ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

ORDER OF DIVINE SERVICE



First Sunday in Advent

November 29, 2026

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



Talk of the "end times" often leaves Christians feeling anxious or uncertain. Yet Jesus doesn't give us the signs of Mark 13 to terrify us—He gives them to point us to our rescue. Join us Sunday in God's House as we see how Good Friday and Easter turn the Last Day from a moment of dread into a day of pure deliverance, where we can lift our heads and say, *"The stars are falling, and my chains are breaking!"*.

THE PRELUDE

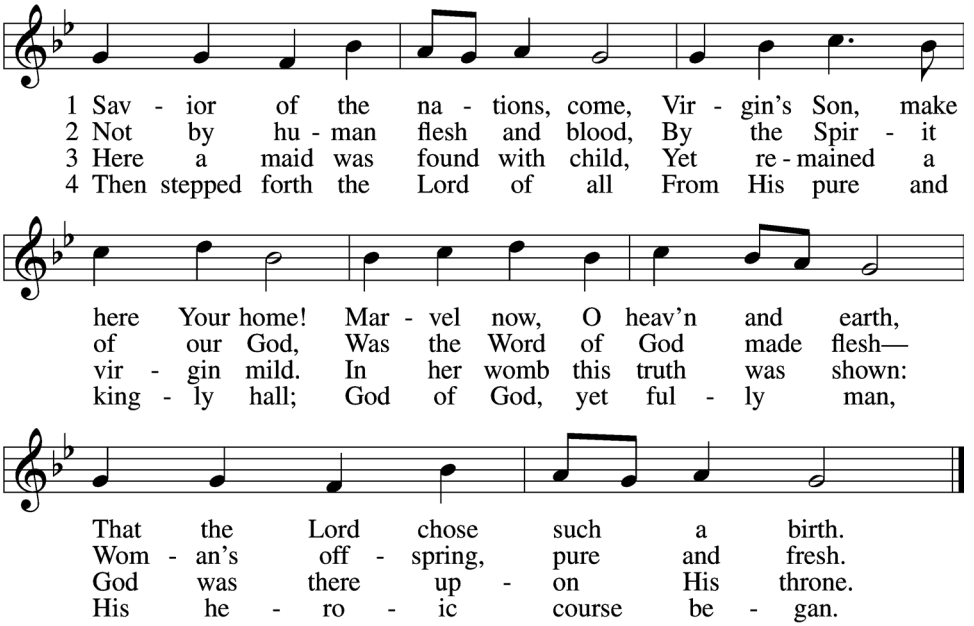
THE TOLLING OF THE BELL

WELCOME

Please stand

INVOCATION HYMN

332 Savior of the Nations, Come



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Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter
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INVOCATION

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

C **Amen.**

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

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.**

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

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Hear my prayer, O LORD;

C **give ear to my pleas for mercy!**

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we have not lived as children of the light. We have fallen into complacency, forgetting who You are and who we are. We have grown comfortable in habits that do not honor You. We have buried what You have given us rather than loving our neighbor with those gifts. We have become complacent in our thoughts, our words, and our actions. 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. God has not destined you for wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

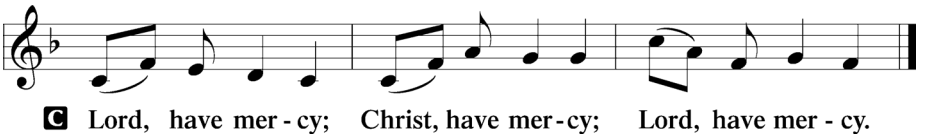
C **Amen.**

Please stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

KYRIE

Mark 10:47



SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
P 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.
C **Amen.**

Please sit

FIRST READING

Isaiah 64:1–9

A The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 64.

[1]Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence—
[2] as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
and that the nations might tremble at your presence!
[3]When you did awesome things that we did not look for,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
[4]From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear,
no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him.
[5]You meet him who joyfully works righteousness,
those who remember you in your ways.
Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?

