

Jesus was baptized by John
in the Jordan

MARK 1:9



+ The Baptism Of Our Lord +

January 6-7, 2024

AS WE GATHER

A new season in the Church Year begins today. Following Advent hope and Christmas joy in the Savior born for us, we enter Epiphany, which can be summed up with words such as revealing, shining forth, and manifestation. The Word we hear today is fitting as epiphanies are things the Lord has done since the beginning of time. The first creation was light shining forth on the first day. From that day of creation to the fall into sin to the first promise of the Savior, God has shone His light and enabled His people to see and know what is needed. As the time was right for Jesus to begin His earthly ministry, it began with His Baptism. With John the Baptist in the Jordan River, the Lord reveals and shines forth the manifestation of the Word made flesh for us when He says: “You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased” (Mark 1:11).

REGARDING COMMUNION

Jesus was born in a town called “house of bread” (Bethlehem) and laid in a feeding trough (a manger) where the livestock normally found their grain. Little surprise then that Jesus spoke of himself as “the bread who came down from heaven” (John 6:41) and as “a grain of wheat falling into the earth” (John 12:24)! Christmas is the celebration of the Eternal Son Jesus, God of God and Light of Light, taking on flesh and dwelling among us so that we behold in him the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). Our word “Christmas” simply means *Christ’s Mass* and reminds us that Jesus is still present among us in body and blood through the sacred gifts of bread and wine. In this vein, Luther once said: “Word and Sacrament are the manger and swaddling clothes into which it has pleased Christ to lay himself.” May we come to Christ’s manger (the Altar) humbled in repentance for all that is wrong in our lives so that we may receive his gracious meal for forgiveness and renewal. ***Since Christian denominations have differing understandings of Holy Communion, if you are not a member of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation and have not communed here before, we ask that you speak with the pastor or elder prior to communing with us the first time. Those not communing are invited to cross their arms over their chests and approach the pastor for a blessing during the distribution. Also, if certain factors prohibit you from partaking of regular wine, non-alcoholic wine is available in the center circle of the tray. If you would***

like to begin sharing this sacred meal with us on a regular basis, please ask the pastor for a time of faith instruction and formation.

If you are in need of a gluten-free wafer for Communion, please let Pastor or an Elder know.

Liturgical Color:

White is the color of purity and is associated with festivals of Christ and his Church .

Visitors: We are glad you have chosen to be with us today! We would especially like to follow-up with you beyond today, so please take a moment to leave your best contact information in the guest books at each entrance/exit or in the Record of Fellowship books found on each pew. **A cry-room for parents and children is just off from the front entryway, and there's a wonderful nursery downstairs at the end of the fellowship hall for you to make use of at any time.** Do you have any questions about anything here? Don't hesitate to ask one of the ushers or elders, or talk to the pastor.

Prelude

Pastoral Welcome

Please rise, as able.

(Prayer request cards will be collected as the hymn is sung.)

Invocation Hymn..... "The People That in Darkness Sat" #412



1 The peo - ple that in dark - ness sat A glo - rious
2 To hail Thee, Sun of Righ - teous - ness, The gath - 'ring
3 To us a Child of hope is born, To us a
4 His name shall be the Prince of Peace, The Ev - er -



light have seen; The light has shined on them who long In
na - tions come; They joy as when the reap - ers bear Their
Son is giv'n, And on His shoul - der ev - er rests All
last - ing Lord, The Won - der - ful, the Coun - sel - or, The



shades of death have been, In shades of death have been.
har - vest trea - sures home, Their har - vest trea - sures home.
pow'r in earth and heav'n, All pow'r in earth and heav'n.
God by all a - dored, The God by all a - dored.

5 His righteous government and pow'r
Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end,
His reign shall have no end.

6 Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,
And make us Thine alone,
Who with the Father ever art
And Holy Spirit, one,
And Holy Spirit, one.

