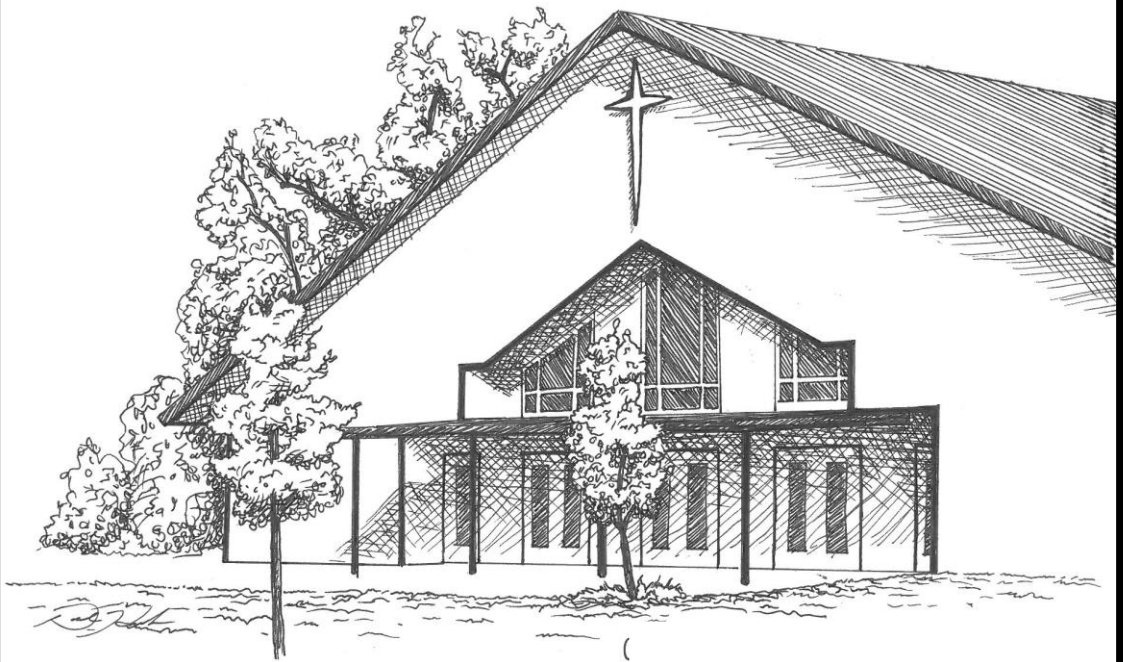


Celebration Lutheran Church

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



Second Sunday in Advent Divine Service Three December 7, 2025

Take this bulletin home and use it for prayer,
Scripture reading, and encouragement throughout the week.

Celebration Lutheran Church

LCMS

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Welcome to Celebration Lutheran Church

You have entered a holy place where Christ serves His people. In the Divine Service, He forgives sins, feeds the faithful, and strengthens His Church through Word and Sacrament. He does this to prepare us to live by faith, love our neighbor, and bear witness in the world.

Whether you are a lifelong Lutheran, a visitor, or new to the faith, **we are glad you are here.** May you receive His mercy, His promises, and His peace.

What to Know Before Receiving the Lord's Supper

Our Communion Statement

We believe, teach, and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the Sacrament of the Altar. His body and blood are given in, with, and under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins, just as He says: "This is My body... this is My blood" (Matthew 26:26–28).

In faithfulness to God's Word and in care for all who commune, we practice closed communion. All who are baptized, instructed, and confirmed members of this congregation or of a congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are welcome to receive the Sacrament. In receiving the Lord's Supper, we not only receive Christ's gifts but also confess a shared faith.

Communion is not a general Christian right. It is an invitation to the holy banquet, and our Lord calls us to be prepared, clothed in faith and understanding. Scripture warns, "Whoever eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1 Corinthians 11:29).

Those not communing today may come forward for a blessing by crossing their arms. Before communing, Luther's Small Catechism encourages each Christian to ask:

Do I believe I am a sinner?

Do I believe in Christ and His words in the Sacrament?

Do I intend, with God's help, to turn from sin?

If you have questions, Pastor Keinbaum or one of the Elders would be glad to speak with you.

Preparing for the Divine Service

Before the Service – Speak to God.

During the Service – Let God speak to you.

After the Service – Speak to one another.

Please enter the sanctuary quietly and prayerfully, allowing others time for reflection. We ask that all electronic devices be silenced before the Service begins.

