

LUKE 2:30

MY
EYES
HAVE SEEN YOUR
SALVATION



+ First Sunday After Christmas +
December 30-31, 2023

AS WE GATHER

How long is a generation? Keepers of statistics suggest that a generation is between twenty and thirty years and note that at the present time there are six distinct generations living in the United States. The current generations range from our oldest citizens, known as the Greatest Generation through our youngest, given the group name of Generation Z. In the account of the presentation of our Lord in the temple at Jerusalem, we see Jesus as a baby from the youngest generation and we meet Anna the prophetess, well advanced into the most elderly generation, and Simeon, who is often portrayed as an older man. The temple is the place for all generations to experience the presence and blessing of God! The psalmist exults in praise to God: “One generation shall commend Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts” (Psalm 145:4). As we worship, we continue that praise in this generation.

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 such as Christmas Eve

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..... "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising" #375



1 Come, your hearts and voic - es rais - ing, Christ the
2 Christ, from heav'n to us de - scend - ing And in
3 Ja - cob's star in all its splen - dor Beams with
4 From the bond - age that op - pressed us, From sin's



Lord with glad - ness prais - ing; Loud - ly sing His love a -
love our race be - friend - ing; In our need His help ex -
com - fort sweet and ten - der, Forc - ing Sa - tan to sur -
fet - ters that pos - sessed us, From the grief that sore dis -



maz - ing, Wor - thy folk of Chris - ten - dom.
tend - ing, Saved us from the wi - ly foe.
ren - der, Break - ing all the pow'rs of hell.
tressed us, We, the cap - tives, now are free.

5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing
When by faith we grasp this blessing,
And to You we come confessing
That Your love has set us free.

6 Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
From Your lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join Your choir above.

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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 "Angels from the Realms of Glory" #367 (4-5)



4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in
5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



hope and fear, Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



In His tem - ple shall ap - pear.
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.

Refrain



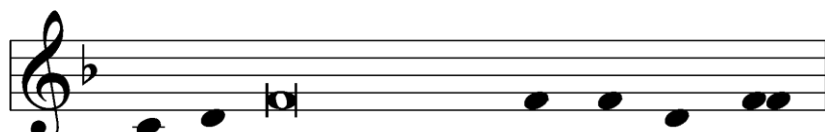
Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;



Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

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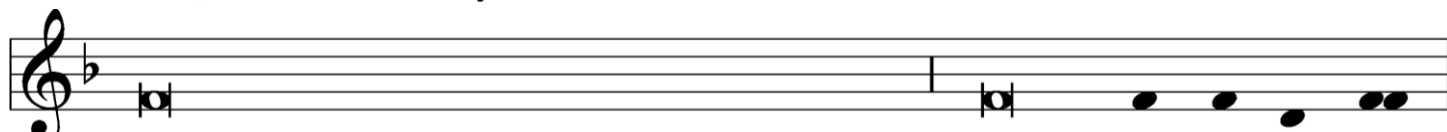
Kyrie.....pages 152-153



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.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



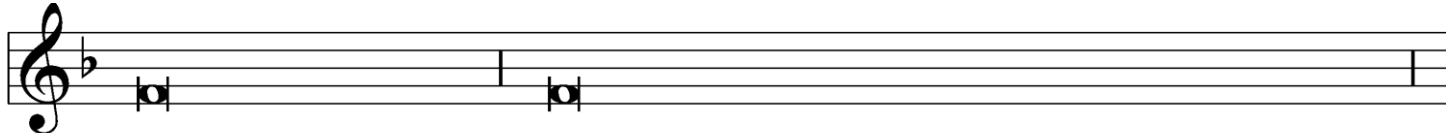
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



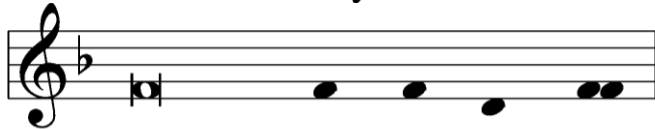
and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



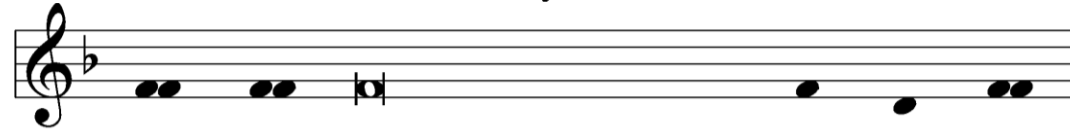
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



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 Excelsispage 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.