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Divine Service, Setting One

Confession and Absolution

The sign of the cross † may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Confession and Absolution.....page 151

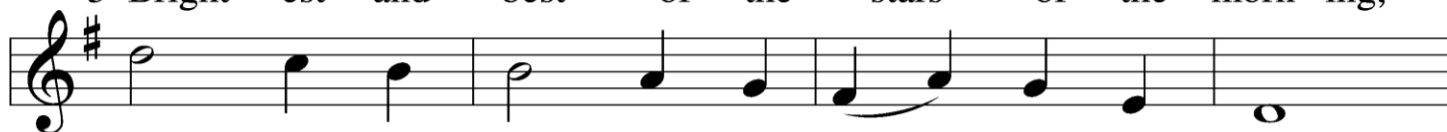
- P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.
- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.
- P** In the mercy of almighty God . . . Lord Jesus Christ.
- C** Amen.

Service of the Word

Entrance Hymn . "Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning" #400



1 Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,
2 Cold on His cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing;
3 Shall we not yield Him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion,
4 Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,
5 Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,



Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Fra - grance of E - dom and of - f'rings di - vine,
Vain - ly with gifts would His fa - vor se - cure.
Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;



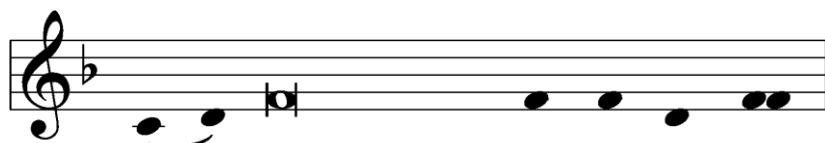
Star of the East, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,
An - gels a - dore Him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,
Gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,
Rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion;
Star of the East, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,



Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.
Mak - er and Mon - arch and Sav - ior of all.
Myrrh from the for - est and gold from the mine?
Dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.
Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.

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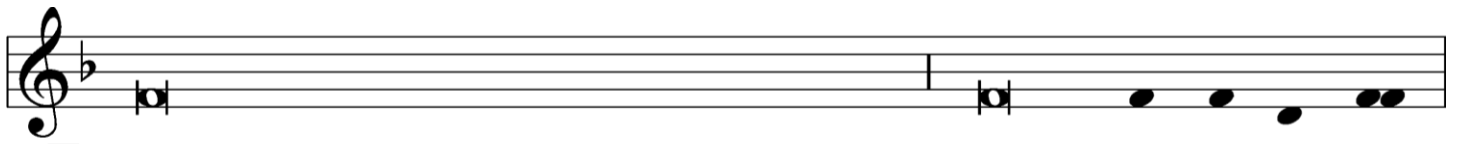
Kyrie.....pages 152-153



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



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



C Lord, have mer - cy.



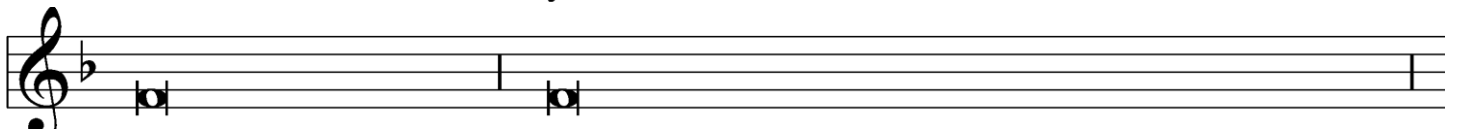
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



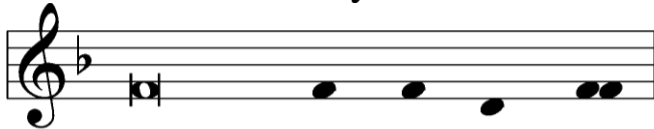
and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



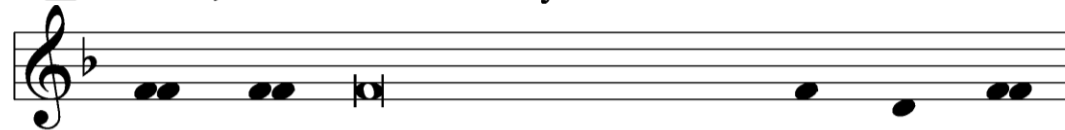
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



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



C A - men.

