



*Bethlehem Lutheran Church—William Penn  
Founded 1860—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*

## **THE FESTIVAL OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS**

**DECEMBER 28, 2025**  
**10:15 AM**



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Crucifer

Michael Hinze

Organist

Ann Sommer

Greeter

Grace Kankel

# *The Festival of The Holy Innocents*

**December 28, 2025 – 10:15 AM**

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## Divine Service: Setting I with Holy Communion

Order of Service: *Lutheran Service Book*, pp 151-166

*Pre-Service Music*



Representing God's Love  
To our Congregation,  
Community, and the World

### December Bible Verse

"But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation;  
my God will hear me."

*Micah 7:7*

### Our Mission Statement

Representing God's Love to Our Congregation, Community, and the World!



In Light of 1 Cor. 11:23-26, Bethlehem Lutheran Church maintains the historical practice of "closed" communion in the belief that the Sacrament requires faith in Christ's words that His body and blood are truly present. Furthermore, participation in the Sacrament is a sign of our unity in the faith with all those who join us at the altar. *For that reason, we ask that those visitors desiring to commune be members in good standing of a congregation of the LCMS and speak to the pastor or an elder before the beginning of the service.* Our denial of admission to those who are members of another confession is not a judgment upon their faith but a recognition that we hold to different confessions concerning God, salvation, and the Sacrament itself. Such individuals are invited to speak with the pastor following the service.

### *Ringing of the Church Bell*

*Stand and turn to face the Cross for the Processional Hymn.*

#### PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*God Moves in a Mysterious Way*

*LSB 765*



1 God moves in a mys - te - rious way His  
2 Judge not the Lord by fee - ble sense, But  
3 His pur - pos - es will rip - en fast, Un -  
4 Blind un - be - lief is sure to err And  
5 You fear - ful saints, fresh cour - age take; The

won - ders to per - form; He plants His foot - steps  
 trust Him for His grace; Be - hind a frown - ing  
 fold - ing ev - 'ry hour; The bud may have a  
 scan His work in vain; God is His own in -  
 clouds you so much dread Are big with mer - cy

in the sea And rides up - on the storm.  
 prov - i - dence Faith sees a smil - ing face.  
 bit - ter taste, But sweet will be the flow'r.  
 ter - pret - er, And He will make it plain.  
 and will break In bless - ings on your head.

Text: William Cowper, 1731–1800, alt. Tune: The CL Psalms of David, 1615, Edinburgh Text and tune: Public domain

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

INVOCATION

LSB 151

**P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 151

**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.**

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

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

**C** Amen.

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

### INTROIT

*Psalm 31:1,3,5; antiphon: Revelation 7:14b*

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

**They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;  
**in your righteousness deliver me.**

For you are my rock and my fortress;  
**and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.**

Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
**you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

**They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

### KYRIE

*LSB 152*

**P** In peace let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

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



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

**P** 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.

**P** 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.

**P** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



**C** A - men.



## HYMN OF PRAISE

*This Is the Feast*  
*Refrain*

LSB 155



**C** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



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



1 — Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose  
2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and

3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and

4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to

5 For the Lamb who was slain has be -



blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*  
hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*

join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*  
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*

gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*



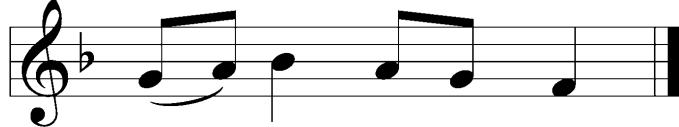
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



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

## SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And al - so with you.

**P** Let us pray.

**C** Almighty God, the martyred innocents of Bethlehem showed forth Your praise not by speaking but by dying. Put to death in us all that is in conflict with Your will that our lives may bear witness to the faith we profess with our lips; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Sit*

OLD TESTAMENT READING

*Jeremiah 31:15-17*

<sup>15</sup>Thus says the LORD:  
“A voice is heard in Ramah,  
lamentation and bitter weeping.  
Rachel is weeping for her children;  
she refuses to be comforted for her children,  
because they are no more.”

<sup>16</sup>Thus says the LORD:  
“Keep your voice from weeping,  
and your eyes from tears,  
for there is a reward for your work,  
declares the LORD,  
and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.

