

A Christmas Festival of
**NINE LESSONS
AND CAROLS**

Sunday, December 14
7:00pm

The Cantata Choir of St. John's
Jubilation Ringers
Dana Shinneman, Piano
Dr. Marc Brunelle, Director of Music

St. John's Lutheran Church & School
505 S. Park Road, LaGrange, IL 60525
708-354-1690 Ext. 222

Reception to follow
Free-will offering
Plenty of free parking

THE TOWER CHORALE presents

**THE
HARMONY OF
HAPPY
HOLIDAYS**

Patrick Godon
Music Director

Saturday, December 6
4:00 pm

Sunday, December 7
4:00 pm

St. John's Lutheran Church
505 S. Park Road
La Grange, IL

Adult \$25
Senior \$22
Student \$15
Child 10 and under FREE

**THE
TOWER
CHORALE**
40th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

TOWERCHORALE.ORG

Illinois
ARTS
Council



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

ORDER OF DIVINE SERVICE



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT NOVEMBER 30, 2025

Equipping ✦ Engaging ✦ Encouraging
St. John's Lutheran Church and School
505 S. Park Rd. La Grange, IL 60525
www.sjlagrange.com
708-354-1690



WELCOME! TODAY WE CELEBRATE THE LORD’S HOLY COMMUNION



For baptized Christians (Matthew 28:19) who have been instructed in the faith (Galatians 6:6), The Lord’s Supper is our participation in the body and blood of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16), as the one body of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:17), to receive forgiveness of sin (Matthew 26:28) and to proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26).

So that those who partake of the Lord’s Supper do so in a worthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:27) and not to their harm (1 Corinthians 11:29), let us each examine ourselves (1 Corinthians 11:28):

- Do you believe that you are a sinner? That you have sinned in thought, word and deed?
- Are you sorry for your sin?
- Do you trust that Jesus Christ gives forgiveness of sin through His Supper?
- Do you believe that the body and blood of Jesus are present in, with and under the bread and wine?
- Do you seek to lead godly lives by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Please speak to a pastor or usher if you have questions. Gluten-free wafers are provided upon request. Non-alcoholic grape juice is provided in the center of each communion tray. Those who are not communing may come forward for a blessing from the pastor.

AS WE GATHER



Today is not only the First Sunday in Advent but also the commemoration of St. Andrew, whose day governs the start of Advent. In this way, Andrew continues to point to Christ as we begin a new Church Year. How odd it is, then, that the Gospel for the First Sunday in Advent is the same as the Gospel for Palm Sunday! This reminds us that Jesus came for the cross and empty tomb, and this is the only Gospel that can save us from sin and death. In order to enjoy the fruits of His redeeming work, we must be able to answer “Who is this?” (Matthew 21:10). This question of the crowd also becomes a question for us as we enter into Advent and a new Church Year. We marvel at this man, also true God, who is born among us in flesh and blood, who suffers and dies to win salvation for us, and who will come in His glory to bring all things to their perfect consummation and bliss.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Rev. Mark Stapleton, Homilist & Liturgist
Dr. David Christiansen, Guest Organist
Joann Pyritz, Lector
Bonnie Kane, Lector

ALTAR FLOWERS

Flowers at the altar are given to the Glory of God in memory of my parents Bob and Shirley Pyritz, from Joann Pyritz

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Advent Midweek Vespers Service	Wednesday, Dec. 3, 7PM
Advent Midweek Vespers Service	Wednesday, Dec. 10, 7PM
Christmas Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols	Sunday, Dec. 14, 7PM
Advent Midweek Vespers Service	Wednesday, Dec. 17, 7PM
Christmas Eve Family Service	Wednesday, Dec. 24, 4:30PM
Choral Prelude	Wednesday, Dec. 24, 10PM
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	Wednesday, Dec. 24, 10:30PM
<i>Featuring the Cantata Choir & The Royal String Quartet</i>	
Christmas Day Worship Service	Thursday, Dec. 25, 10AM