Gloria in Excelsis.....*page 154*



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His peo - ple on earth.



C Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa - ther:



We wor-ship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer.



For You a-lone are the Ho-ly One, You a-lone are the Lord,



You a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Salutationpage 156



P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Collect of the Day *(spoken in unison)*

Father in heaven, at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized in His name faithful in their calling as Your children and inheritors with Him of everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

The Twelve Days Ornament

Old Testament **Isaiah 60:1-6**

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.
Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual *(spoken in unison)*

Praise the Lord, all nations!
Extol him, all peoples!
For great is his steadfast love toward us,

and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

bring an offering, and come into his courts! (*Psalm 117:1*)

Epistle ReadingRomans 6:1-11

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please rise.

Alleluia and Versepage 156

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. Below the first staff, the lyrics "Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the" are written. The second staff continues the melody with quarter and eighth notes. Below the second staff, the lyrics "words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia." are written. A double bar line is at the end of the second staff.

Holy GospelMark 1:4-11

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all

Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Hymn of the Day *"Breath of the Living God"*



1 Breath of the liv - ing God on the wa - ters
 2 Breath of the liv - ing God, You con - ceived the
 3 Breath of the liv - ing God, You bring us to



in the be - gin - ning mov - ing, Breath of the liv - ing
 Son, Je - sus, to be like us, Breath of the liv - ing
 life in bap - tis - mal wa - ter, Breath of the liv - ing



God, You fill all cre - a - tion with fruit - ful life.
 God, so You re - cre - ate all who live in Him.
 God, we new crea - tures live by Your liv - ing breath.

Refrain



Come now and live with-in us, and with Your

gifts en-rich us: Breath of the liv - ing God, — O most
Ho - ly Spir - it of the Lord!

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Sermon..... “Baptized into His Mission”

Installation of 2024 Council

President-Jeremy VanWey, *Elders*-Willie Crespo, Sean Estanek, Evan Florida, Alan Miller, Jimmy Smithers, Rich Vanderburgh; *Stewardship*-James Schumaker; *Evangelism*-Becca Estanek; *Missions*-Darlene Laubenstein; *Education*-Rebecca Holland; *Fellowship*-Felisa Brown; *Treasurer*-Jeff Florida; *Recording Secretary*-Colin Hart; *Trustees*-Ron Rode, Jeremiah Murrell, Ben Smith; *Long Range Planning*-Ellen Pederson, Cody Clemons, Bonnie Rich.

Please rise.

Nicene Creed.....page 158

**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.

Prayer of the Church

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P . . . who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Please be seated.

Offering

Please rise.