<sup>17</sup>There is hope for your future,  
declares the LORD,  
and your children shall come back to their own country.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

*Psalm 71:4a, 5a, 6a, b, 8*

Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked.  
For you, O Lord, are my hope.  
Upon you have I leaned from before my birth;  
you are he who took me from my mother’s womb.  
My mouth is filled with your praise,  
and with your glory all the day.

<sup>1</sup>Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. <sup>2</sup>And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, <sup>3</sup>and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup>It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, <sup>5</sup>and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

COMMON ALLELUIA

LSB 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

Matthew 2:13-18

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

**C** Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

<sup>13</sup>When [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” <sup>14</sup>And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

<sup>16</sup>Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup>“A voice was heard in Ramah,  
weeping and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



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

NICENE CREED

LSB 158

**C** I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered and was buried.  
 And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
 and ascended into heaven  
 and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
 And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the  
 dead,  
 whose kingdom will have no end.  
 And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the Lord and giver of life,  
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
 who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and  
 glorified,  
 who spoke by the prophets.  
 And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
 I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
 and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
 and the life  $\dagger$  of the world to come. Amen.

*Sit*

HYMN OF THE DAY

*When Aimless Violence Takes Those We Love*

LSB 764



1 When aim - less vi - o - lence takes those we love,  
 2 When pass - ing years rob sight and strength and mind  
 3 Our faith may flick - er low, and hope grow dim,  
 4 Be - cause Your Son knew ag - o - ny and loss,  
 5 Through long grief - dark - ened days help us, dear Lord,



When ran - dom death strikes child - hood's prom - ise down,  
 Yet fail to still a strong - ly beat - ing heart,  
 Yet You, O God, are with us in our pain;  
 Felt des - o - la - tion, grief and scorn and shame,  
 To trust Your grace for cour - age to en - dure,



When wrench - ing loss be - comes our dai - ly bread,  
 And grief be - comes the fab - ric of our days,  
 You grieve with us and for us day by day,  
 We know You will be with us, come what may,  
 To rest our souls in Your sup - port - ing love,



We know, O God, You leave us not a - lone.  
 Dear Lord, You do not stand from us a - part.  
 And with us, shar - ing sor - row, will re - main.  
 Your lov - ing pres - ence near, al - ways the same.  
 And find our hope with - in Your mer - cy sure.

Text: Joy F. Patterson, 1931 Tune: Alfred M. Smith, 1879-1971 Text: © 1994, 1997 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005013  
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## SERMON

### *Weeping at Christmas*

*Matthew 2:13-18*

*Stand*

OFFERTORY

LSB 159

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

## OFFERING PRAYER

*Sit*

## OFFERING

*Stand*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

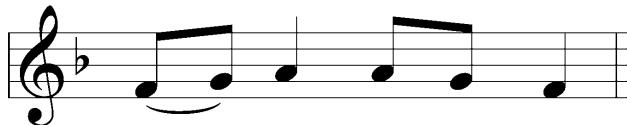
### SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

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#### PREFACE

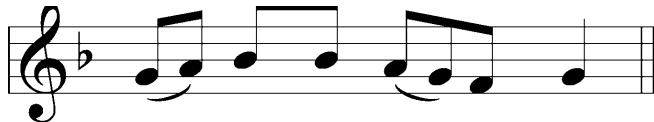
*LSB 160*

**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 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 singing:

## SANCTUS

LSB 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

LSB 161

**P** Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

LSB 162

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:  
**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

LSB 162

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My  $\ddagger$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\ddagger$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PAX DOMINI

LSB 163

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

**C** A - men.

AGNUS DEI

LSB 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; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*Sit*