[6]We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
[7]There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.
[8]But now, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.
[9]Be not so terribly angry, O LORD, and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people.

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

PSALM *Psalm 80:1–7; antiphon: v. 7*

A Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
C **Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,**
stir up your might and come to save us!
A Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!
C **O LORD God of hosts,**
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
A You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
C **You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,**
and our enemies laugh among themselves.
A Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

EPISTLE *1 Corinthians 1:3–9*

A The Old Testament Reading is from 1 Corinthians, chapter 1.

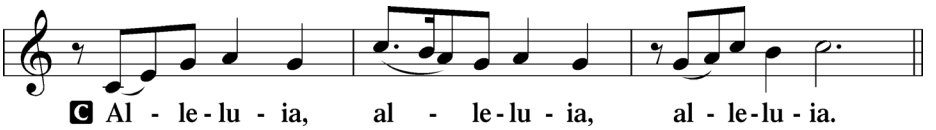
[3]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
[4]I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, [5]that in every way you were enriched in him in all

speech and all knowledge—[6]even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—[7]so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, [8]who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9]God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

Please stand

ALLELUIA



HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 13:24–37*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the thirteenth chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[24][Jesus said:] "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, [25]and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. [26]And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. [27]And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

[28]"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. [29]So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. [30]Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. [31]Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

[32]"But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. [33]Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. [34]It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. [35]Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock

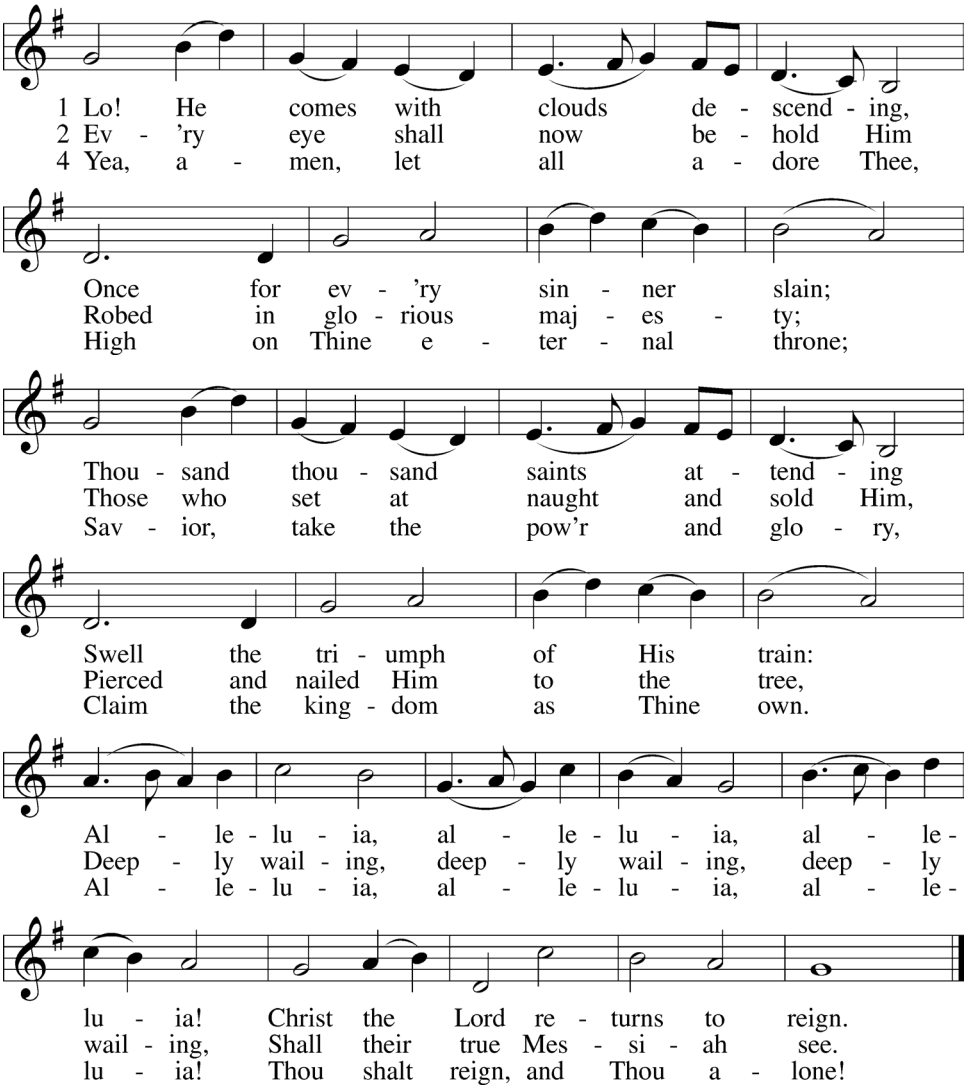
crows, or in the morning— [36]lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. [37]And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