CLOSING HYMN

336 Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending



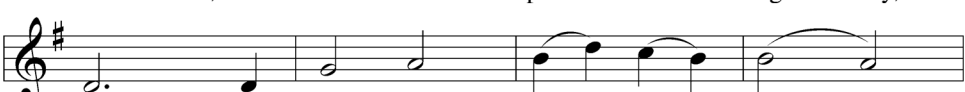
1 Lo! He comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
2 Ev - 'ry eye shall now be - hold Him
3 Those dear to - kens of His pas - sion
4 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore Thee,



Once for ev - 'ry sin - ner slain;
Robed in glo - rious maj - es - ty;
Still His daz - zling bod - y bears,
High on Thine e - ter - nal throne;



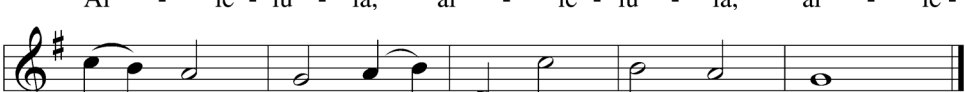
Thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
Those who set at naught and sold Him,
Cause of end - less ex - ul - ta - tion
Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,



Swell the tri - umph of His train:
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
To Claim His ran - somed wor - ship - ers.
Claim the king - dom as Thine own.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
Deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly
With what rap - ture, with what rap - ture, with what
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -



lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
wail - ing, Shall their true Mes - si - ah see.
rap - ture Gaze we on those glo - rious scars!
lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and Thou a - lone!

POSTLUDE

Postlude on HELMSLEY

Wilbur Held

Sit

THE PRELUDE

Settings of VENI EMMANUEL

Robert Lau and Gerald Near

THE TOLLING OF THE BELL & WELCOME

INVOCATION HYMN

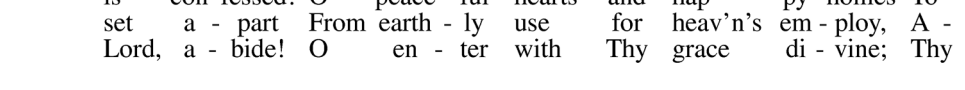
340 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates



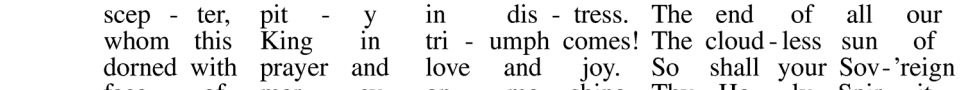
1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates! Be - hold, the King of
2 A righ - teous Help - er comes to thee; His char - iot is hu -
3 How blest the land, the cit - y blest, Where Christ the rul - er
4 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; Make it a tem - ple
5 Re - deem - er, come and o - pen wide My heart to Thee; here,



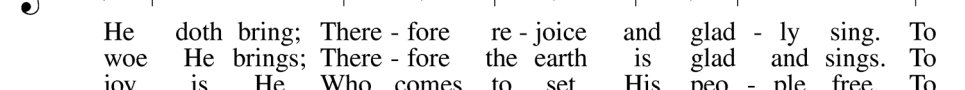
glo - ry waits. The King of kings is draw - ing near; The
mil - i - ty, His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness, His
is con - fessed! O peace - ful hearts and hap - py homes To
set a - part From earth - ly use for heav'n's em - ploy, A -
Lord, a - bide! O en - ter with Thy grace di - vine; Thy



Sav - ior of the world is here. Life and sal - va - tion
scep - ter, pit - y in dis - tress. The end of all our
whom this King in tri - umph comes! The cloud - less sun of
dorned with prayer and love and joy. So shall your Sov - 'reign
face of mer - cy on me shine. Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



He doth bring; There - fore re - joice and glad - ly sing. To
woe He brings; There - fore the earth is glad and sings. To
joy is He Who comes to set His peo - ple free. To
en - ter in And new and no - bler life be - gin. To
guide us on Un - til our glo - rious goal is won. E -



God the Fa - ther raise Your joy - ful songs of praise.
Christ the Sav - ior raise Your grate - ful hymns of praise.
God the Spir - it raise Your hap - py shouts of praise.
God a - lone be praise For word and deed and grace!
ter - nal praise and fame We of - fer to Thy name.