G And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Collect of the Day (*spoken in unison*)

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through 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 61:10-62:3

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.

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.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.

The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual *(spoken in unison)*

To us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder.
And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things! *(Isaiah 9:6)*

Epistle Reading Galatians 4:4-7

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please rise.

Alleluia and Versepage 156

C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel Luke 2:22-40

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

When the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Hymn of the Day “Where Shepherds Lately Knelt” #369



1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,
2 In that un - like - ly place I find Him as they said:
3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,
4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;
Sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:
His proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:
Its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



But there is room and wel - come there for me,
A still, small voice to cry one day for me,
A child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
To die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



But there is room and wel - come there for me.
A still, small voice to cry one day for me.
A child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
To die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

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Sermon..... “Rippling & Ripping through Time”

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

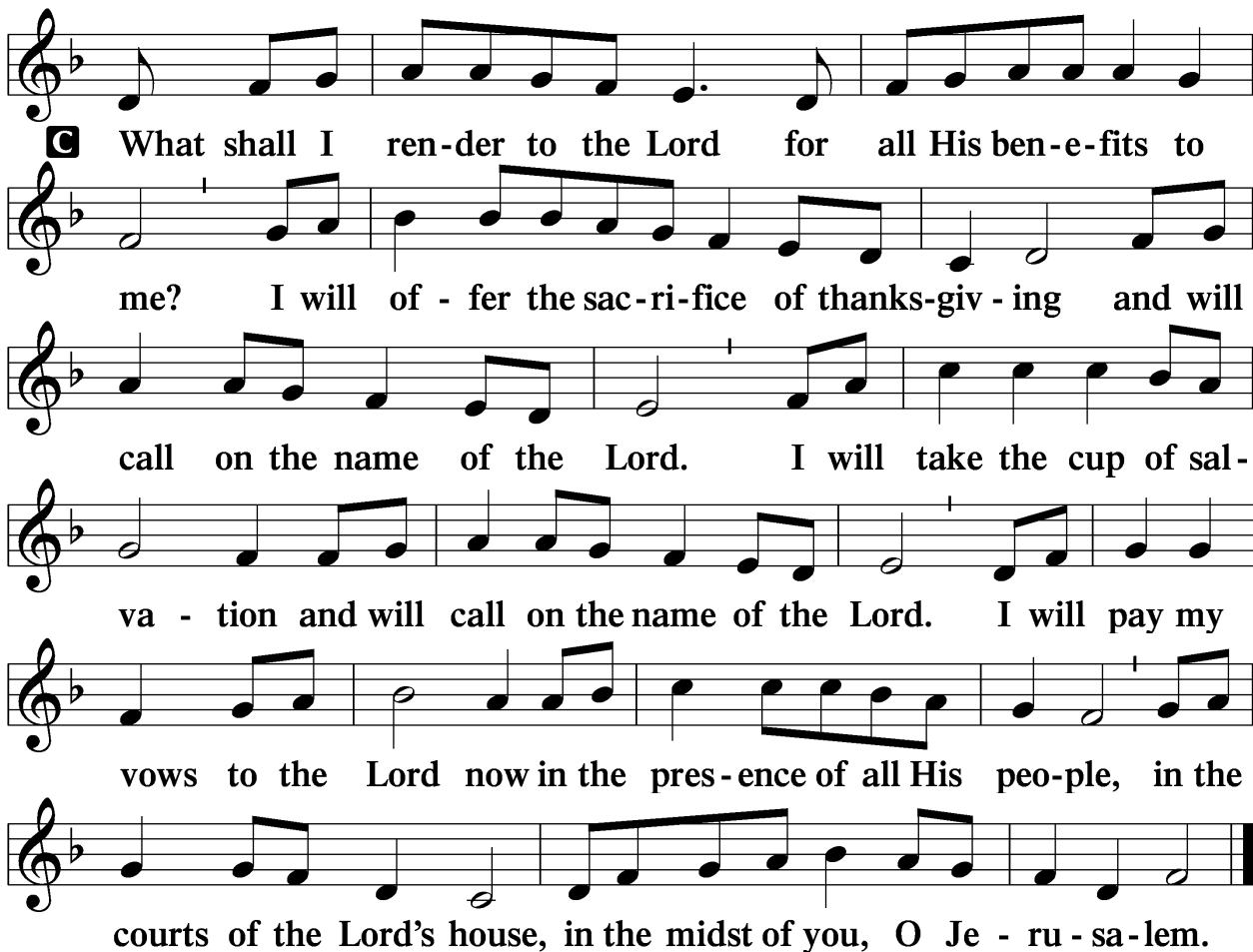
- P** Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** . . . who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