Please sit

SERMON HYMN 336 Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending



SERMON **"The Stars are Falling and My Chains are Breaking"**
Rev. Mark Stapleton

Please stand

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.

Please kneel

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P 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.

C **Come, Thou precious Ransom, come, Only hope for sinful mortals!**

P 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.

C **Come, O Savior of the world! Open are to Thee all portals.**

P 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.

C **Come, Thy beauty let us see; Anxiously we wait for Thee.**

P For people who cry out to God, awaiting relief from long-term ills or sudden crises of health, *(especially….)* those seeking an end to unemployment and financial woes, or not knowing where to turn for help, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Hail! Hosanna, David's Son! Jesus, hear our supplication!**

P For the Church here and around the world, led by clergy and lay members, waiting for every opportunity to grow in faith, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown, Bring us blessing and salvation.**

P For ourselves and everyone who eagerly await the return of our Savior, whose kingdom shall never end, let us pray to the Lord.

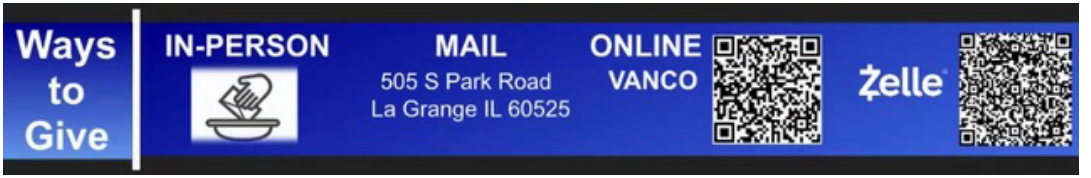
C **That forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.**

P 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.

