



CHRISTMAS

DAY



The Nativity of our LORD

“Peace Came to Earth”

December 25, 2023

AS WE GATHER

Today we remember Mary and Joseph as they come to Bethlehem. We sing with the angels as they fill the sky. We run with the shepherds as they arrive on the scene. We behold the glory of God in the face of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is here we find our peace. Wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger, our Prince of Peace is very much the diamond that the everlasting Father gives to us. As we gather to open His Word and sing His praises, let us rejoice in Jesus, the greatest blessing the world will ever know.

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELLS

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

GREETING

P: Peace be with you,

C: And also with you.

HYMN “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

LSB 379



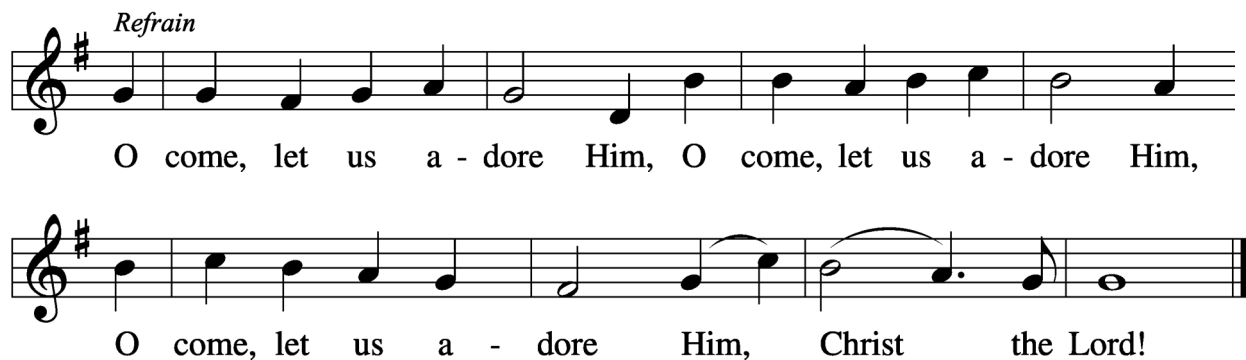
1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to Thee — be — glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God — In — the — high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!



Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–80, alt. Text and tune: John F. Wade, c. 1711–1786 Text and tune: Public domain

stand

INVOCATION

P: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: Everlasting Father, we acknowledge our unworthiness to stand in Your presence as we celebrate the arrival of Your Son to save us. Confessing our sins of thought, word, and deed, we pray:

C: Father, forgive us.

P: The Virgin Mary accepted Your call to be the mother of Jesus. Forgive us for the ways we ignore the call of Your Holy Word and live in disobedience to Your perfect will. We pray:

C: Father, forgive us.

P: Your Son, our Savior, was humbly born and laid in the Bethlehem manger. Forgive our greed, pride, and rejection of Your commands. We pray:

C: Father, forgive us.

P: The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord had made known to them. Forgive our self-interest and unwillingness to leave everything to follow You. We pray:

C: Father, forgive us.

P: The Magi followed the star as it led them to Jesus, the true King of all people. Forgive us for not seeking You with all our hearts. We pray:

C: Father, forgive us.

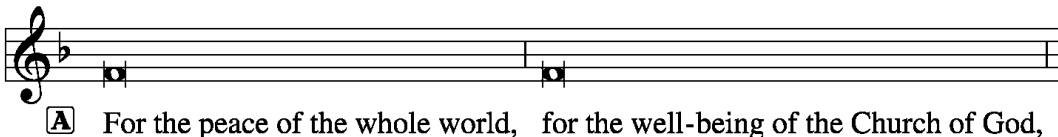
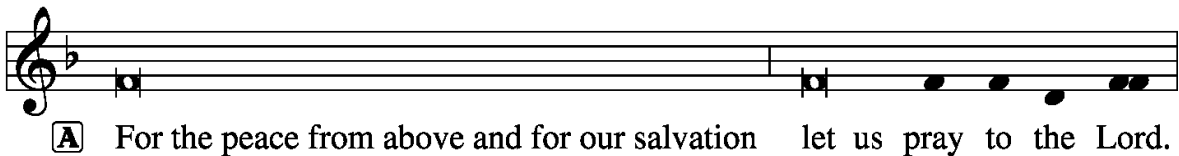
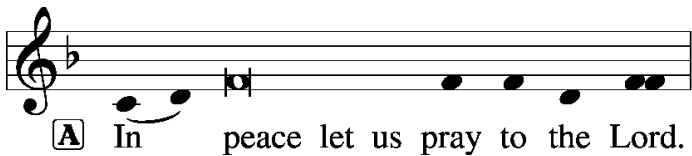
P: Everlasting Father, knowing that You hear and answer us for sake of Jesus Christ, we bring the silent prayers of our hearts before Your throne of grace.