“Let all the earth keep silence before Him.” (Habakkuk 2:20)

Prayer before the Service

Almighty and eternal God, I, a poor, unworthy sinner, come before You in the name of Jesus Christ. I pray that You would graciously prepare my heart by Your Holy Spirit, that I may rightly hear Your Word, receive Your grace, and offer You praise and thanksgiving. strengthen my faith and lead me in holiness of life, that I may serve You in joy, now and forever. Amen.

Reading Summary

What the Word Is About This Week

By the Preaching of Repentance, We Are Prepared for the Coming of the Lord

“John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent’” (Matt. 3:1–2). His preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins prepared people for the coming of Christ into the world. St. John’s work was historically complete with the incarnate advent of Jesus, but his vital ministry continues in preaching Law and Gospel. The Son of God has come in the flesh, *“a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots”* (Is. 11:1), and continues to bear the fruits of righteousness.

His good tree of the cross is *“a signal for the peoples”* (Is. 11:10), by which He calls the nations to repentance. *“With the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips”* (Is. 11:4), He slays the wicked and brings the dead to life, making sons of Abraham out of lifeless stones. So also the *“root of Jesse”* comes to us, *“even he who arises to rule the Gentiles”* (Rom. 15:12), that *“we might have hope”* and be filled *“with all joy and peace in believing”* (Rom. 15:4, 13).

Processional Hymn

Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty sts. 1, 3-5

LSB 901



1 O - pen now thy gates of beau - ty; Zi - on, let me
3 Here Thy praise is glad - ly chant - ed; Here Thy seed is
4 Thou my faith in - crease and quick - en; Let me keep Thy
5 Speak, O God, and I will hear Thee; Let Thy will be



en - ter there, Where my soul in joy - ful du - ty
du - ly sown. Let my soul, where it is plant - ed,
gift di - vine, How - so - e'er temp - ta - tions thick - en;
done in - deed. May I un - dis - turbed draw near Thee



Waits for Him who an - swers prayer. Oh, how bless - ed
Bring forth pre - cious sheaves a - lone, So that all I
May Thy Word still o'er me shine As my guid - ing
While Thou dost Thy peo - ple feed. Here of life the



is this place, Filled with sol - ace, light, and grace!
hear may be Fruit - ful un - to life in me.
star through life, As my com - fort in all strife.
foun - tain flows; Here is balm for all our woes.

Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1672-1737; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

Tune: Joachim Neander, 1650-80

Text and tune: Public domain

Confession and Absolution

Stand

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

P In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Kneel/Stand

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually!

Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

O offspring of Abraham, his servant,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

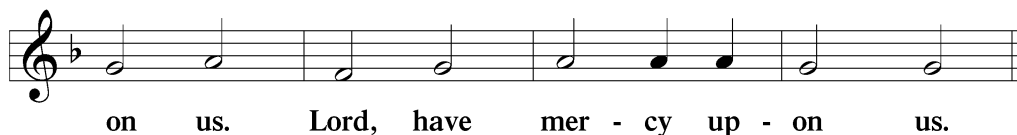
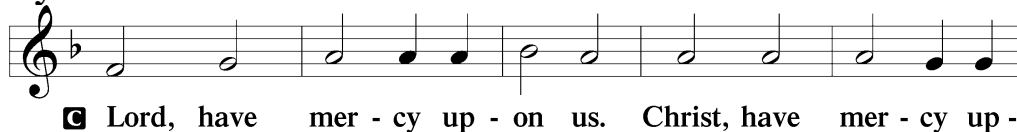
He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.
In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

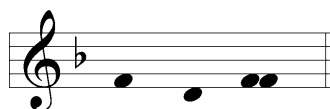


Kyrie

LSB 186



Salutation and Collect of the Day



- P** Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 11:1–10

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

In that day, the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

From the house of the Lord we bless you.

Epistle

Romans 15:4–13

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name.”

And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him.”

And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope.”

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia

LSB 190



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

Holy Gospel

Matthew 3:1–12

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



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, 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

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

LSB 344



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc - es
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; Make straight the
 3 We hail Thee as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our ref - uge
 4 Lay on the sick Thy heal - ing hand And make the
 △ 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to Thee Whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - ken,
 way for God with - in, And let us all our
 and our great re - ward; With - out Thy grace we
 fall - en strong to stand; Show us the glo - ry
 sets Thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 of Thy face Till beau - ty springs in ev - 'ry place.
 we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite

Tune: adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Stand

Offertory

LSB 192



☐ 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.