C **Amen.**

Please sit

OFFERING



SOLO

THANKSGIVING MEDLEY

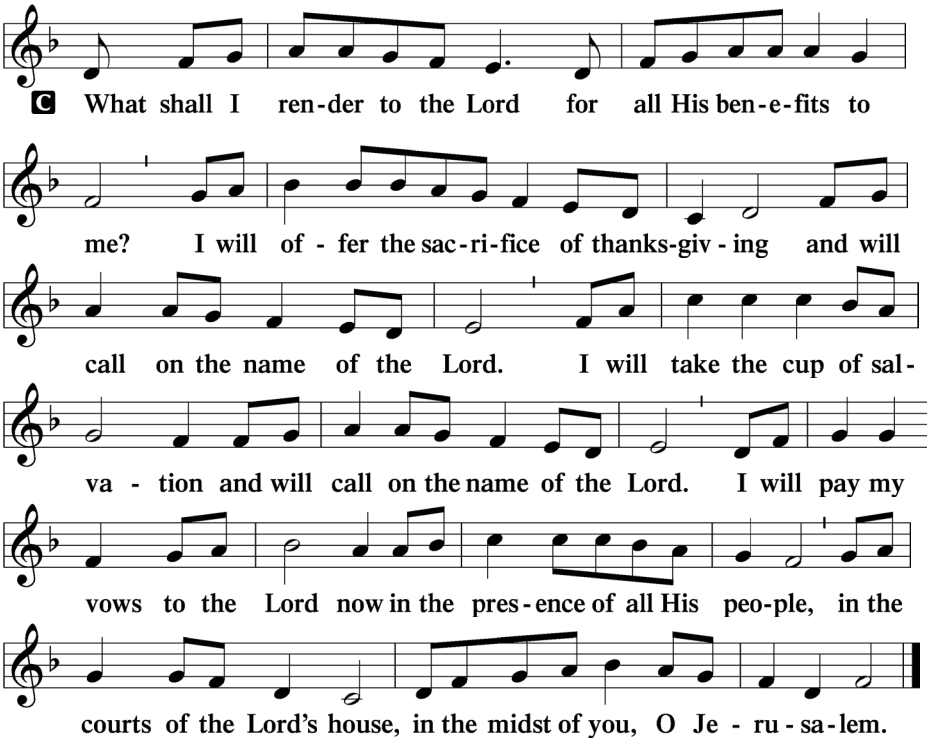
arr. Gary Lanier

Sofie Hemminger, *flute*
Rebecca Hemminger, *piano*

Please stand

OFFERTORY

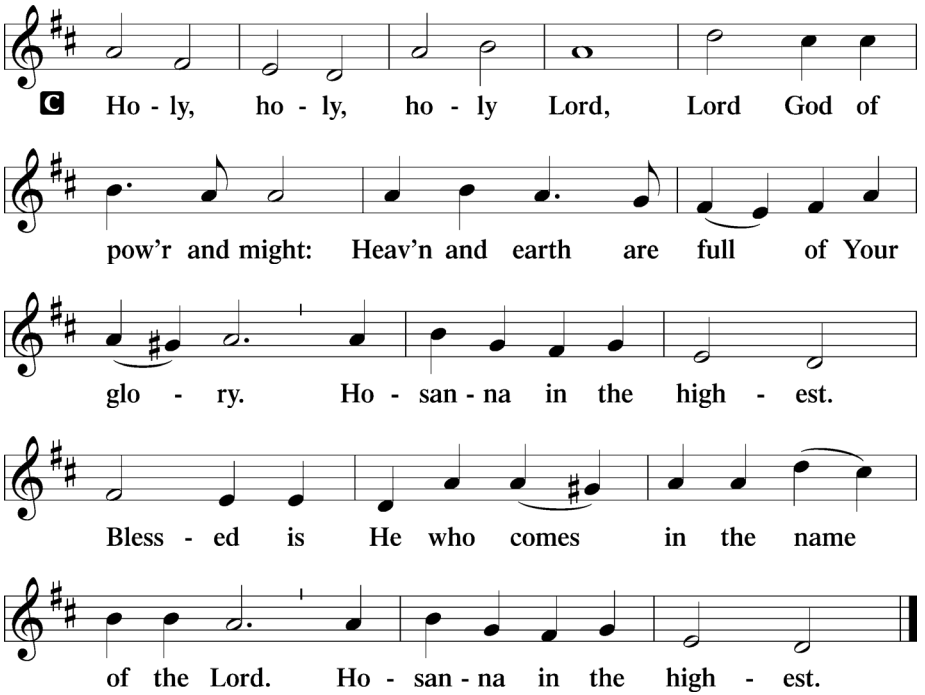
Psalm 116:12–13, 17–19



PREFACE

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

SANCTUS



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."

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.

