

THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

December 27-28, 2025

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



**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! Welcome to worship! May this time of prayer and praise help you hold on a bit longer to Christmas joy and carry it into the new year.

Devotions & Publications Available are found in the main entryway. Please leave donation envelopes in the offering plate.

..... **WORSHIP NOTES**

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 as well as a "Guest" side. Please fill out the appropriate side and pass them to the center aisle during the gathering of the offerings. The cards are gathered after the offering has been collected.

To Our Visitors...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 entryway.

For All Who Worship...If you are arriving after the service has started, please allow our ushers to assist you with seating. We ask that you avoid entering during the confession, prayers, or Bible readings as these are quiet and meditative moments.

For Parents with Small Children...We love and want children in our services as a part of God's family, to spend time with Jesus, and to learn how to worship. We want you and your children to experience our Lord's love and to have a great opportunity to worship the Lord along with all who are gathered here to praise our Savior's name.

DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING ONE

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

Notes for Worship: As you prepare for worship 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 all aspects of the Christian Life (some of the prayers are also located on the inside front cover of the hymnal). May these prayers be useful in your worship.

Before worship prayer

Almighty God, grant that we, who have been redeemed from the old life of sin by our baptism into the death and resurrection of Your Son Jesus Christ, may be renewed by Your Holy Spirit to live in righteousness and true holiness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

We're So Glad God Brought You Here Today!

Opening Hymn: "By All Your Saints in Warfare" *LSB, hymn #517, st 1,9,3*

By all Your saints in warfare,
For all Your saints at rest,
Your holy name, O Jesus,
Forevermore be blest!
For You have won the battle
That they might wear the crown;
And now they shine in glory
Reflected from Your throne.

All praise for infant martyrs,
Whom Your mysterious love
Called early from their warfare
To share Your home above.
O Rachel, cease your weeping;
They rest from earthly cares!
Lord, grant us crowns as brilliant
And faith as sure as theirs.

Then let us praise the Father
And worship God the Son
And sing to God the Spirit,
Eternal Three in One,
Till all the ransomed number
Fall down before the throne,
Ascribing pow'r and glory
And praise to God alone.

- 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

Gloria in Excelsis ~Glory to God in the Highest

Luke 2:14, John 1:29

P: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

C: **(Sung) Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father: We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God: You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen**

P: The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C: **(Sung) And also with you.**

P: Let us pray . . . 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.

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 2:13-18

(Death Of The 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."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **(Sung) Praise to You, O Christ.**

(Please be Seated)

Sermon Hymn: "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

LSB, hymn #384

Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see Evermore and evermore.

Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face Evermore and evermore.

This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring Evermore and evermore.

Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory Evermore and evermore. Amen.

Sermon: "God's Love is Stronger than Herod's Rage" *Matthew 2:13-18*

Stand (as you are able)

P: Let us confess our faith, using the words of the 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**

(Please be Seated)

Tithes and Offerings/Attendance Cards

OFFERTORY - Create In Me

LSB, Divine Service 3, pg 192-193

C: (Sung) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

1 Timothy 2:1-4

P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus 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 pray that you be with those hospitalized this past week (*Especialy*, . . .). 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*). We pray that they be healed and comforted

according to Your will and delivered from all that afflicts them on the day when You raise Your people to everlasting life. O God, grant healing and wholeness according to Your gracious will. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Give us wisdom during in these days of Nativity celebration to follow as the Magi did, seeking ever to witness the presence of the incarnate Christ in our midst. Within the flurry of this season, may we truly contemplate the joy of our redemption in Christ Jesus. 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, who has taught 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

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: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

LSB, hymn #380

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the_angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the_incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

See You In Worship Next Week!

After worship prayer

Lord God, You have called Your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go but only that Your hand is leading us and Your love supporting us; through 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 with thanks to God on our 24th wedding anniversary (12/29), by Joe & Elizabeth Kubal.



ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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