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.

C And al - so 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 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*

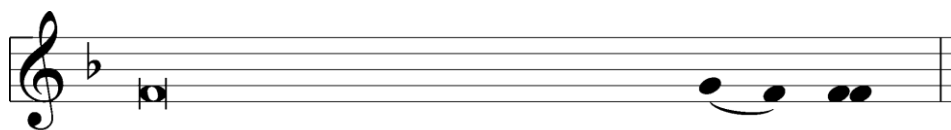
P Blessed are You . . . one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Dominipage 163



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

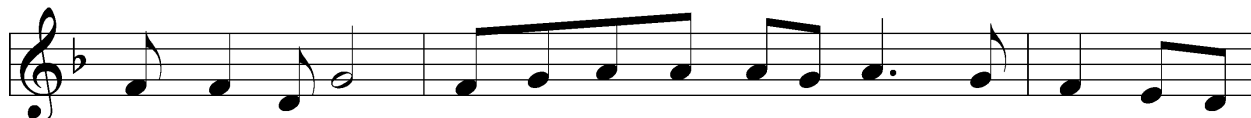


C A - men.

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 Only)

Communion Hymns "Once in Royal David's City" #376



1	Once	in	roy	-	al	Da	-	vid's	cit	-	y	Stood	a
2	He	came	down		to	earth	from	heav	-	en,	Who	is	
3	For	He	is		our	child	-	hood's	pat	-	tern,	Day	by
4	And	our	eyes		at	last	shall	see	Him,	Through	His		
5	Not	in	that		poor,	low	-	ly	sta	-	ble	With	the



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
 God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
 day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and
 own re - deem - ing love; For that child so dear and
 ox - en stand - ing by Shall we see Him, but in



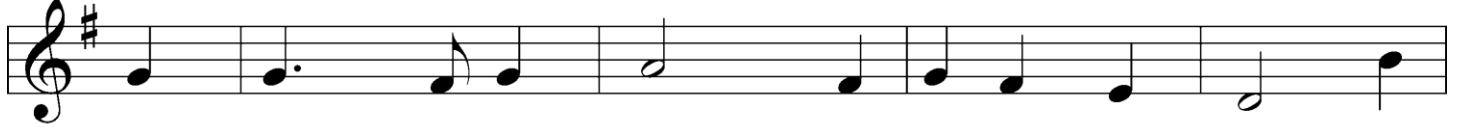
ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
 sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
 help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
 gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He
 heav - en, Set at God's right hand on high. Then like



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 feels for all our sad - ness, And He shares in all our glad - ness.
 leads His chil - dren on To the place where He is gone.
 stars His chil - dren, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