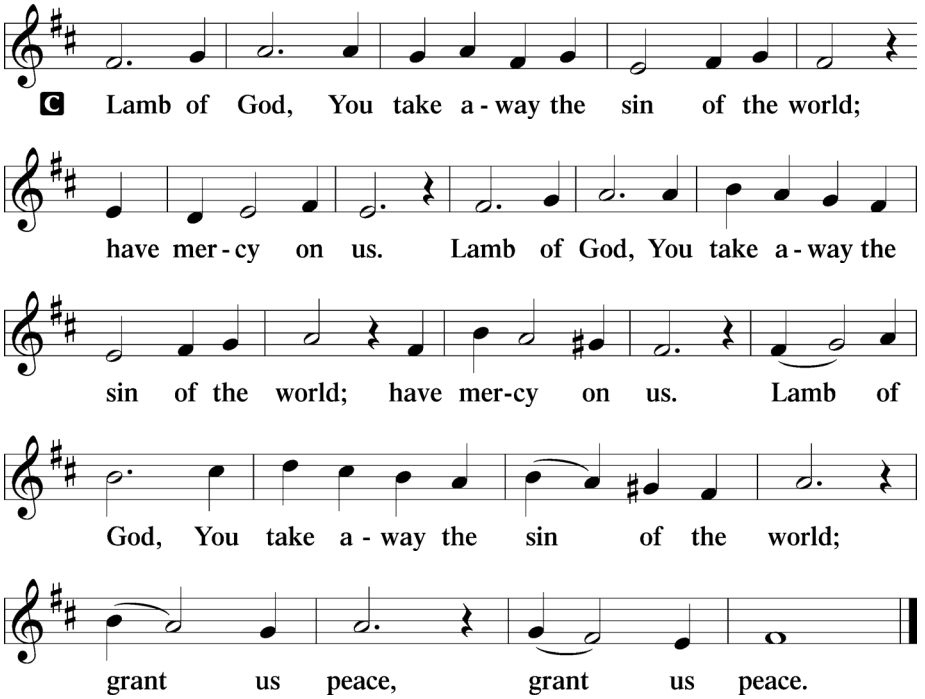
Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

Following the prayers, 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).