## DISTRIBUTION HYMN

### *By All Your Saints in Warfare*

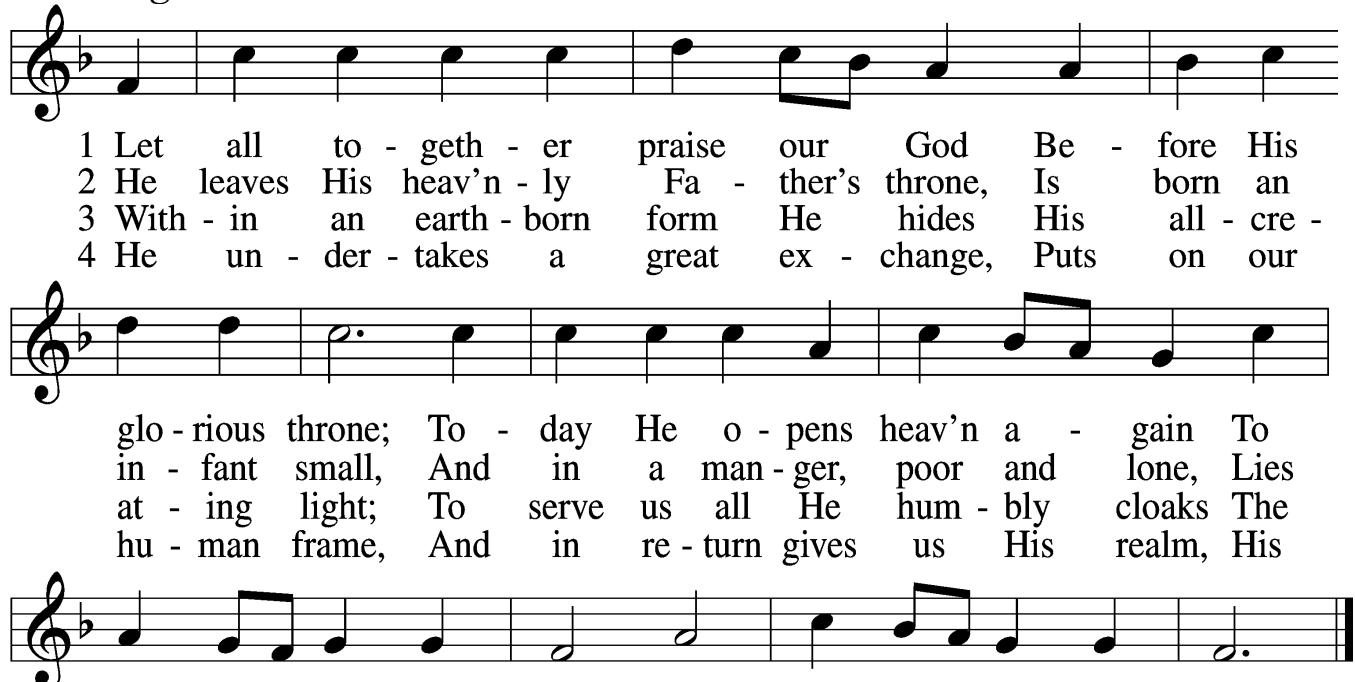
LSB 517 sts. 1, 9, 3

1 By all Your saints in warfare, fare, For Whom  
 2 All praise in - fant mar - - tyrs, Whom  
 3. Then let us praise the Fa - - father And  
 all Your saints at rest, Your ho - ly name, O  
 Your mys - te - rious love Called ear - ly from their  
 wor - ship God the Son And sing to God the  
 Je - sus, For ev - er - more be blest! For  
 war - fare To share Your home a - bove. O  
 Spir - it, E - ter - nal Three in One, Till  
 You have won the bat - tle That they might wear the  
 Ra - chel, cease your weep - ing; They rest from earth - ly  
 all the ran - somed num - ber Fall down be - fore the  
 crown; And now they shine in glo - ry  
 cares! Lord, grant us crowns as bril - liant  
 throne, As - crib - ing pow'r and glo - ry  
 Re - flect - ed from Your throne.  
 And faith as sure as theirs.  
 And praise to God a lone.

Text: Horatio Bolton Nelson, 1823–1913, alt. Tune: English; coll. and arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958 Text: Public domain 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.

△ 7 Your grace in lowliness revealed,

Lord Jesus, we adore

And praise to God the Father yield

And Spirit evermore;

We praise You evermore.

## *The Infant Priest Was Holy Born*

LSB 624

1 The infant Priest was ho - ly born For us un - .  
2 This great High Priest in hu - man flesh Was i - con .  
3 The ho - ly Lamb un - daunt - ed came To God's own .  
4 But death would not the vic - tor be Of Him who .

ho - ly and for - lorn; From flesh - ly tem - ple  
of God's righ - teous - ness. His hal - lowed touch brought  
al - tar lit with flame; While weep - ing an - gels  
hung up - on the tree. He leads us to the

forth came He, A - noint - ed from e - ter - ni - ty.  
sanc - ti - ty; His hand re - moved im - pu - ri - ty.  
hid their eyes, This Priest be - came a sac - ri - fice.  
Ho - ly Place With - in the veil, be - fore God's face.

