

SAINT JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SANKT JOHANNES GEMEINDE  
ÉGLISE LUTHÉRIENNE ST-JEAN

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

December 31, 2023

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PASTOR: Katherine Gohm  
INTERIM ORGANIST: Esther-Ruth Teel

*We acknowledge that St. John's Lutheran Church is situated on unceded Indigenous land that was never surrendered by treaty or agreement. We recognize that the Kanien'keha:ka (commonly known as the Mohawk), a nation of of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (commonly known as Iroquois), are the custodians of Tiohtia:ke (the Island of Montreal), which is a traditional meeting place between peoples including the Anishinaabe (commonly known as Algonquin), Abenaki and the Huron-Wendat. As a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and in agreement with its official policies, our church is committed to participating in an ongoing process of finding truth and reconciliation.*

## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

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### PRELUDE

*Esther-Ruth Teel*

*Please stand*

### **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (ELW p. 97)**

*The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**Amen.**

*The presiding minister addresses the assembly.*

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.*

We give you thanks, O God,  
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world,  
calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,  
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit,  
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise

through Jesus Christ our Lord  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*The service continues with gathering song. As a reminder of the gift of baptism, the assembly may be sprinkled with water during the singing.*

## GATHERING SONG

### Once in Royal David's City *ELW 269*



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,  
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,  
3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;  
4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:  
and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;  
for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;  
we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.  
there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895  
Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 158)



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, and peace to earth be  
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's  
3 To you a - lone, O God, we cry, the Ho - ly One we



giv - en! Let an - gels sing, let all re - ply; good -  
au - thor, O Lamb of God, your death a - lone takes  
name you; for you a - lone are God most high, one



will breaks forth from heav - en! Lord God Al - might - y,  
sin a - way for - ev - er. Stretch out your arms to  
liv - ing God we claim you: we wor - ship you, Lord



heav - en's king, we wor - ship you, our thanks we sing, we  
ev - 'ry land, and, as you reign at God's right hand, re -  
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it ev - er blest, in



praise you for your glo - ry.  
ceive our prayer; have mer - cy.  
God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. A - men.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who

came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

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### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:10—62:3**

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

<sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.

<sup>62:1</sup>For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a burning torch.

<sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your vindication,  
and all the kings your glory;  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

<sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM: Psalm 148**

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the LORD<sup>1</sup> from the heavens;  
praise God<sup>1</sup> in the heights.

<sup>2</sup>**Praise the LORD,<sup>1</sup> all you angels;**

**sing praise, all you | hosts of heaven.**  
<sup>3</sup>Praise the LORD, | sun and moon;  
sing praise, all you | shining stars.  
<sup>4</sup>**Praise the LORD, heav- | en of heavens,**  
**and you waters a- | bove the heavens.**  
<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name | of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they | were created,  
<sup>6</sup>**who made them stand fast forev- | er and ever,**  
**giving them a law that shall not | pass away.**  
<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD | from the earth,  
you sea monsters | and all deeps;  
<sup>8</sup>**fire and hail, | snow and fog,**  
**tempestuous wind, do- | ing God's will;**  
<sup>9</sup>mountains | and all hills,  
fruit trees | and all cedars;  
<sup>10</sup>**wild beasts | and all cattle,**  
**creeping things and | flying birds;**  
<sup>11</sup>sovereigns of the earth | and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers | of the world;  
<sup>12</sup>**young | men and maidens,**  
**old and | young together.**  
<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name | of the LORD,  
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over | earth and heaven.  
<sup>14</sup>**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all | faithful**  
**servants,**  
**the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. | Hallelujah!**

## SECOND READING: Galatians 4:4-7

A reading from Galatians.

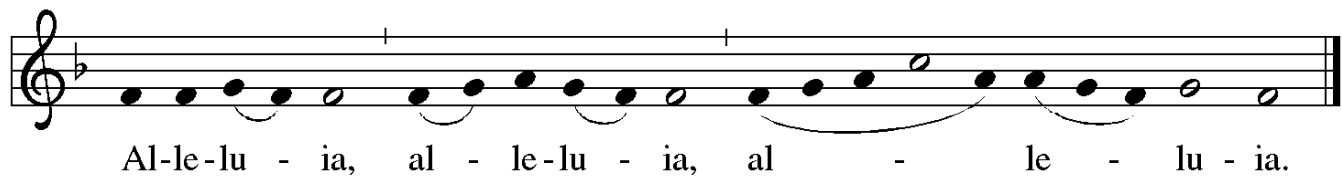
<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The word of the Lord.

