

THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

Sunday, December 29, 2024, 8:30 a.m.

“Changing Lives through Worship, Compassion, and Christian Education.”

“Persevere With Thanksgiving”



“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

M a t t h e w 2 : 2

Music of Preparation,
Welcome, Announcements, Greeting

Our Ministry: We are a people of God who are: *“Changing Lives through Worship, Compassion, and Christian Education.”*

Welcome! Merry Christmas — yes, still! As the church continues to celebrate Christ’s birth, I invite you to bask in the goodness of God. Welcome!

Devotions & Publications are available in the Main Entryway. Please leave donation envelopes in the offering plate.

..... **WORSHIP NOTES**

Communion: *The Lord’s Supper - A Reverent Sacrament
The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11:27,29, “Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the Lord’s cup in an unworthy way is guilty of sinning against the Lord’s body and blood. Anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the Lord’s body brings judgment on himself as he eats and drinks.” In view of the serious nature of the Lord’s Supper, Paul commands us to examine ourselves to see if we are partaking the supper for the purposes for which Christ instituted with our hearts properly prepared. We heartily invite Confirmed members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod to receive of the Lord’s Supper. Other guests, we ask you to see the pastor or lay minister first so that you may receive the supper to your benefit rather than to your harm as the Apostle Paul warns.
NOTE: If you are allergic or cannot drink full strength wine, The two (2) cups in the center of each tray have water with a drop or two of wine.

Note About Attendance Cards...Remember that the only way we may know you are worshipping with us is by seeing your name on an attendance card. These cards may be completed as you enter for worship and will be collected after the offering. Use one card for each family that is gathered. **Please list the name of each person in worship.** (Parents, please take responsibility for signing in your children) There is a "Member" side and a "Guest" side. Please fill out the appropriate side and pass them to the side aisles during the gathering of the offerings.

To Our Visitors...Please sign our guest book found in the main entryway. Our school has a few nooks and crannies, so don’t be afraid to ask an usher where things are. Our pastor and any member here today would also be glad to meet and assist you. A guest information packet is available in the main (west) entryway.

DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING ONE

(The music for the liturgy may be found on page 151 in the Hymnal)

Notes for Worship: As you prepare to receive the Lord's Supper this day, we invite you to turn to the prayer section of the Hymnal (page 305). In addition to prayers for before and after worship, there are prayers for use before and after receiving the Lord's Supper (page 308 as well as on the inside front cover of the hymnal). May these prayers be useful in your worship.

Before worship prayer

We implore You, O Lord, in Your kindness to show us Your great mercy that we may be set free from our sins and rescued from the punishments which we rightfully deserve; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

We're So Glad God Brought You Here Today!

Opening Hymn: "Sweet Flowerets of the Martyr Band"*LSB, hymn #969, tune 655*

Sweet flow'rets of the martyr band,
Plucked by the tyrant's ruthless hand
Upon the threshold of the morn,
Like rosebuds by a tempest torn;

First victims for the incarnate Lord,
A tender flock to feel the sword;
Beside the altar's ruddy ray,
With palm and crown, you seemed to play.

Ah, what availed King Herod's wrath?
He could not stop the Savior's path.
Alone, while others murdered lay,
In safety Christ is borne away.

O Lord, the virgin-born, we sing
Eternal praise to You, our King,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit evermore.

INVOCATION, CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

- P: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C: **Amen.** *Matthew 28:19b*
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.** *1 John 1:8-9*
P: Dear Friends in Christ, let us humble our hearts before our Holy God and silently reflect upon our sins.

(Moment of silent reflection)

- 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. 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. *John 20:19-23*
C: **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

This is the Feast

Revelation 5:12-13, 19:5-9

- C: **(Sung)**
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

P: The Lord be with you. 2 Timothy 4:22

C: (Sung) And also with you.

P: Let us pray . . . 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.

C: Amen
(Please be Seated)

THE READING OF THE WORD

Old Testament Lesson: Jeremiah 31:15-17 *(Rachel Weeps For Her Children)*

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." 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. There is hope for your future, declares the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country."

Stand (as you are able)

Alleluia and Verse - Common *John 6:68*

C: (Sung) Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia.

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

C: (Sung) Glory to You, O Lord.

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 2:13-23

(Holy Innocents)

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." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 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." 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. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "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." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: (Sung) Praise to You, O Christ.
(Please be Seated)

Sermon Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" *LSB, hymn #361*

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

Sermon: "The Other Side Of The Christmas Story" Matthew 2:16-18

Stand (as you are able)

P: Let us confess our faith, using the words of the Nicene Creed.