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.
- P** Beloved in the Lord, as we begin the season of Advent, let this wreath remind us that Jesus Christ came to conquer the darkness of sin and to lead us into the light of His glorious kingdom. As the prophet Isaiah says, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.”
- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.
- P** The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.
- P** Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the true light who comes into the world to enlighten all people, bless us as we light the first candle of this wreath in preparation for Your coming, and enkindle in our hearts the fire of Your love that we may receive You with joy and gladness and evermore remain steadfast in the faith; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.
- P** The Lord Almighty, the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless this wreath for use in His Church throughout this holy season of Advent.

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- 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.

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

Stand
THANK THE LORD

Psalm 105:1–3, 42–43; 1 Chronicles 16:8–10

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

- A** 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

Numbers 6:24–26

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!
2 God's peo-ple, see Him com - ing: Your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom-ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch-es strew be - fore Him! Spread gar-ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands, bow down be - fore Him! All na - tions, now a - dore Him!
So let your praise be sound-ing For kind-ness so a - bound-ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

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Tune: Swedish, 17th cent.
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DISMISSAL

- P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✝ in peace.
- C** Amen.



- 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.

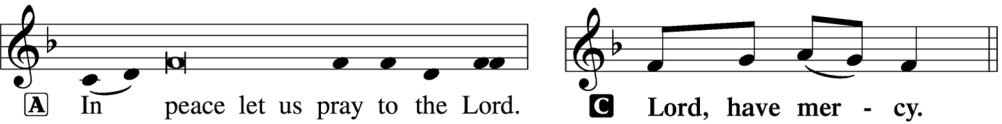
- C** Amen.

Stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

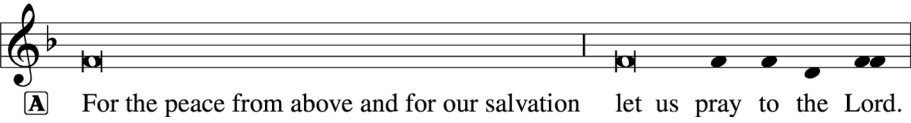
KYRIE

Mark 10:47

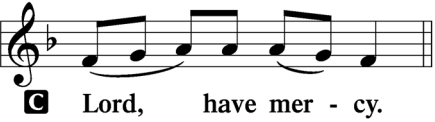


A In peace let us pray to the Lord.

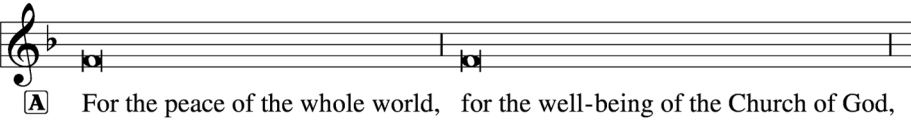
C Lord, have mer - cy.



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



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A 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.

Lord, have mer - cy.

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

let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

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

A - men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

- The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.
- Let us pray.
Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- Amen.

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 HYMNS

345 Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding

1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is
2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - spect - ed, Comes with
4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the
near," we hear it say. "Cast a - way the
earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -
works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!"
sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n;
with His mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Sit

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

- P** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD’S PRAYER

- C** **Our Father who art in heaven,**
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

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

PAX DOMINI

John 20:19

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

C **Amen.**

The people may greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, “Peace be with you,” as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matt. 5:22–24; Eph. 4:1–3).

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 2:1–5

- L** The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 2.

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

It shall come to pass in the latter days
that the mountain of the house of the LORD
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be lifted up above the hills;
and all the nations shall flow to it,
and many peoples shall come, and say:
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”
For out of Zion shall go the law,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and shall decide disputes for many peoples;
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.
O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalms 122; antiphon: v. 6

- L** I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the LORD!”

C **Our feet have been standing**
within your gates, O Jerusalem!

L Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together,
to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD,
as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD.

C **There thrones for judgment were set,**
the thrones of the house of David.

L Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

- C** “May they be secure who love you!
- L** Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!”
- C** **For my brothers and companions’ sake I will say, “Peace be within you!”**
- L** For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.