- 5 The veil is torn, our Priest we see,  
As at the rail on bended knee  
Our hungry mouths from Him receive  
The bread of immortality.
- 6 The body of God's Lamb we eat,  
A priestly food and priestly meat;  
On sin-parched lips the chalice pours  
His quenching blood that life restores.
- 7 With cherubim and seraphim  
Our voices join the endless hymn,  
And "Holy, holy, holy" sing  
To Christ, God's Lamb, our Priest and King.

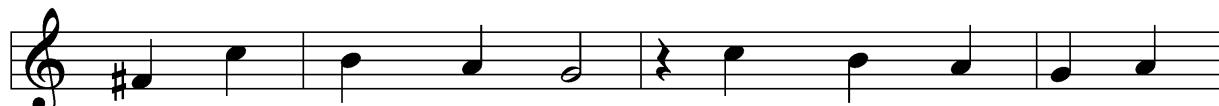
Text: Chad L. Bird, 1970. Tune: Second Supplement to Psalmody in Miniature, 1778, London; adapt. Edward Miller, 1731–1807 Text: © 1997, 2003 Chad L. Bird. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005013. Tune: Public domain

*Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior*

LSB 619



1 Thy bod - y, giv'n for me, O Sav - ior, Thy blood which  
 2 With Thee, Lord, I am now u - nit - ed; I live in  
 3 Who can con - demn me now? For sure - ly The Lord is  
 4 Though death may threat - en with dis - as - ter, It can - not  
 5 My heart has now be - come Thy dwell-ing, O bless - ed,



Thou for me didst shed, These are my life and  
 Thee and Thou in me. No sor - row fills my  
 nigh, who jus - ti - fies. No hell I fear, and  
 rob me of my cheer; For He who is of  
 ho - ly Trin - i - ty. With an - gels I, Thy



strength for - ev - er, By them my hun - gry soul is fed.  
 soul, de - light - ed It finds its on - ly joy in Thee.  
 thus se - cure - ly With Je - sus I to heav - en rise.  
 death the mas - ter With aid and com - fort e'er is near.  
 prais - es tell - ing, Shall live in joy e - ter - nal - ly.

*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. 110005013 Tune: Public domain

*Stand*

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

*Thank the Lord*

LSB 164



**C** Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev - 'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re - calls His prom - is - es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

LSB 166

**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** Amen.

## BENEDICTION

LSB 166

**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  $\dagger$  give you peace.**C** A - men.

Face the cross for the Closing Hymn.

## CLOSING HYMN

*Children of the Heavenly Father*

LSB 725

1 Chil - dren of the heav'n - ly Fa - - ther Safe - ly  
 2 God His own doth tend and nour - - ish; In His  
 3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - - er From the  
 4 Though He giv - eth or He tak - - eth, God His

in His bos - om gath - er; Nest - ling bird nor star in  
 ho - ly courts they flour - ish. From all e - vil things He  
 Lord His chil - dren sev - er; Un - to them His grace He  
 chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth; His the lov - ing pur - pose

heav - en Such a ref - - uge e'er was giv - en.  
 spares them; In His might - y arms He bears them.  
 show - eth, And their sor - - rows all He know - eth.  
 sole - ly To pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.



## POSTLUDE

Welcome to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, where we worship in the name of the crucified and risen Lamb of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. Blessings to you as you worship with us today.

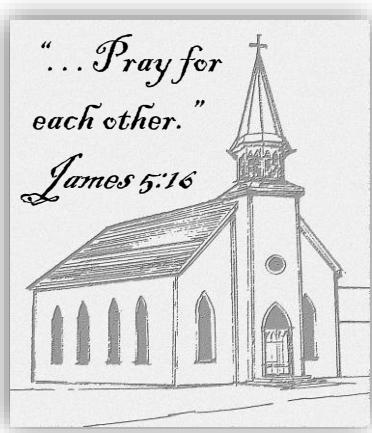


**Congregation:** Healing for Lillian Hayden from knee surgery; for Edith Erwin, healing; for Tom Hayden's recovery after surgery and continued healing; for Adeline Platt's health; for health and healing for Lathel Norris; for Blake Powers, Edith Erwin, and Deloris Griffin; for our shut-in members: Renee Brinkmann, Mildred Holle, Lathel Norris, Elvera Schroeder, and others who are unable to come to church.