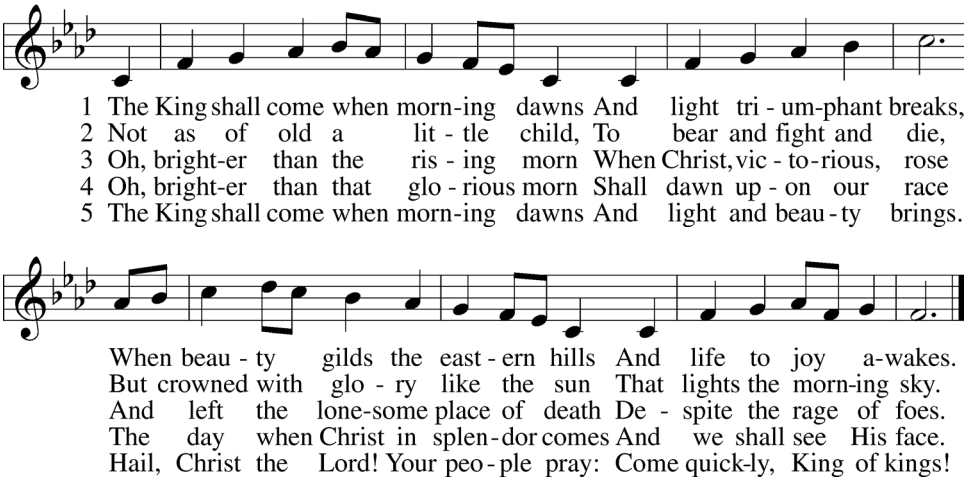
AGNUS DEI



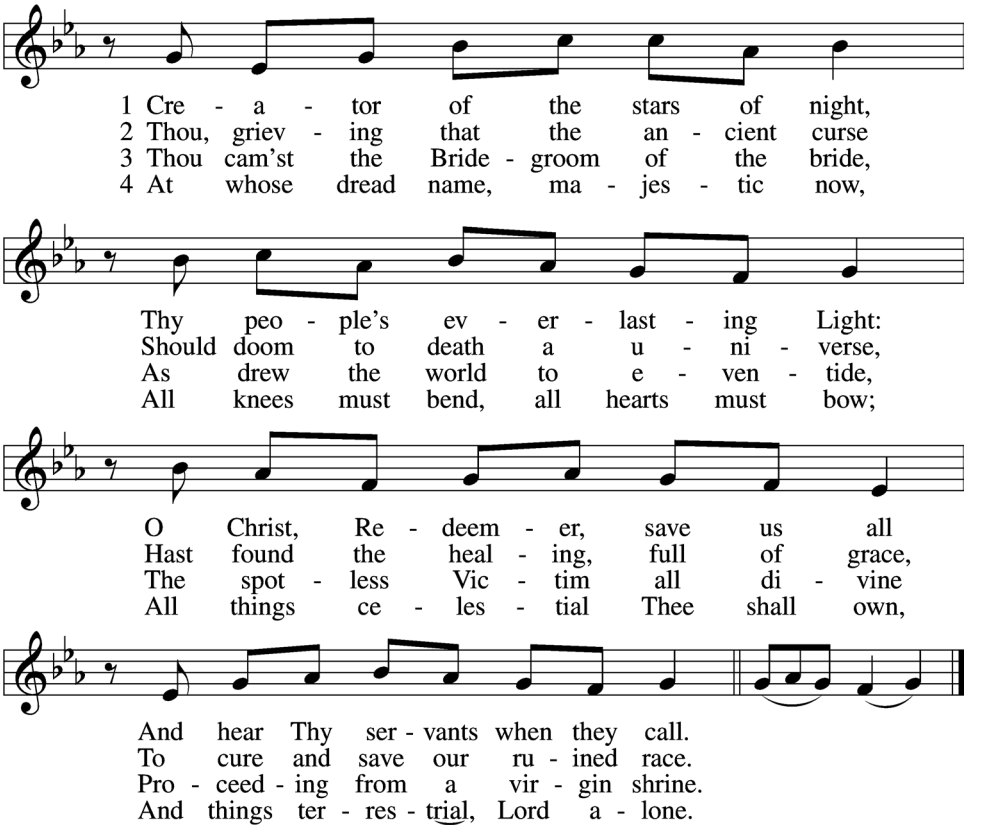
Please sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns



DISTRIBUTION HYMN 351 Creator of the Stars of Night



5 O Thou, whose coming is with dread
To judge the living and the dead,
Preserve us from the ancient foe
While still we dwell on earth below.