EPISTLE

Romans 13:8–14

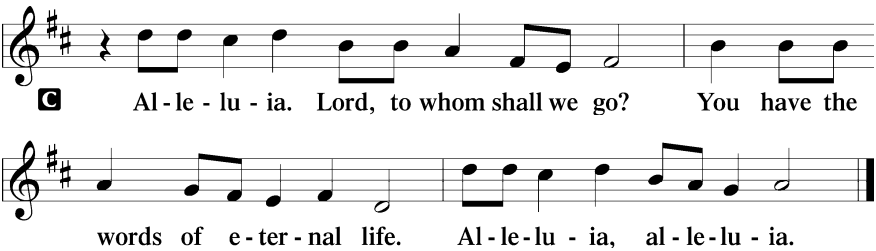
- L** The Epistle is from Romans, chapter 13.

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

Stand
ALLELUIA AND VERSE

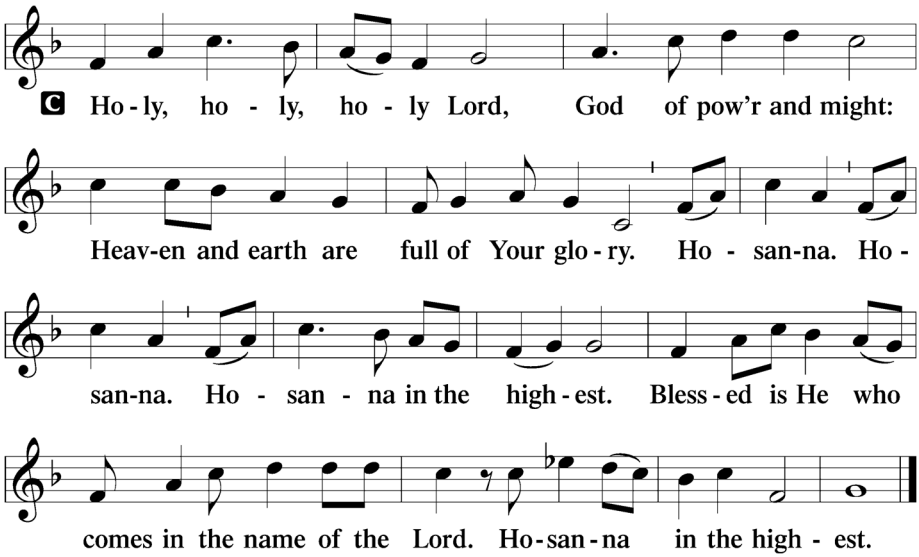


C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

- 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 saying:

SANCTUS

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9



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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

- 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  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  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

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

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also 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** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fourth chapter.
- C** Glory to You, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Praise to You, O Christ.

1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and

here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,

That the Lord chose such a birth.
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
God was there up - on His throne.
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

Stand

NICENE CREED

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.

- As we wait for our Lord’s return, let us pray for all people in their various needs and for the Church, here and around the world.
For any among us and all others who await freedom from the consequences of their past mistakes, from the injustices of their societies, and from their own worldly passions, that God would surround them with people of faith to apply the gracious news of God’s forgiveness, love, and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- Come, Thou precious Ransom, come, Only hope for sinful mortals!**
- For our communities and country and for all the nations of the world, wherever people await an end to discord with their neighbors and calm across their borders, that God would use people in positions of power to order society at home and work for peace among the nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- Come, O Savior of the world! Open are to Thee all portals.**
- For people still waiting to hear and understand the Gospel, that God would inspire artists and craftspeople, musicians and poets to creatively carry the news of Christ’s advent in history, His presence with us now, and His promised return, let us pray to the Lord.
- Come, Thy beauty let us see; Anxiously we wait for Thee.**
- For people who cry out to God, awaiting relief from long-term ills or sudden crises of health, seeking an end to unemployment and financial woes, or not knowing where to turn for help, [*including . . .*], let us pray to the Lord.
- Hail! Hosanna, David’s Son! Jesus, hear our supplication!**
- For ourselves and everyone who eagerly await the return of our Savior, whose kingdom shall never end, let us pray to the Lord.
- That forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.**
- Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- Amen.**