**Community:** for Grace Lutheran School, that they may continue to be a place for the children of our community and congregation to learn and grow in their faith and knowledge of God's world; may our Lord continue to deliver to us favorable weather; for Brenham Pregnancy Center and those whose lives they touched; Faith Mission; families and individuals cared for by Child Protective Services.

**World:** for all those suffering through war, may God watch over and protect His children, and by His Holy Spirit, may they all come to know Christ as their Savior and thus enjoy eternity with Him, for those who have been led astray into false belief; for those facing crisis pregnancies, that they would find the strength to choose life for their unborn child; for the leaders of the nations, that they would make godly decisions for their people and countries.

### Bethlehem at Prayer



Prayer is a vital part of our life together in Christ. To that end, *Bethlehem at Prayer* is a means to encourage more intentional prayer for one another. This is an opportunity for us to support one another in faith, lifting up each household by name before our gracious God. While members can always request prayers at any time, this effort ensures that every family at Bethlehem is prayed for regularly. We invite you to join us in encouragement and intercession, praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ each week.

*Please remember these families in your prayers this week:*

- Guthrie – Jeremy, Adrienne, Lydia, Jackson, Brody
- Hafer – Amanda
- Luera – Kaci, Amara Torrez, Christopher Teague, Harlee and Landon Duckett
- Malone – Corey, Christen, Lane and Rowdy Borgstedt
- Watson – Sherry, Dan Montana, Daniel
- Wiedemann – Gene, Billie

*May the Lord bless and strengthen them in faith and life.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### This Week's Schedule

#### **December 28 – January 4**



<b>Today:</b>	<b><i>The Festival of The Holy Innocents</i></b>	
<b>9:00 AM</b>	Sunday School, Adult Bible Class	
<b>10:15 AM</b>	Divine Worship: Setting I with Holy Communion	
Acolyte:	Wyatt Schramme	
Crucifer:	Michael Hinze	
Greeter:	Diane Jaehne	
Ushers:	Billy Ashorn	Blane Ashorn
	Brian Ashorn	Westin Ashorn



<b>Wednesday:</b>	<b><i>New Year's Eve Service</i></b>	
<b>4:30 PM</b>	Confirmation 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Grades	
<b>7:00 PM</b>	Divine Worship: Setting III with Holy Communion	
Acolyte:	Amelia Kettler	
Ushers:	Jason Ashorn	Kaisen Ashorn
	Melvin Ashorn	Eric Berglund



<b>Thursday:</b>	
<b>6:00 PM</b>	Elders' Meeting



<b>Next Sunday:</b>	<b><i>Second Sunday after Christmas</i></b>	
<b>9:00 AM</b>	Sunday School, Adult Bible Class	
<b>10:15 AM</b>	Divine Worship: Setting III with Holy Communion	
Acolyte:	Dillion Nowicki	
Greeter:	Laramie Kettler	
Ushers:	Brian Crabb	Daryl Dahmann
	Doyle Dahmann	Tyler Gandy
<b>11:15 AM</b>	Youth League Meeting	

**Serving in December:** Elder – Brad Molitor / Trustee – Michael Schroeder  
**Serving in January:** Elder – Chris Smitherman / Trustee – Doyle Dahmann

*If you have a question or thought concerning spiritual care or the church property, please contact the appropriate elder or trustee.*



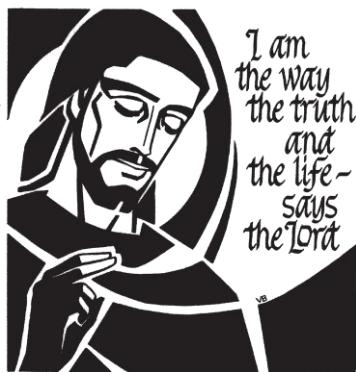
*The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God by members of the congregation*



**December 28 – Holy Innocents** – The devil hates little children because he hates the Christ child, who was promised to crush his head (Genesis 3:15). Sadly, his influence can still be seen today in those who, like Herod, see little

children as a threat to their authority and aim for their destruction (Matthew 2:16). As we weep with Rachel and her children (Jeremiah 31:15), we also rejoice that by sparing His only-begotten Son from Herod's wrath, God has provided eternal salvation for all the holy innocents—past, present and future—that they too might join in the heavenly song around the throne of God (Revelation 14:3).