We take a moment for silent prayers of confession and reflection on God's Word.

P: Our Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God sends forth His perfect gift into our sinful world. On this most sacred day, we behold the glory of Jesus Christ and receive the redemption He earned for us by His death and resurrection. By faith in His promises, we become children of our Everlasting Father and heirs of His eternal kingdom. As your pastor, and by the command and authority of Jesus, our Prince of Peace, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

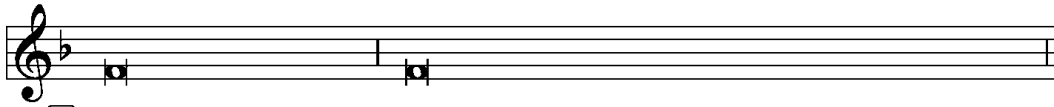
C: Amen.

KYRIE





C Lord, have mer - cy.



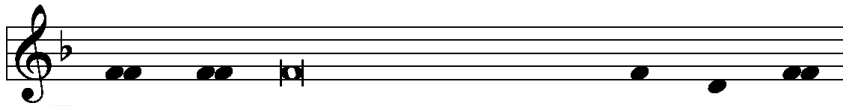
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

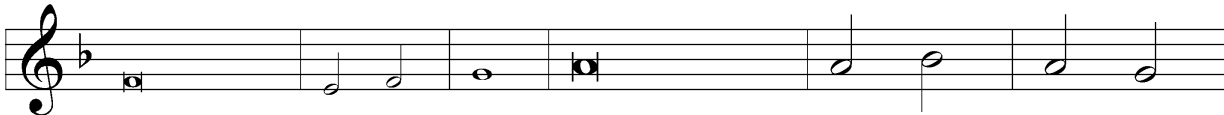


A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

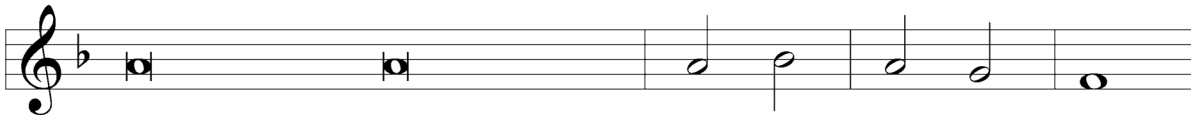
GLORIA IN EXCELSIS



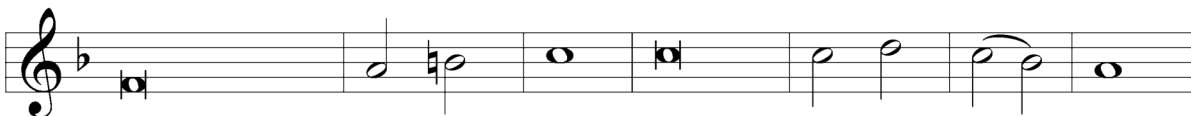
P Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward



men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



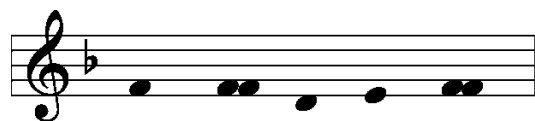
O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



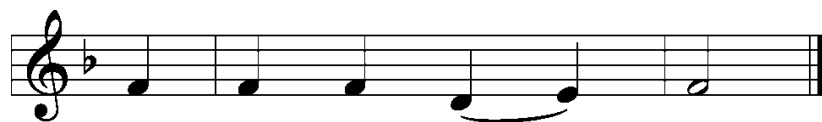
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
 that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.
 Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.
 Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-
 on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.
 Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost,
 art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

SALUTATION & COLLECT OF THE DAY



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Let us pray.