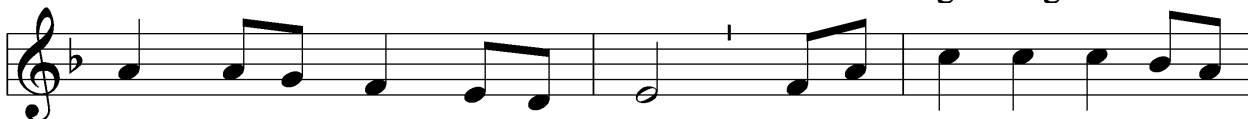
Offertorypages 159-160



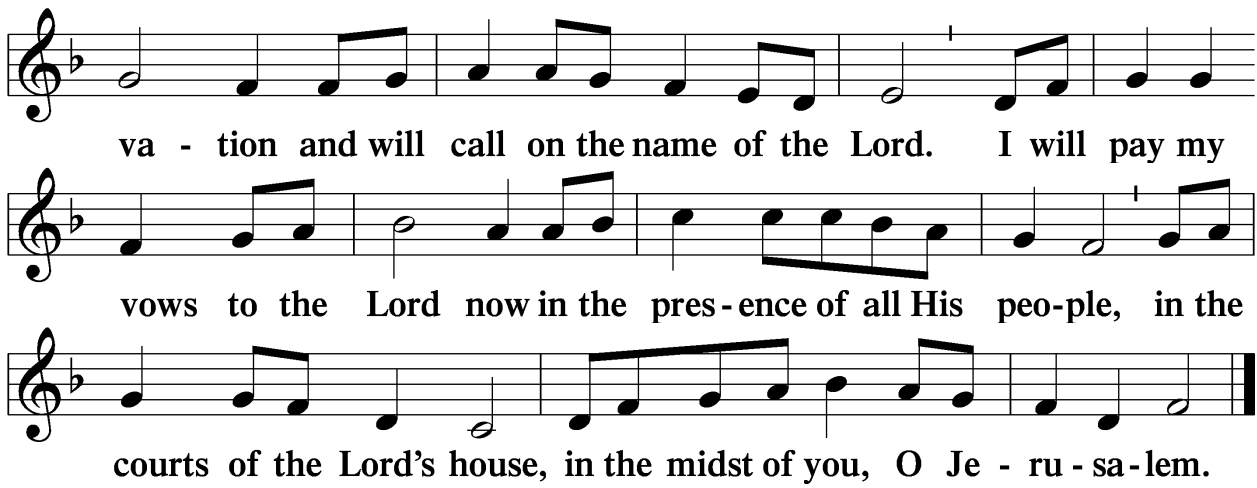
C What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to



me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will



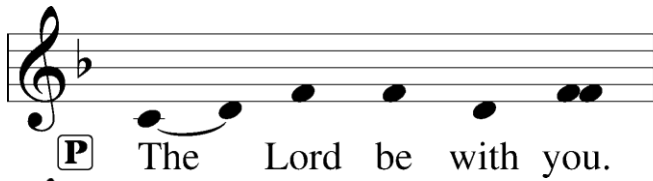
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-



va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
 vows to the Lord now in the pres - ence of all His peo - ple, in the
 courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

Service of the Sacrament

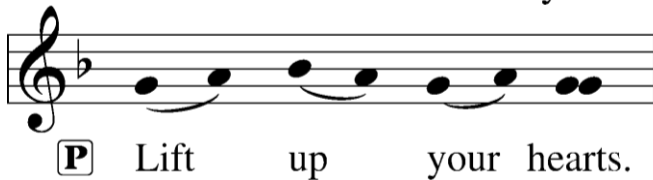
Communion Liturgypages 160-163



P The Lord be with you.



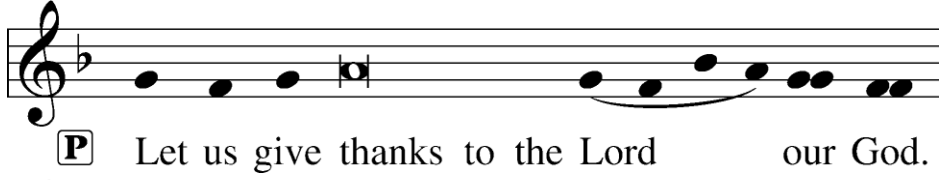
G And al - so with you.



P Lift up your hearts.



G We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



G It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and beneficial . . . evermore praising You and singing:

Sanctus.....page 161

C 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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving.....page 161

- P** Blessed are You . . . one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Lord's Prayer

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini.....page 163

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

Agnus Dei.....page 163

C 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.

Communion Distribution

Sit (until motioned to rise and proceed forward if going for Communion or a blessing).