Sit

Offering

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
 Deborah DeGrado, Pianist

Arr. Mark Hayes

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For courage to speak Christ to the nations and to teach those still in darkness and death about His gift of light and life; and that God would keep us from being ashamed of His Gospel or intimidated by the opinions of others, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the ministries of our congregation, that you would nourish your people through the gifts already in place, prepare and equip us for service in your kingdom, and guide us into the new works you are calling forth for the blessing of those within and beyond our walls, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For families, that they would faithfully fulfill their vocations to love and forgive one another, even as they grow in the fear, love and trust of the Lord, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

(Cont.)

P For those afflicted in body or mind, that they would receive the riches of God's grace, healing according to His will, and grace to carry them through the day of trouble, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For all who commune this day, that their hearts would be stirred up to make ready the way of the Lord Jesus, who comes in His body and blood, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P O Lord God, heavenly Father, grant us all things needful and keep from us all things harmful to us and to our salvation, that with confidence in Your will, we may say "amen" to our prayers and live in contentment and peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 194



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them up un - to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.



C It is meet and right so to do.

P It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 195



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

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

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197




P Our Lord Je-sus Christ, on the night when He was be-trayed, took bread,
and when He had giv-en thanks, He broke it and gave it to the
dis-ci-ples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ bod-y, which is giv-en for you.
This do in re-mem-brance of Me." In the same way al- so
He took the cup after sup-per, and when He had giv-en thanks, He gave it
to them, say-ing: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in
My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the for-give-ness of sins.

This do, as often as you drink it, in re-mem-brance of Me.”

Pax Domini

LSB 197


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



Agnus Dei

LSB 198

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sit

Distribution

I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table

LSB 618



1 I come, O Sav - ior, to Thy ta - ble, For weak and
 2 Thy heart is filled with fer - vent yearn - ing That sin - ners
 3 Un - wor - thy though I am, O Sav - ior, Be - cause I
 4 Wea - ry am I and heav - y lad - en; With sin my
 5 What high - er gift can we in - her - it? It is faith's



wea - ry is my soul; Thou, Bread of Life, a -
 may sal - va - tion see Who, Lord, to Thee in
 have a sin - ful heart, Yet Thou Thy lamb wilt
 soul is sore op - pressed; Re - ceive me gra - cious -
 bond and sol - id base; It is the strength of



lone art a - ble To sat - is - fy and make me whole:
 faith are turn - ing; So I, a sin - ner, come to Thee.
 ban - ish nev - er, For Thou my faith - ful shep - herd art:
 ly and glad - den My heart, for I am now Thy guest.
 heart and spir - it, The cov - e - nant of hope and grace.



Refrain

Lord, may Thy bod - y and Thy blood Be for my soul the high - est good!

Text: Friedrich Christian Heyder, 1677–1754; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, abr.

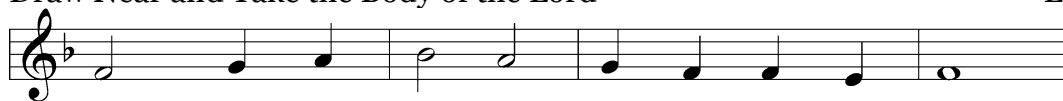
Tune: Emskirchner Choral-Buch, 1756, Leipzig

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110017168

Tune: Public domain

Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord

LSB 637



1 Draw near and take the bod - y of the Lord,
2 He who His saints in this world rules and shields,
3 Come for - ward then with faith - ful hearts sin - cere,



And drink the ho - ly blood for you out - poured;
To all be - liev - ers life e - ter - nal yields;
And take the pledg - es of sal - va - tion here.



Of - fered was He for great - est and for least,
With heav'n - ly bread He makes the hun - gry whole,
O Lord, our hearts with grate - ful thanks en - dow



Him - self the vic - tim and Him - self the priest.
Gives liv - ing wa - ters to the thirst - ing soul.
As in this feast of love You bless us now.

Text: Latin, 7th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-66, alt.

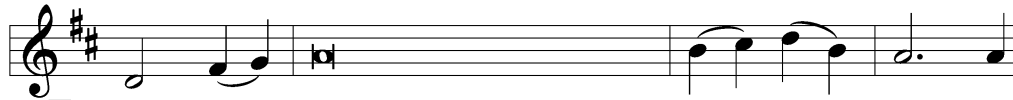
Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199



C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -



cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,

(Cont.)

which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

Thanksgiving

LSB 200

A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

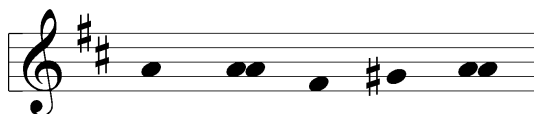
P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus

Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.