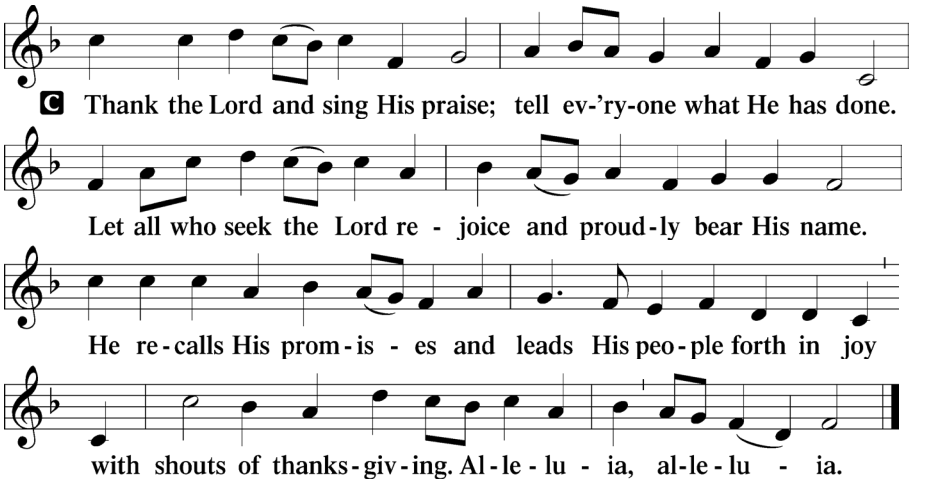
Please stand

THE 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.**

THANK THE LORD



POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

A Let us pray.
Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

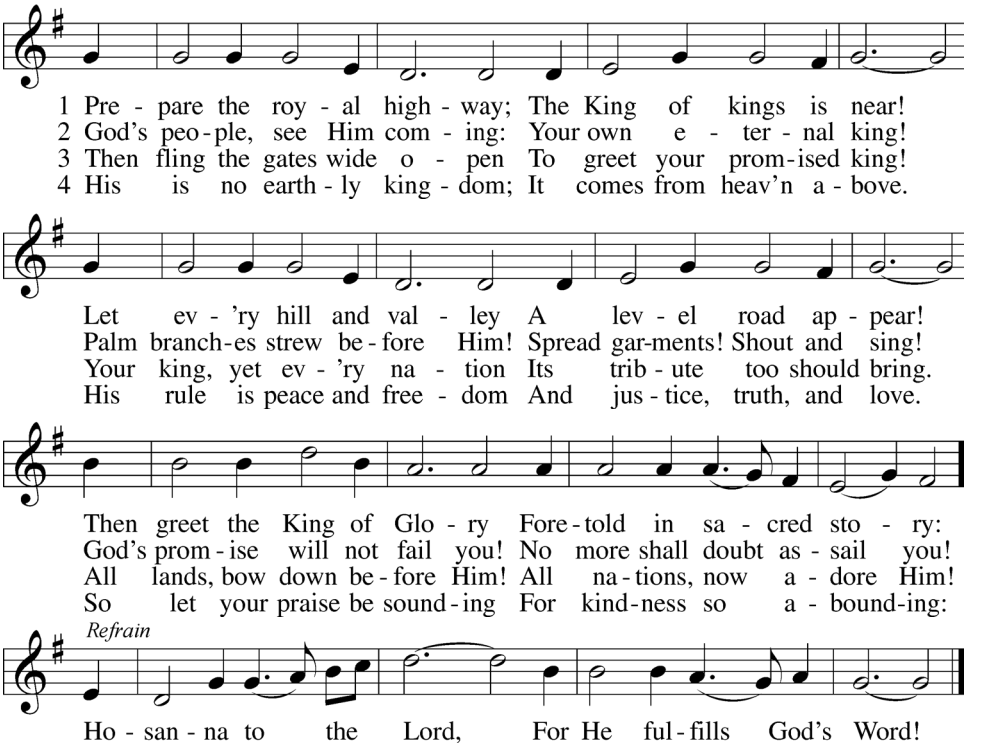
BENEDICTION

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.**

CLOSING HYMN 343 Prepare the Royal Highway



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Please sit

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Rev. Mark Stapleton, Homilist & Liturgist
Dr. Marc Brunelle, Director of Music & Organist
Sue Kunz, Lector | 8:00am
Bonnie Kane, Lector | 10:45am

ALTAR FLOWERS

Today's flowers are given by Joann Pyritz with gratitude for Christian parents Bob and Shirley Pyritz.

Mark your calendar for **"A Visit from St. Nikolaus!"** This fun, family friendly program by Elmhurst Harmonie, a German-language chorus in the western suburbs, which will include carols in German and English, cookies and hot chocolate – and St. Nikolaus and his mischievous sidekick Knecht Ruprecht will tell the real story of Santa Claus. It will be held here at **2:00pm** on **Saturday, Dec. 5**. Not available on December 5? Go to www.elmhurstharmonie.com for another performance on Dec. 6.

YEAR-END IRA CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

As we approach the end of the year and contemplate end-of-year philanthropic contributions, families holding IRAs may want to consider a year-end gift through your IRA.

When you make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) to St. John's Lutheran Church and School from your IRA, the benefits are two-fold; you benefit from not having to pay income taxes on that withdrawal, and St. John's continues to be able to fund our missions and outreach efforts by impacting our community with God's love and saving grace.

If you are 70.5 or older, you can give any amount (up to $100,000 annually) directly from your IRA to St. John's Lutheran Church. If you are 72 or older, this charitable gift from your IRA can also be used to satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution (RMD).