### Sunday School Corner



In our Winter unit, we continue our study of the New Testament, beginning with the account of Mary and Martha and continuing through Jesus appearing to Thomas. This morning, the kids studied the lesson “Lost-and-Found Wonder – Jesus Seeks the Lost.” Jesus shares three parables demonstrating our heavenly Father’s concern for the lost. The shepherd leaves the ninety-nine sheep to seek one that was lost. A woman sweeps the house to find one of ten silver coins.

In the parable of the lost son, a young man squanders his inheritance, ending up in squalor. Determined to plead for his father’s mercy and beg to return as a servant, the son instead receives a celebration. Angered at his father’s welcome for the prodigal, the older son confronts his father. The father’s gentle response reassures the young man of the father’s everlasting love and care. To reinforce this lesson with your kids, as a family, discuss: The older son in the parable didn’t really know his father at all. He thought he was a mean dad who only loved his children if they kept all the rules. But a good father does not love his children like that. He loves them no matter what—even if they break the rules. How are we sometimes like the lost son? How are we

sometimes like the older brother? We can be sure that God's love finds us and forgives us completely because of Jesus' death on the cross. What are some ways Jesus gives us that love and forgiveness? Also, parents, you can join Pastor Krieg in the adult Sunday School class. See you next week!

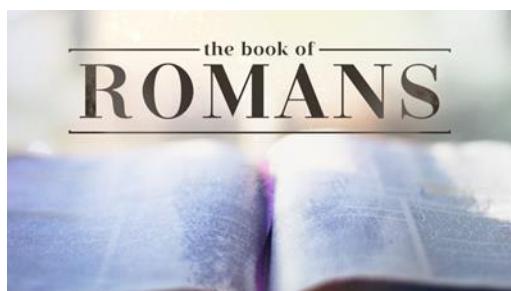
## High School Lesson

Our High School Sunday School class is beginning a new study series using Not-So-Nice Bible Stories: Master Criminals. In this engaging and thought-provoking study, students will explore the stories of some of Scripture's most notorious wrongdoers, and discover how God's mercy and grace still shine through even the darkest human deeds. Each lesson points us to Christ, who took the punishment for all sin upon Himself and gives us forgiveness, life, and salvation. Join us as we dig into God's Word, wrestle with tough questions, and see how even "master criminals" reveal our need for the one true Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **Lesson 5 – Flirt Like an Egyptian (Genesis 39)**

In this week's lesson, our High School class explored Joseph's encounter with Potiphar's wife in "Flirt Like an Egyptian." Students looked at how temptation, false accusation, and injustice played out in Joseph's life, and how God remained with him through it all. Even when Joseph suffered for doing what was right, the Lord preserved him and worked through his trials for a greater purpose. We discussed how Christ, too, was falsely accused and unjustly condemned, yet through His suffering brought about our salvation. Joseph's story points us to the One who is with us in every trial and who turns even evil intentions toward His saving plan.

## Adult Sunday School Lesson



St. Paul's letter to the Romans is often called the "chief part of the New Testament." Romans clearly lays out the heart of the Christian faith: we are justified by grace alone through faith alone on account of Christ alone. In this rich epistle, Paul teaches on sin and righteousness, law and Gospel, baptism, the struggle against the old Adam, and life lived in the freedom of the Gospel.

Whether you've been attending or have yet to join us, this is a wonderful time to dig into God's Word together and grow in our understanding of His mercy in Christ. Come and be strengthened in the faith that saves and learn how

the Gospel shapes our daily lives. We look forward to studying this treasure of Scripture with you! If you could not attend today, please join us next Sunday during the Adult Bible Study hour before church, starting at 9 a.m. Now is the time to commit yourself to a deeper and more meaningful understanding of God's Word and your relationship with Him. I hope to see you all next Sunday as we continue our studies.

### Online Giving



You may give tithes and offerings online by clicking the "Give" tab on our website (<https://www.bethlehemwmpenn.org/>), or just scan the QR code to the left.

### Last Week at Bethlehem

DATE	SERVICE	ATTENDANCE	GIFTS IN RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL
Dec. 21	Sunday School	19	\$58.50
	Youth Bible Class	3	
	Adult Bible Class	20	
Dec. 21	Worship Service	101	\$5,171.50 Designated Offering \$300.00
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Worship Service	176	\$7,540.00
Dec. 25	Christmas Day Worship Service	49	\$1,913.00