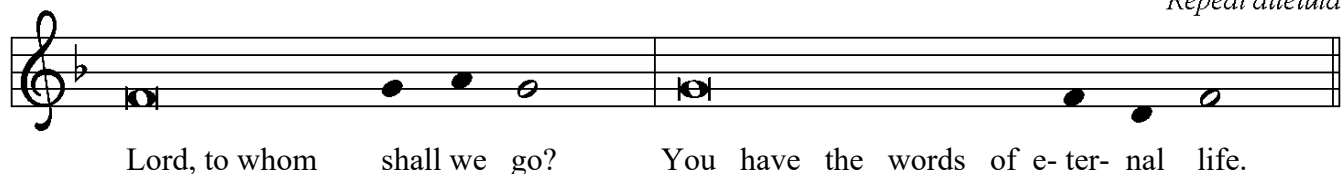
**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION, p. 160



*Repeat alleluia*



**GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup>And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

**SERMON**            *Katherine Gohm*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Please stand.*

*In His Temple, Now Behold Him ELW 417*

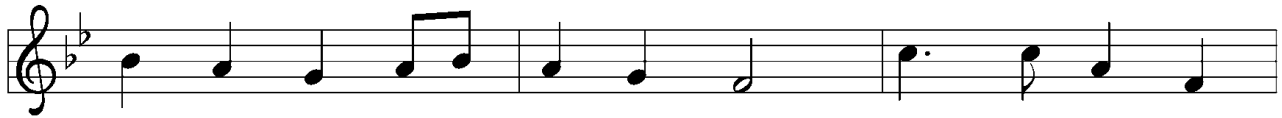




1 In his tem - ple now be - hold him, see the long - ex -  
2 In the arms of her who bore him, vir - gin pure, be -  
3 Je - sus, by your pre - sen - ta - tion, when they blessed you,  
4 Prince and au - thor of sal - va - tion, be your bound - less



pect - ed Lord; an - cient proph - ets had fore - told him,  
hold him lie, while his a - ged saints a - dore him,  
weak and poor, make us see your great sal - va - tion,  
love our theme! Je - sus, praise to you be giv - en



God has sent the prom - ised Word. Now to praise him,  
ere in per - fect faith they die. Al - le - lu - ia!  
seal us with your prom - ise sure; and pre - sent us,  
by the world you did re - deem, with the Fa - ther



his re - deem - ed shall break forth with one ac - cord.  
Al - le - lu - ia! Lo, the in - car - nate God Most High!  
in your glo - ry, to your Fa - ther, cleansed and pure.  
and the Spir - it God of maj - es - ty su - preme!

Text: Henry J. Pye, 1825–1903, alt.

Music: REGENT SQUARE. Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

*Please remain standing.*

**APOSTLES' CREED, p. 160**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

*A brief silence.*

You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts and the witness of people who are neurodivergent, living with disability, or bearing invisible illness. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Your praise is sung throughout creation in all times and seasons. As the new year turns, ground us in your changeless and sustaining love. Keep us attentive to the rhythms of the cosmos and inspire us to live in harmony with all the earth. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Give hope and stamina to leaders who work tirelessly for the sake of the most vulnerable. We pray especially for organizations working on behalf of children to provide basic needs, to protect from abuse and neglect, to address trauma, and to rescue from trafficking. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Sustain all people who, like Simeon and Anna, have been waiting for salvation and wholeness. We pray especially for anyone living with cancer or chronic illness, all people who are in physical rehabilitation or addiction recovery, and those experiencing complications from long COVID. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. Teach us to honor the wisdom of children, the inquisitiveness of youth, the thoughtfulness of adults, and the knowledge of elders. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We give thanks for all the beloved who lived with expectation and departed this life in peace. Sustain us in joy until we join them around your throne. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

**Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Share a gesture of peace with one another as you are comfortable.*

