
 glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
 Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;
 A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
 For as in the be - gin - ning, Is
 to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
 now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
 peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
 sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Post-Communion Collect

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.

Benedicamus

LSB 212

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

900 Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love



1 Je - sus! Name of won-drous love, Name all oth - er names a - bove,
2 Je - sus! Name de - creed of old, To the maid-en moth - er told,
3 Je - sus! Name of price - less worth To the fall - en of the earth
4 Je - sus! Name of mer - cy mild, Giv - en to the ho - ly Child



Un - to which must ev - 'ry knee Bow in deep hu - mil - i - ty.
Kneel-ing in her low-ly cell, By the an - gel Ga - bri - el.
For the prom - ise that it gave, "Je - sus shall His peo-ple save."
When the cup of hu-man woe First He tast - ed here be - low.

5 Jesus! Only name that's giv'n
Under all the mighty heav'n
Whereby those to sin enslaved
Burst their fetters and are saved.

6 Jesus! Name of wondrous love,
Human name of God above;
Pleading only this, we flee
Helpless, O our God, to Thee.

Text: William W. How, 1823-97, alt.
Tune: Geist-reiches Gesang-Buch, 1704, Halle, ed. Johann A. Freylinghausen, alt.
Text and tune: Public domain

Announcements

Adult Sunday School is at **9am** on Sunday mornings studying our Lutheran identity.

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

The **Ladies Bible Study** meets next Wednesday **Dec 31** at **10am** studying the Proverbs.

Church Council next meeting is **Jan 11** at **8am**.

The next **Men's Breakfast and Bible Study** is Sat. **Jan 10** at **9am**.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service is at **6pm** on the 24th. **Christmas Morning Divine Service** is at **10am** on the 25th.

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Four from Lutheran Service Book

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2025 Concordia Publishing House.