Instrumental/Silent Reflection

(Sunday Hymns)

Communion Hymn "What Child Is This" #370

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 2 Why lies He in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are
 3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to

sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
 own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let

shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
 lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the

Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
 song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;

Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

Communion Hymn "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright" #395 (1-4)



1 O Morn - ing Star, how fair and bright! You shine with God's
2 Come, heav'n - ly Bride-groom, Light di - vine, And deep with - in
3 Lord, when You look on us in love, At once there falls
4 Al - mighty Fa - ther, in Your Son You loved us when



own truth and light, A - glow with grace and mer - cy!
our hearts now shine; There light a flame un - dy - ing!
from God a - bove A ray of pur - est plea - sure.
not yet be - gun Was this old earth's foun - da - tion!



Of Ja - cob's race, King Da - vid's son, Our Lord and mas -
In Your one bod - y let us be As liv - ing branch -
Your Word and Spir - it, flesh and blood Re - fresh our souls
Your Son has ran - somed us in love To live in Him



ter, You have won Our hearts to serve You on - ly!
es of a tree, Your life our lives sup - ply - ing.
with heav'n - ly food. You are our dear - est trea - sure!
here and a - bove: This is Your great sal - va - tion.



Low - ly, ho - ly! Great and glo - rious, All vic - to - rious,
Now, though dai - ly Earth's deep sad - ness May per - plex us
Let Your mer - cy Warm and cheer us! O draw near us!
Al - le - lu - ia! Christ the liv - ing, To us giv - ing



Rich in bless - ing! Rule and might o'er all pos - sess - ing!
And dis - tress us, Yet with heav'n - ly joy You bless us.
For You teach us God's own love through You has reached us.
Life for - ev - er, Keeps us Yours and fails us nev - er!

Communion Hymn *“As with Gladness Men of Old”* #397



1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be-hold;
 2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to Thy low-ly bed,
 3 As they of-fered gifts most rare At Thy cra-dle, rude and bare,
 4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-'ry day Keep us in the nar-row way;
 5 In the heav'n-ly coun-try bright Need they no cre-at-ed light;



As with joy they hailed its light, Lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
 There to bend the knee be-fore Thee, whom heav'n and earth a-dore;
 So may we with ho-ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al-loy,
 And when earth-ly things are past, Bring our ran-somed souls at last
 Thou its light, its joy, its crown, Thou its sun which goes not down;



So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev-er-more be led by Thee.
 So may we with will-ing feet Ev-er seek Thy mer-cy seat.
 All our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'n-ly King.
 Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds Thy glo-ry hide.
 There for-ev-er may we sing Al-le-lu-ias to our King.

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Please rise.

Nunc Dimittis *page 165*



Lord, now 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.



Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it;



as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.

Post Communion Collect..... page 166

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father. . .one God, now and forever.

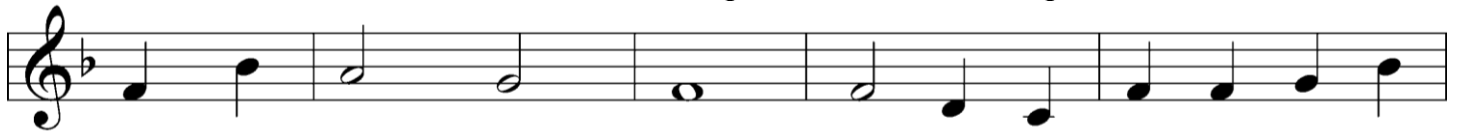
C Amen.

Benediction..... page 166

Sending Hymn..... "Mark How the Lamb of God's Self-Offering" #600



1 Mark how the Lamb of God's self - of - f'ring Our hu - man
2 From this as - sur - ance of God's fa - vor Je - sus goes
3 Grant us, O God, the strength and cour - age To live the



sin - ful - ness takes on In the birth - wa - ters of the
to the wil - der - ness, There to en - dure a time of
faith our lips de - clare; Bless us in our bap - tis - mal



Jor - dan As Je - sus is bap - tized by John.
test - ing That read - ied Him to teach and bless.
call - ing; Christ's roy - al priest-hood help us share.