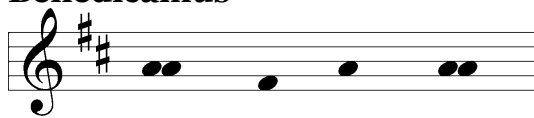
P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

LSB 202



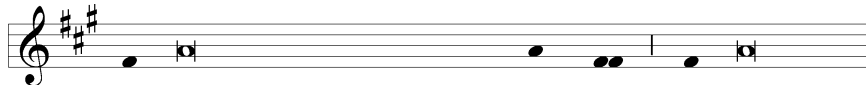
A Bless we the Lord.



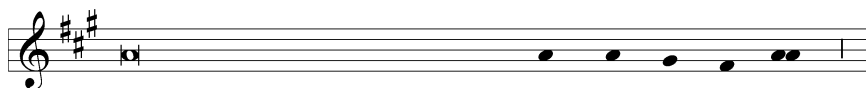
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

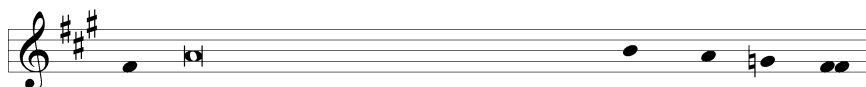
LSB 202



P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



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

On What Has Now Been Sown

LSB 921



- 1 On what has now been sown Thy bless - ing, Lord, be - stow;
- 2 To Thee our wants are known, From Thee are all our pow'rs;
- 3 O grant that each of us, Now met be - fore Thee here,



The pow'r is Thine a - lone To make it sprout and grow. Do Thou
Ac - cept what is Thine own And par - don what is ours. Our prais -
May meet to - geth - er thus When Thou and Thine ap - pear And fol -



in grace the har - vest raise, And Thou a - lone shalt have the praise!
es, Lord, and prayers re - ceive, And to Thy Word a bless - ing give.
low Thee to heav'n, our home. E'en so, a - men, Lord Je - sus, come!

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.

Tune: John Darwall, 1731–89

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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FROM THE TREASURER

Monthly Offering Goal – November 30, 2025

Goal Progress: 105%

Thank you for your faithful and generous giving. Your offerings support the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments, the care of souls, and the ongoing work of the Church here at Celebration Lutheran.

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

LIFE TOGETHER AT CELEBRATION

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING A congregational members meeting will be held today after Divine Service. The elders of Celebration are excited to share and discuss the topic of mission and ministries of our church. Please join us and participate in this important meeting. *Due to the Congregational meeting, all after-service activities are cancelled for this week.*

CHRISTMAS TREE SPECIAL FUND: If you would still like to contribute to the special fund for the Christmas Tree in the sanctuary, please write “Christmas tree” on your check or envelope.

SANCTUARY POINSETTIAS If you would like to purchase a plant, please use the sign-up sheet in the lobby, and place your payment in the “Poinsettia Purchase” envelope provided, and put it in the basket **by December 10**. You will be able to take your plant home after the Christmas Eve service on December 24.

YOUTH AND FAMILY NIGHT will not be meeting during the Advent season.

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES will be held in December. Come join us at 6:30 pm on December 10th and December 17th.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE will be held on Wednesday, December 24th, at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to join us for a service of worship and music honoring the birth of our Savior.

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY led by Debra Weier meets Monday night at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. The current study is *Meant for God: A study of Joseph*.

BOOK CLUB will meet on December 18 at 7:00 p.m. We are reading *The Persian Pickle Club*. It is about a group of midwestern ladies from the Midwest who have a quilting club in

the 1930s. It is about their relationships going through hard times on the farm as well as a mysterious disappearance in the story as well.

GRIEF SHARE will start on Tuesday, January 13 at 6:00 p.m. This study is designed for those who have lost loved ones, either recently or in the past. All are welcome. Spread the word. If you have any questions, contact Erin Porter or Pastor Keinbaum.