P: Everlasting Father, You fill our hearts with joy as we gather to celebrate the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that we may joyfully receive Your perfect gift, the diamond found in the manger; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” ⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Hebrews 1:1-6

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? ⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

stand

GRADUAL

P: Alleluia. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory,

C: **glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. Alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

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

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

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES CREED

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

sit

HYMN OF THE DAY "Peace Came to Earth" (INSERT)

SERMON "The Diamond Found in the Manger"

GATHERING OF THE OFFERINGS

stand

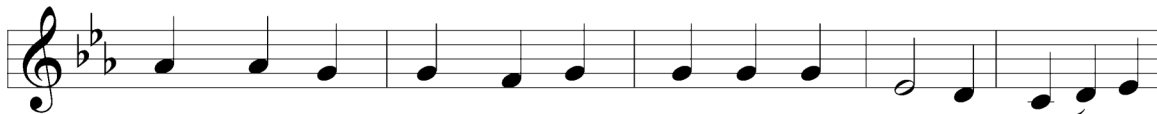
OFFERTORY



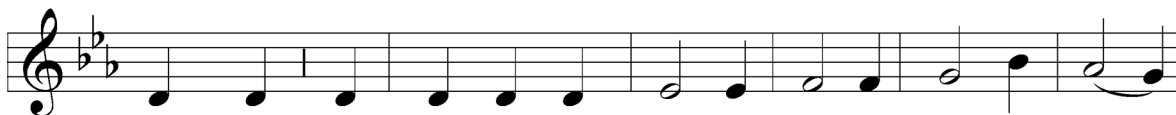
C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -



way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -



tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. Wonderful Counselor, You govern all things with wisdom, righteousness, and truth. Grant to all mankind the joy of Your presence, that we may see You at work in our midst. Guide all nations to behold Your glory in the face of Jesus. Wherever the good news of great joy is announced, grant that lives be changed forever by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our world!

P: Mighty God, You reign over all things and yet, in Christ, You reach down to save us by placing the most brilliant Light and most beautiful diamond in the manger of Bethlehem. Give us the boldness to declare Your mighty deeds and reflect the brightness of Your truth throughout the world. Inspire us to fulfill our earthly callings so that, through our worship and witness, all may know Your saving love.

C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our hearts and minds!

P: Everlasting Father, You embrace us and make us Your children through faith in Your only-begotten Son. Bless all those who, in any form of illness of mind and body, need Your tender care. Heal the sick, bind up the brokenhearted, and grant Your perfect peace to all who rest in You. We pray for those with special needs, [*especially . . .*], that they may rejoice in the message of Christ coming into this world for them.

C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our bodies and souls!

P: Prince of Peace, You give to us what the world can never give. Drive out all fears and doubts. Deliver us from all enemies, seen and unseen. Grant us solace in Him whose blood has set us free that we may be Your people forever. Open our ears to the message of the angels: "Fear not . . . for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

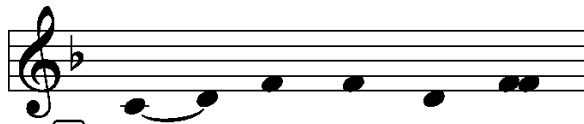
C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our world!

Special Prayers

P: Gracious God, we entrust all of these prayers into Your good and gracious hands, for the sake of Him whose birth we celebrate: Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

PREFACE



P The Lord be with you.



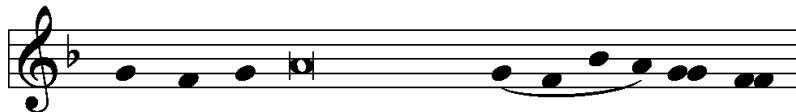
C And al - so with you.



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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P: Blessed are You, Mighty God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. You sent our Lord Jesus Christ, come to us wrapped in swaddling cloths, the diamond found in Bethlehem's manger. He grew up to live the perfect life we cannot live so that, by His sacrificial death and resurrection, we are saved from sin, delivered from death, and promised peace forever in Your eternal kingdom. All glory and honor are Yours, O Lord, and we are blessed to receive You as You come to us in this most sacred Meal You have prepared for all who trust in You. Hear us as we pray in Your name and in the words You have 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 (Spoken by the pastor.)