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 of the world to come. Amen

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH 1 Timothy 2:1-4

P: Let us pray for the people of God in Christ Jesus, for His church, and for all people according to their needs. . . . Almighty God, the death of the Holy Innocents reminds us that we live in a fallen world, full of senseless violence,

unbridled bids for power, a world full of rage and fury, where even the most innocent suffer. Help us not to look upon our world in despair, but to find comfort in the fact that even the most heinous crimes cannot deter Your holy purposes, and even the world's vilest hate can be conquered by Your valiant love. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Help us to realize in ourselves the potential for evil, and give us Your Holy Spirit that we may be ruled not by our sinful flesh but by Your gracious will. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Faithful creator, You are the Lord of life. Help us to protect all life - the unborn baby, the aged, and the infirmed. According to Your will, may we recognize that all life is Your cherished creation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: When those surrounding us mourn and weep, may we console them with Your Word. Make us to be faith-filled emissaries of consolation to all members in the body of Christ who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: When we suffer, Lord, give us grace to see You, that in spite of suffering, we may be firmly grounded in our God-given faith. We lift up before You those hospitalized this past week (*Epecially, . . .*). Also be with those who continue treatment and healing at home. We pray for them and all those that we name in our hearts . . . (*Silence*). O Lord, grant healing and wholeness according to Your gracious will. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

(Additional prayers of the congregation. Each petition concludes with. . .)

P: . . . Lord, In Your Mercy,

C: Hear Our Prayer.

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen

(Please be Seated)

Tithes and Offerings/Attendance Cards

OFFERTORY - Let The Vineyards

LSB, Hymn # 955

C: (Sung) Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer now. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

HOLY COMMUNION

(In preparation to receive the Sacrament, please read the Communion notes on page 2)

P: The Lord be with you. *2 Timothy 4:22*

C: (Sung) And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts. *Colossians 3:1*

C: (Sung) We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. *Psalms 136*

C: (Sung) 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. In the communion of all Your saints gathered into the one body of Your Son, You have surrounded us with so great a cloud of witnesses that we, encouraged by their faith and strengthened by their fellowship, may run with perseverance the race that is set before us and, together with them, receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. 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 ~ Holy, Holy, Holy

Isaiah 6:3, Matthew 21:9

C: (Sung) Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might: Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

P: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on us, Your children, and given your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for the redemption you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts that he may establish in us a living faith and prepare us joyfully to

remember our Redeemer and receive him who comes to us in his body and blood. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

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 \dagger 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 is my \dagger blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Mt 26:26-28, Mk 14:22-24, Lk 22:19-20, 1 Cor. 11:23-25

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always. *John 20:19*

C: And also with you.

Agnus Dei ~ The Lamb of God

John 1:29

C: (Sung) Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Please be Seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

LSB393 - Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Infant holy, Infant lowly,
For His bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, Little knowing
Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, Angels singing,
Bells are ringing, Tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, Shepherds keeping
 Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, Heard the story,
 Tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, Free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, Greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!

LSB637 - Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord

Draw near and take the body of the Lord,
And drink the holy blood for you outpoured;
Offered was He for greatest and for least,
Himself the victim and Himself the priest.

He who His saints in this world rules and shields,
 To all believers life eternal yields;
With heav'nly bread He makes the hungry whole,
 Gives living waters to the thirsting soul.

Come forward then with faithful hearts sincere,
 And take the pledges of salvation here.
O Lord, our hearts with grateful thanks endow
 As in this feast of love You bless us now.

LSB392 - God Loves Me Dearly

God loves me dearly, Grants me salvation,
God loves me dearly, Loves even me. *Refrain*

Refrain
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

I was in slav'ry, Sin, death, and darkness;
God's love was working To make me free. *Refrain*

Refrain
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, My dear Redeemer,
He sent forth Jesus And set me free. *Refrain*

Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer;
Jesus, my Savior, Paid all I owed. *Refrain*

Now I will praise You, O Love Eternal;
Now I will praise You All my life long. *Refrain*

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE: Thank The Lord:

C: (Sung) Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'ryone what he has done. Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name. He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Let us pray. . . . Grant, O Lord, that the lips which have sung Your praise in the sanctuary may glorify You in the world, that the ears which have heard the voice of Your songs may be closed to the voice of clamor and dispute, that the eyes which have seen Your great love may behold Your blessed hope, that the tongues which have confessed Your name may ever speak the truth, and that the bodies of all who have tasted of Your Son's living body and blood may be restored to newness of life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

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: **(Sung) Amen**

Closing Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

LSB, hymn #379

O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the king of angels: *Refrain*

Refrain

*O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!*

Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest: *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

See You In Worship Next Week!

After worship prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, through Your Son You have promised us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. Govern our hearts by Your Holy Spirit that in our daily need, and especially in all time of temptation, we may seek Your help and, by a true and lively faith in Your Word, obtain all that You have promised; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

There is a Prayer Ministry Member(s) in each service that is wearing a prayer ministry tag around their neck. Please look for them if you want a prayer for someone else, a concern or situation you may have, or yourself.

Please join us for coffee and donut holes in the cafeteria after Sunday services.

Altar Flowers Altar flowers this weekend are given in loving memory of our mother, Mildred Drazy and our aunt, Hazel Piatt, by Karen Beatty and Sharon Drazy; also with thanks to God on our 23rd wedding anniversary (12/29), by Joe & Elizabeth Kubal.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Rev. Roger A. Drinnon Associate Pastor	Rev. Ross Engel Adopt-A-Chaplain
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