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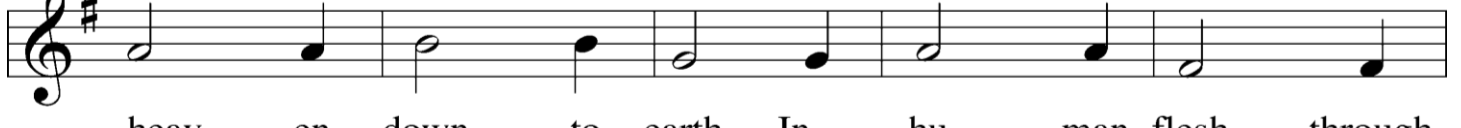
Communion Hymn *“O Jesus So Sweet, O Jesus So Mild” #546*



1 O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild! For
 2 O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild! With
 3 O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild! Joy



sin - ners You be - came a child. You came from
 God we now are rec - on - ciled. You have for
 fills the world which sin de - filed. What - e'er we



heav - en down to earth In hu - man flesh through
 all the ran - som paid, Your Fa - ther's righ - teous
 have be - longs to You; O keep us faith - ful,



hu - man birth. O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild!
 an - ger stayed. O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild!
 strong, and true. O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild!

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Communion Hymn *“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” #374*



1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;
 2 An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
 3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



There He lay, the Un - de - filed, To the world a strang - er.
 Heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth Glo - ry all a - round Him.
 He is still the Un - de - filed But no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Sav - ior?
 Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, Heard the an - gels sing - ing;
 Son of God of hum - ble birth, Beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His fa - vor.
 All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ring - ing.
 Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glo - ry!

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Please rise.

The Nunc Dimittis Hymn *“Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace”, #937*



1 Lord, bid Your ser - vant go in peace,
 2 This is the Sav - ior of the world,
 3 With saints of old, with saints to come,



Your word is now ful - filled. These eyes have seen sal -
 The Gen - tiles' prom - ised light, God's glo - ry dwell - ing
 To You we lift our voice; To Fa - ther, Son, and



va - tion's dawn, This child so long fore - told.
 in our midst, The joy of Is - ra - el.
 Spir - it blest Be hon - or, love, and praise.

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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..... "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" #380



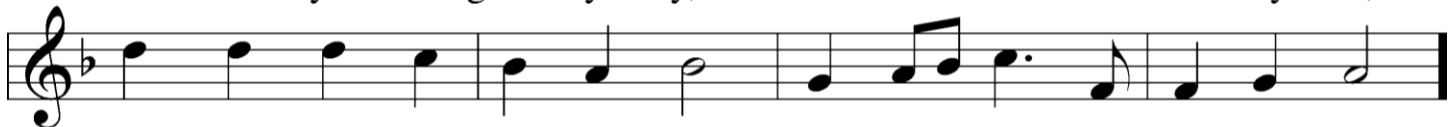
1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



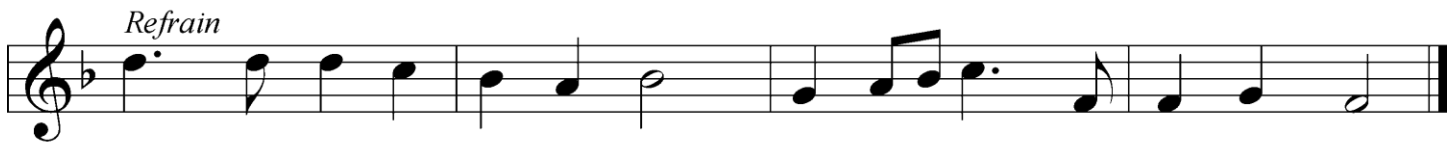
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King!"