PAX DOMINI

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen. We wait in hope for the Lord!

sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

LSB 361



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
 While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
 Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;




The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
 Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–93 Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908 Text and tune: Public domain


“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

LSB 388


Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, O-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;




Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem - bled When lo, a - bove the earth
3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger The hum-ble Christ was born;

Refrain




Be - hold, through - out the heav - ens There shone a ho - ly light.
Rang out the an - gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
And God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

Text (sts. 1–3): John W. Work II, 1873–1925, alt. Text (ref) and tune: African American spiritual Text and tune: Public domain

“Let All Together Praise Our God”


LSB 389



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God Be - fore His
2 He leaves His heav'n - ly Fa - ther's throne, Is born an
3 With - in an earth - born form He hides His all - cre -
4 He un - der - takes a great ex - change, Puts on our



glo - rious throne; To - day He o - pens heav'n a - gain To
in - fant small, And in a man - ger, poor and lone, Lies
at - ing light; To serve us all He hum - bly cloaks The
hu - man frame, And in re - turn gives us His realm, His



give us His own Son, To give us His own Son.
in a hum - ble stall, Lies in a hum - ble stall.
splen - dor of His might, The splen - dor of His might.
glo - ry, and His name, His glo - ry, and His name.

5 He is a servant, I a lord: How great a mystery!
How strong the tender Christ Child's love! No truer friend than He,
No truer friend than He.

6 He is the key and He the door To blessed paradise;
The angel bars the way no more. To God our praises rise,
To God our praises rise.

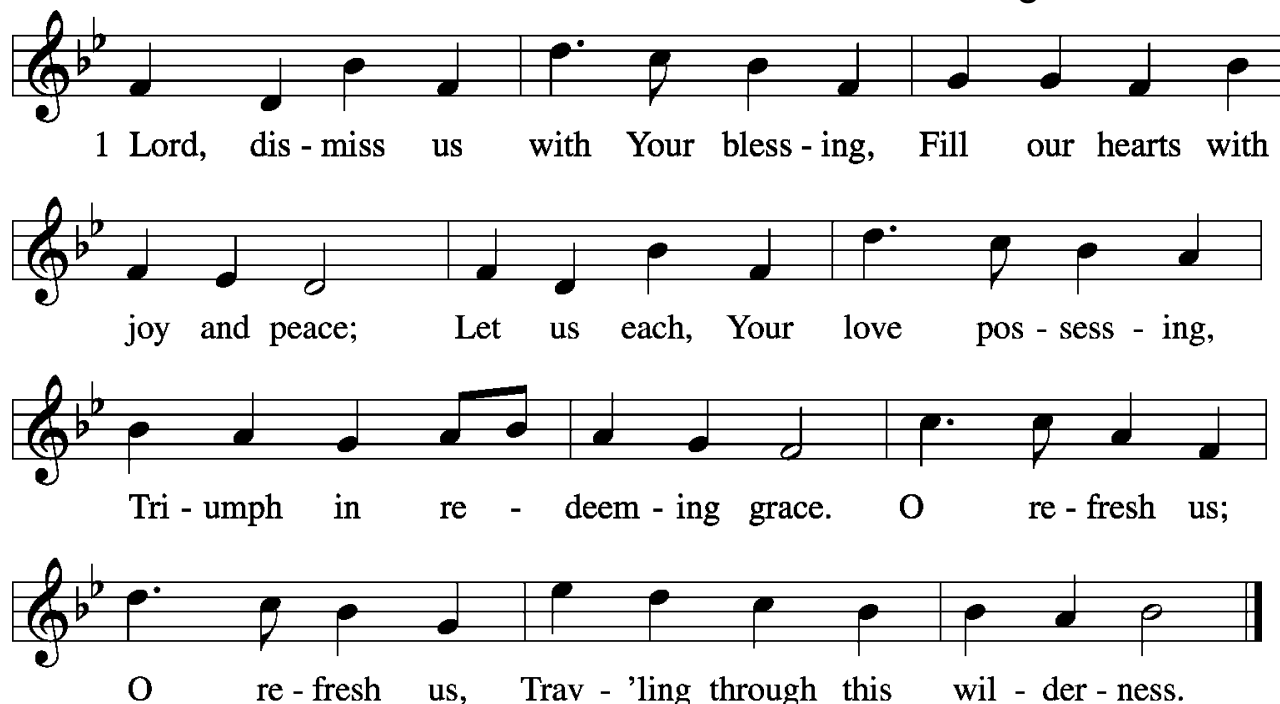
Δ 7 Your grace in lowliness revealed, Lord Jesus, we adore
And praise to God the Father yield And Spirit evermore;
We praise You evermore.