Hear how the voice from heav - en thun - ders, "Lo,
So we, by wa - ter and the Spir - it Bap -
Turn us from ev - 'ry false al - le - giance, That



this is My be - lov - ed Son." See how in dove-like
tized in - to Christ's min - is - try, Are of - ten led to
we may trust in Christ a - lone: Raise up in us a



form the Spir - it De - scends on God's A - noint - ed One.
 paths of ser - vice Through maz - es of ad - ver - si - ty.
 cho - sen peo - ple Trans - formed by love to be Your own.

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Dismissal (Bethlehem's Mission)

- P** Grow in Christ,
- C** Live in Love and Share the Faith!

Postlude

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Next week's readings:

O.T. 1 Samuel 3:1-20; EP: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Gospel: John 1:43-51

Attendance Saturday: 22	Attendance Sunday: 61
Attendance: New Year's Eve: 21	
Total Offering: \$5,641.00	Missions: \$0.00
Home Use: \$5,501.00	Benevolences: \$140.00

Serving us today:

- Elders.....Jimmy Smithers (Sat), Alan Miller, Rich Vanderburgh
- Musicians Gary Moege, Lorraine Miller (Sat), Jerrode Marsh (Sun)
- Altar Committee..... Darlene Laubenstein (Chair), Bambi Burden,
Julie Crespo, Diana Holland, Georgia Luker
- Flower Committee Penny Humphrey (Chair)

This Week's Schedule

- Monday
 - 9:30 a.m. Exercise Class
 - 2:00 p.m. Moms and Tots at the Park
 - 7:00 p.m. Mary Martha Guild Meeting
- Tuesday
 - Pr. Joel at monthly circuit pastoral conference*
 - 9:30 a.m. Quilting
 - 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting
- Wednesday
 - 9:30 a.m. Exercise Class
 - 10:30 a.m. Bible Study
 - 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Thursday	9:30 a.m.	<i>Pr. Joel at Warrensburg Christian School</i>
	1:00 p.m.	Games and Cards Group
	3:30 p.m.	Adult Faith Formation Class
Friday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
Saturday	8:45 a.m.	Men's Club at American Legion
	5:30 p.m.	Worship
Sunday	9:15 a.m.	Christian Education
	10:30 a.m.	Worship

Prayers

For Sustenance, Healing, and Provision—We remember those who are dealing with illness, are homebound or in nursing homes, are undergoing and recovering from surgery, as well as going through hospitalization and rehabilitation: Charlie Becker, Mel Bockelman, Paula Brewer, Mark Brown, Ray & Mary Carstensen, Galen Cobb, Bob & Barbara Compton, Marion Droege, Rev. Tom Fatka (Tommy Fatka's dad), Peggy Forstad, Ana Fonseca (Willie Crespo's grandmother), Wilma Gertz, Winnie & George Goldsmith (Steve's parents), Karen Haase, Ken Hoemann, Juanita Holcomb (Peggy Forstad's mother), Mary Johnson, Wanda Kreisel, Lloyd McCarter, Jeannie Peterson, Maryanna Savery, Rose Steitz, and & Joe Zeman.

For Military Members—We remember all service and support personnel who are deployed and stationed away from us and their families.

Prayer Requests & Spiritual Care—If you would like to make a prayer request, contact Pr. Joel or email the church office. Also, if you're feeling the strain, feel free to call or text Pr. Joel or contact your elder or the church office. We rely upon the Holy Spirit and his gifts in Christ during every time of uncertainty and can never be thankful enough for the gift of each other!

Worship Services

Saturday Services start at 5:30 p.m. Sunday Services are at 10:30 a.m. Sunday Services are live on Facebook, YouTube and the webpage at blchurch.com.

Sunday School and Christian Education

Sunday School is at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings downstairs for ages Preschool through 12th grade. We start out with a combined opening with the adults to kick off each Sunday. The children continue working on songs with the goal of singing in the church service once per month. We invite all children to come and be a part of this time growing together in Christ!