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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. Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12; Gospel: Matthew 2:1-23

Attendance Advent: 58	Attendance Saturday: 22
Attendance Sunday (10:30am): 66	Attendance Sunday (7:00pm): 105
Total Offering: \$13,404.00	Missions: \$0.00
Home Use: \$10,745.00	Benevolences: \$2,659.00

Serving us today:

Elders..... Rich Vanderburgh (Saturday), Alan Miller, Jimmy Smithers (Sunday)
MusiciansJerrode Marsh
Altar Committee.....Teresa Hillsman-Chair Lisa Gulick, Beryl Lindley
Susie Mills, Cindy Schnell, Samantha Schnell
Flower Committee Penny Humphrey (Chair), Cindy Smith

This Week’s Schedule

Sunday	7:00 p.m.	New Year’s Evening Service
Monday		<i>New Year’s Day-Office Closed</i>
Tuesday		<i>Pastor’s Holiday</i>
	11:00 a.m.	Braille in Concordia
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
	10:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	5:30 p.m.	Faith Night Potluck/Discussion
	6:30 p.m.	Choir Practice
Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Pastor at Warrensburg Christian School
	1:00 p.m.	Games and Cards Group
	3:30 p.m.	Adult Faith Formation Class

	7:00 p.m.	Ezekiel Bible Study
Friday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
	10:00 a.m.	Creation School
	6:00 p.m.	Friday Family Fun Night
Saturday		<i>Epiphany!</i>
	5:30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday	9:15 a.m.	Christian Education
	10:30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	1:00 p.m.	Youth Catechesis

The Rev. Nabil S. Nour, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church—Hartford, S.D., and LCMS fourth vice-president—is a Palestinian Christian from the very town of Nazareth where Jesus grew up from childhood to adulthood. He recently joined KFYO (Lutheran) Radio to discuss the Israel—Gaza conflict and offer insights. To listen to the podcast, visit kfyo.org and search for “Nabil Nour.”

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!

Thank You

Shawn and Beryl Lindley would like to thank our friends at Bethlehem for all their thoughts, gifts, and cards this Christmas season. Blessings for the New Year go out to everyone.

Cindy Smith and Rebecca Holland would like to thank everyone for the Christmas cards, gifts, goodies. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful church family and hope everyone stays safe and healthy in the upcoming year.

Many appreciative thanks to each and every one who gave me joyous cards, caring words, and thoughtful, generous gifts! I am grateful for your overwhelming signs of love and support, and I'm truly filled with gratitude for the blessing all of you are to me! **Pastor Joel**

Special Days for Members This Week

Birthdays—Glenda Mabrey-30th, Gary Moege-31st, Sheree Moody-31st.
Anniversaries—Gary and Christine Moege-31st.

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

Faith Night happens on the first Wednesday of every month with a simple shared potluck meal from **5:30 to 6:00** (or so), followed by a faith discussion **until 6:45**. We will be looking at Epiphany and *Keeping Every Moment HOLY* by reflecting on liturgies and prayers from this great new resource in book or app form (www.everymomentholy.com).

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!

Creation School—Join us on the first Friday of each month from **10-11 am** for our faith-focused version of the trendy forest. We'll do our best to enjoy creation in all weather, so be sure to dress appropriately. Please invite any families with young children that you know, as the hope is to welcome all in the community into our green space.

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.

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!

Fellowship

Family Fun Night will be held on **January 5, at 6:00 p.m.** Sign up near the mailboxes to bring a potluck dish to share. We will be having a Bible Escape Trivia Night.

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. Exercise class will not meet again until **January 3rd**.

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

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. Pr. Joel will be the guest speaker at the luncheon.

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. **Katy Trail's Mobile Medical Unit** will resume its services on **January 16th**.

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-F) 660-679-8121, crespo6fam@gmail.com

Ricky Bertels (last name begins G-K), 660-262-8080, rick1janice2@gmail.com

Jack Easterwood (last name begins L-O) 660-678-2045, easter.egg2380@gmail.com

Alan Miller (last name begins P-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

Office: 660-747-6742

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Email: jkurz@blchurch.com

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

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Cindy Smith

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660-747-6742

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.