Text (sts. 1, 3–7): tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001; (st. 2): tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt. Text and tune: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561 Text (sts. 1, 3–7): © 1969 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005744 Text (st. 2) and tune: Public domain

stand

NUNC DIMITTIS – “Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing”

LSB 924 v. 1



1 Lord, dis - miss us with Your bless - ing, Fill our hearts with
joy and peace; Let us each, Your love pos - sess - ing,
Tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. O re - fresh us;
O re - fresh us, Trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.

Public domain

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P: Let us pray. You have come to us, O Prince of Peace, in the precious gift of Your body and blood. Grant that we who know the treasure of Christmas may extend to others the grace and peace we have here received; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN “Joy to the World”

LSB 387



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
 prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
 ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748
 Tune: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.
 Text and tune: Public domain

THE SENDING

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

NEW YEAR'S EVE SCHEDULE 2023

New Year's Eve

Saturday, December 30 (5:00 P.M.) & Sunday, December 31 (9:00 A.M.)

“A Time for Everything”

Welcome to Peace in the name of the Risen Savior!

We request that visitors register by using the Communication cards found in the pew card holders. We ask that you share your name and address so that we can recognize your visit with us. All members are requested to register by using the Communication cards found in the pew card holders. Members, please indicate all family members present and those who took communion, so that the Pastor and Elders can be spiritually accountable for you and your family.

Are your cell phones turned off? Cell phones are indeed a great convenience in life these days. However, please, out of courtesy, silence cell phones during the worship service. Thank you!

Hearing assist devices and large print bulletins are available for those who may need them. Please see an Usher or the Elder who will be happy to assist you.

A Mother's Room is available for parents of young children if the need arises. The Mother's Room in the west hallway. The worship service is able to be heard in the Mother's Room.



Today we celebrate the Lord's Supper. Holy Communion. Scripture teaches that Holy Communion is a sacred act, established by Christ Himself and is given to His Church. As members of **The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod**, we hold the doctrine of the Real Presence, in with and under; meaning that Jesus gives His Body and Blood with the bread and wine, as He Himself says, *"This is my body... This is my blood... for the forgiveness of sins."* (Matthew 26:26ff)

The Holy Scriptures also teach us to receive this meal in a way that is responsible and healthy. As overseer, St. Paul wrote- *"let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself"* (1 Cor. 11:28-29). Out of genuine care for God's people we ask that those (1) who have not been baptized and instructed in the faith or (2) who come from another church body, not in altar or pulpit fellowship with us, refrain from receiving Holy Communion.

For those preparing to receive Holy Communion, Luther encourages us to ask ourselves these questions:

Do **I repent** of my sins, desiring to turn away from them, back to the Lord?

Do **I believe** Jesus died and rose for me and gives me His Body and Blood this day "for the forgiveness of sins"?

Do **I intend** to use this means of grace to change my life, following His will and way?

We ask that all who receive the Lord's Supper fill out a "Care Card" and place it in the offering plate. Please note that reduced-alcoholic white wine is available in the center cups of the communion tray.

**Peace Lutheran Church
The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod**

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Ricky P. Schroeder, Pastor
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Josiah Fitch, Associate Pastor
assocpastor@peaceneenah.com

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Holy Communion Celebrated at all Services
Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00a.m.
Sunday Bible Study 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School (Sept. –May) 10:30 a.m.

Website: www.peaceneenah.com

YouTube: Peace Neenah