Sunday Proverbs Bible Study—*Oh, to love wisdom and live wisely!* How many times have you said and thought that? Join us for our Sunday Bible study—*Living (&*

Loving) Wisdom—which explores the book of Proverbs through the lens of the Ten Commandments and Christ “the Wisdom of God” (I Cor. 1:24. Pr. Joel is drawing from David Coe’s *Provoking Proverbs*. **We start at 9:15 a.m.** (in the conference room) and still have a lot of ground to cover!

Let’s join the LCMS Memory Verse Challenge! The Sunday School children will be challenged to learn these verses every week, and you can too! To help make this easy to do and remember, each Sunday I will post the weekly verse on the BLC Facebook page, provide a coloring page with the verse printed on it to take home (find this at the mailboxes), and post the verse in the **Band** app. Download this free app and join the group **BLC Sunday School**. I created a Group Challenge (Rehearse the weekly memory verse), for which you can check-in daily. I’ll make a new challenge for each month. You can also visit lcms.org/worship/memory-verse-challenge to find the weekly verse.

Wednesday Bible Study—Join us at **10:30 a.m.** in the conference room. We’re looking at the Apocrypha, from the time between the two Testaments. Come and find out what it’s about!

Thursday Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.—Pastor Bertels’ study on the book of Ezekiel meets in the conference room and is open to all who have the interest and time available. Come and join us!

Music

The Choir meets on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. for fellowship time and rehearsal from 7:00-8:00p.m. We are always looking for new members! Please contact Peggy Forstad with any questions about joining the choir.

Opportunities to Serve

Food Drive for Show-Me Christian Youth Home—If you’d like to begin 2024 by helping our younger friends, consider donating a pantry good (or a few) to Show-Me Christian Youth Home in La Monte. As part of a Thrivent grant, we are collecting canned and non-perishable foods for the group that helps youth in crisis by providing them a safe and loving home. Look for the collection bin at the north entrance during the month of January. If you’d like a Thrivent T-shirt, please see the church office. Any pantry item that parents could use at home would be welcomed there, too. Call or text Kaye at 660-441-7672 for more information. Learn more about the organization at showmehelpingkids.com.

Thank you to all of those that generously contributed items of children’s arts & crafts materials for the Mid-Missouri Artists benefiting the Survival House. Your contributions are greatly appreciated by Survival & will be well used. **Becky Limback.**

Bulletin Board—A section of the bulletin board at the North entrance has been dedicated to our congregation members who are home-bound and in nursing homes. Please check it out to see how you can reach out to those who can no longer come to services regularly. Send a card or leave one in the pocket on the board to be delivered during a visit. If you have a picture of a loved one you can share, please send it to Rebecca to have it posted!

Winter Trail Work and Garden Planning & Preparation—Keep your eyes open for opportunities in the near future on our Bethlehem Woods nature trail and in our backyard community gardens. Winter is the best time to think spring!

Fellowship

Exercise Class happens at **9:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** in the Fellowship Hall. This class is low impact exercise open to anyone, men or women.

The Games and Card Group meets on **Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.** in the Youth Room downstairs. Everyone is welcome to come to this fellowship time.

The Quilting Group meets on the **second and fourth Tuesday** of the month from **9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.** (September through May). Anyone is welcome to help with this project. No special sewing skills are needed. Bring your own lunch or go out and grab something. If you have any questions, please contact Georgia Luker.

Men's Club will meet for a breakfast on **Saturday, January 13 at 8:45 a.m.** at the Warrensburg American Legion. Breakfast cost is \$5. We'll discuss plans for 2024. Contact Wille Crespo, Alan Miller or Ron Rode with any questions.