If you plan to have your gift count toward your RMD, we encourage you to start this process early as there have been mail delays throughout the year. If you have check writing privileges for your IRA, the check must clear your account by December 31 to be counted inside the tax year.

If you have any questions on how to set-up a donation from your IRA, please reach out to Julie Rauch in our Finance Office (**j.rauch@stjohnslagrange.org**). A take-home guide to QCD's is available in the Narthex.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
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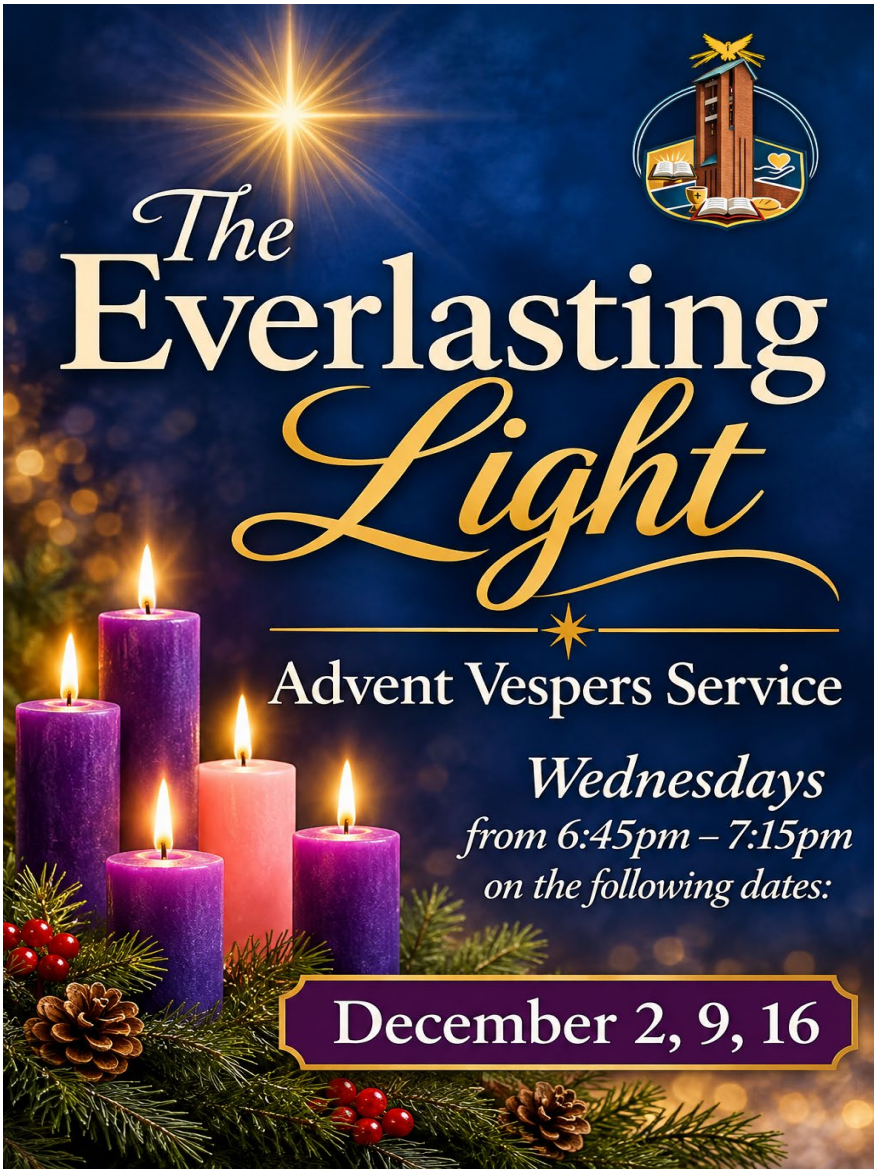

ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MUSIC MINISTRY

SAVE THE DATE

A Festival of NINE LESSONS and CAROLS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20
AT 4:00 PM

THE CANTATA CHOIR

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
505 S. Park Road, LaGrange, Illinois, 60525