PLEASE DOWNLOAD our app using this QR code or visit our website for current and upcoming events.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

7	9:00 am	Bible Study led by Pastor Keinbaum
7	9:45 am	Coffee & Service Preparation
7	10:15 am	Divine Service 3
8	7:00 pm	Women's Bible Study – Fellowship Room
9	9:00 am	Christ's Cupboard Preparation (Volunteers Welcome!)
10	8:00 am	Christ's Cupboard Distribution (Volunteers Welcome!)
10	3:30-5:30 pm	Pastor Keinbaum's Office Hours
10	6:30 pm	Midweek Advent Service
10	7:15 pm	Choir Rehearsal
11	6:30 pm	AA Meeting
11	7:30 am	AA Meeting

DEVOTION

Luke 21:25-36 "But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."
(Luke 21:36, ESV)

It is easy to be asleep. It is easy to be lulled to sleep by the cares of this life. Physical drunkenness will put you to sleep, but spiritual drunkenness will also make you insensible to spiritual things. These are hidden traps. Not only are they in the dark, that is, difficult to see, but they are also soul darkening. They make the light that should be in us dark. Don't sleep. Stay awake.

Just as dissipation, drunkenness, and the cares of this life put you to sleep, our Lord Jesus gives us signs which keep us awake in the Spirit. He tells us what is coming. Like a loud alarm clock, the signs in the sun, moon, and stars should ring in our minds and hearts. Like a strong cup of coffee, the distress of nations ought to jolt us out of sinful security.

The budding of the trees, which seems so far away, is a reminder that all the prophecies concerning the end have already occurred. Jesus' word hasn't lied. The temple has been destroyed. There has been war and rumors of war. The love of many has grown cold. The lawless one, the Antichrist, has been revealed. Rather than frightening pictures which make us faint, these signs of the end are merely the budding of leaves. These things let us know that the Kingdom of God and of His Christ is so very, very near.

The world wants you to sleep. It wants that blessed day of our Savior's return to catch you unawares in the dark. It's a trap, a snare. Don't listen to the lies of the world, which coddle you and rock you to sleep. Don't listen to Satan, who wants to send you false dreams of safety and security. But Jesus doesn't want you to sleep. He wants you to be awake. And the best way to be awake is to read and listen to His word. As He Himself says: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

Let's pray: Dear Jesus, awaken us by Your Word that we may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place and finally stand before You. Amen.

Written by: Rev. Marcus Baikie, Rev. Travis Berg, Rev. Joshua Scheer

NOTES

Take this bulletin home and use it for prayer, Scripture reading,
and encouragement throughout the week.

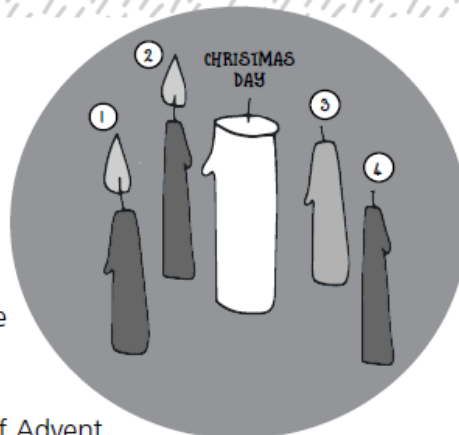


KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

What is the Advent wreath?

The Advent wreath is the circle of candles (and/or evergreen branches) that you see in the sanctuary during the season of Advent.

Some Advent wreaths hang from the ceiling of the sanctuary while others are placed on a floor stand. Either way, the Advent wreath is one of the many beautiful things you'll see around the church during Advent.



How do we use the advent wreath?

It used to be that the Advent wreath was used in the home to help count the four weeks of Advent. Now you can find them in homes as well as in the church sanctuary. Each Sunday in Advent, a new candle on the wreath is lit. For example, during the first week in Advent, only one candle is lit. During the second week in Advent, two candles are lit. We do this to remember and prepare for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Light of the World!



Parents: Before or after the Divine Service, allow your children to walk up to get a better look at the Advent wreath. Remind them to be reverent in God's holy places. During this Advent season, try utilizing an Advent wreath at home with family devotions. If you are unsure how to get started, ask your pastor for help.



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Advent Word Search

W	E	G	T	H	M	K	I	C	X	J	Q
R	W	R	E	A	T	H	S	A	Z	O	C
M	P	E	K	D	J	E	S	N	B	Y	A
A	Y	A	D	V	I	M	P	D	H	O	P
R	J	O	S	E	P	H	E	L	O	V	E
Y	E	B	A	N	C	O	A	E	O	G	A
P	S	X	G	T	H	P	C	S	P	K	C
Z	U	G	M	L	O	E	Z	E	A	Y	E
Y	S	Q	P	U	R	P	L	E	X	R	A

Words to Find

Words can be found left to right and up and down.

- Advent
- Wreath
- Candles
- Purple
- Hope
- Peace
- Joy
- Love
- Mary
- Joseph
- Jesus