This and That

Sermon Sketch Collage in the Luehrman Gallery—While most of the paintings and sketches by Dick Luehrman in the downstairs hallway gallery are unchanging, that's not the case for those grouped together on the east wall below the window—they rotate according to the seasons of the Church Year and were just switched out this past week. So, as we're in the short season of Epiphany and setting our sights toward Transfiguration Sunday and Ash Wednesday next month, spend some time with those black and white sketches and reflect on what they individually and collectively show about Jesus the Christ—God's Son made known to us in light and life, mercy and grace. Thanks to the Rich family for making this splendid rotation of sketches a reality!

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Awards Luncheon will be held on **Wednesday, January 10 from 11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m.** at the Warrensburg American Legion. The cost is \$15 for chamber members and \$20 for non-chamber members; you can register via the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce website or

office. This year's theme is *Living the Dream: It Starts with Me—Spreading Hope, Courage, and Unity*. Pr. Joel will be the guest speaker.

Trinity School of Music Concert Series: A Benefit Performance – January 14th at 3:00 PM. Trinity School of Music is proud to announce a musical performance of Bach, Mendelssohn, Schumann & Brahms. Featuring the musical gifts of **Lorriane Miller (flute), Gary Moege (horn), and Jerrode Marsh (piano)** this concert will take place at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cole Camp, MO (104 E. Butterfield Trail) at 3:00 PM. These accomplished musicians will delight those who gather with a selection of 19th Century German pieces including: *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in d minor (J.S. Bach)*, *Adagio and Allegro for Horn and Piano, op. 70 (Schumann)*, *Klavierstücke, op. 118/2 & 3 (Brahms)*, *Lied ohne Worte, op. 109 (Mendelssohn)* and more! There is no charge to attend the concert; a free-will offering will be taken in support of the school of music's effort to provide virtual music lessons. A reception will follow.

The Johnson County Resource Center happens every Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the basement of First Presbyterian Church (206 N. College)—providing breakfast, a hot lunch, and a place to hang out. Housing assistance and case management are provided, as well as Medicaid signup. **Due to mechanical difficulties, Katy Trail's Mobile Medical Unit will not be able to resume its services until April 4.**

Ongoing thanks to those who generously give to the Bethlehem Emergency Fund, which enables Pr. Joel to assist members and certain people in the community who are in crisis situations. Much appreciation for your good support in shining the light of Christ! If you'd ever like to hear some of the stories of how these funds have been used, just ask Pr. Joel.

2023 Elders

Willie Crespo (last name begins A-B) 660-679-8121, crespo6fam@gmail.com

Evan Florida (last name begins C-E) 660-238-4919, evan.keyrealty@gmail.com

Rich Vanderburgh (last name begins F-H) 660-864-3762, rvburgh@gmail.com

Jimmy Smithers (last name begins I-L) 660-864-5370, jimmyds1980@gmail.com

Sean Estanek (last name begins M-R) 440-396-6439, organvoicer@gmail.com

Alan Miller (last name begins S-Z) 660-909-1764, alormiller@aol.com

Contact Information

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 607 N. Maguire, Warrensburg, MO 64093

Our Mission

· Grow in Christ · Live in Love · Share the Faith

Our Vision

To be a community of believers, disciples, and servants while we deepen our personal faith and reach others for Christ.



Rev. Joel R. Kurz

Tuesday & Thursday: 8am–5pm, Wednesday & Friday: 10am-5pm

Otherwise by appointment

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Website: www.blchurch.com Facebook: [blcwarrensburg](https://www.facebook.com/blcwarrensburg)

Office Manager

Cindy Smith

Monday–Friday: 8am-5pm

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csmith@blchurch.com

Congregation Life Facilitator

Rebecca Holland-VanWey

Wednesday: 1pm-5pm

Thursday: 1pm-5pm

rholland@blchurch.com

Bookkeeper

Teresa Hillsman

Tuesday: 9am-11am

Thursday: 9am-11am

thillsman@blchurch.com

Please note that Bethlehem Lutheran Church has a closed-circuit video system. This allows for live streaming on the web, viewing of the service on screens in the building and helps to enhance our security. Please see a trustee or an elder if you have any questions.