*Please be seated.*

**MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

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**OFFERING**

*Ways to give an offering are at the end of this worship guide.*

**OFFERTORY**

*Esther-Ruth Teel*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

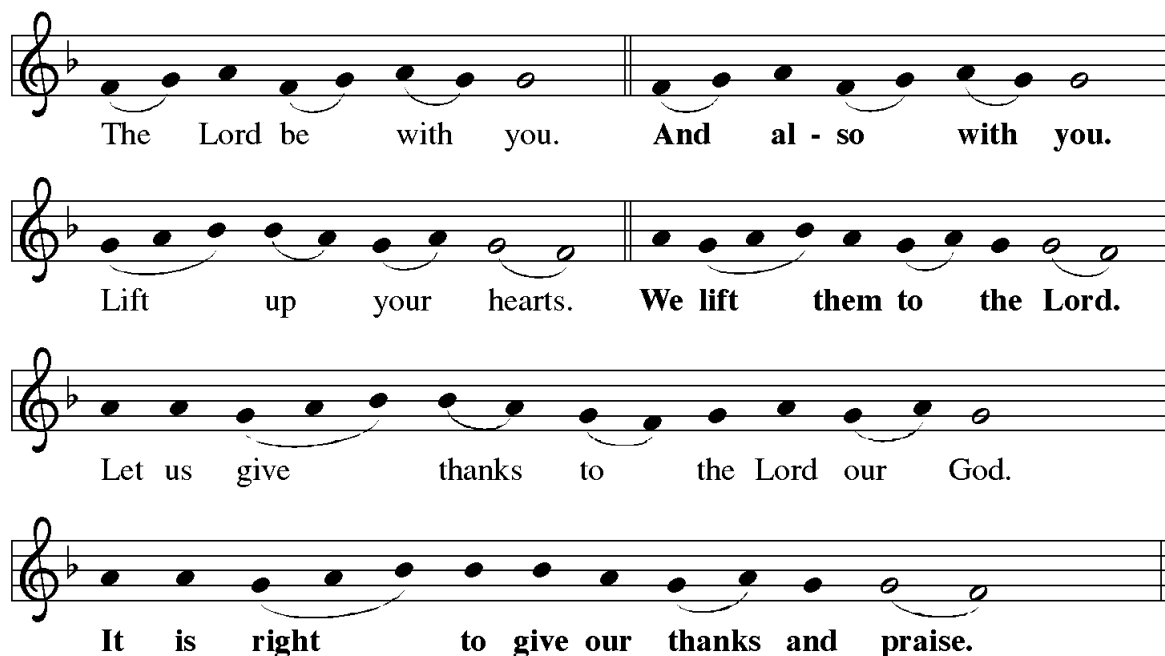
God of abundance,  
receive and bless these gifts we have offered.

Join our hearts with the song of the angels,  
and gather us at your table of celebration.

Strengthen us to share with all the world  
the abundance of your grace upon grace,  
poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

**Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

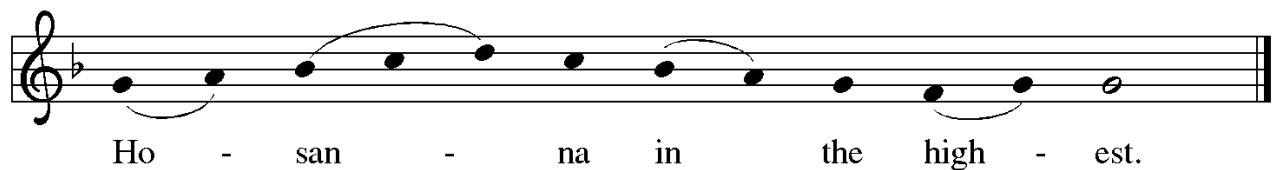
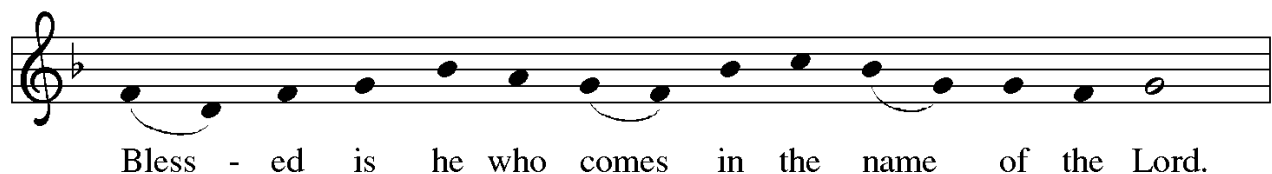
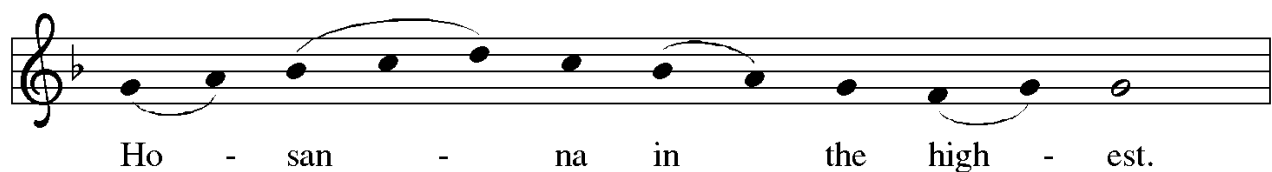
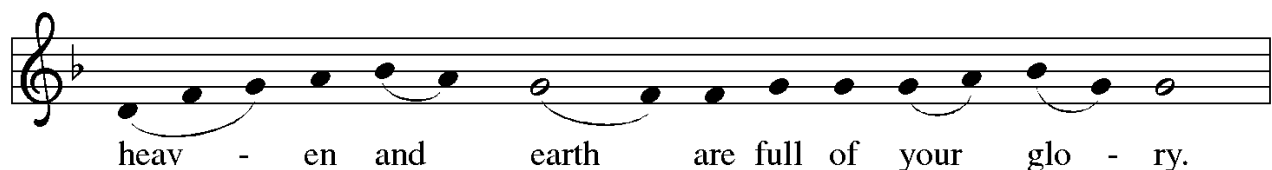
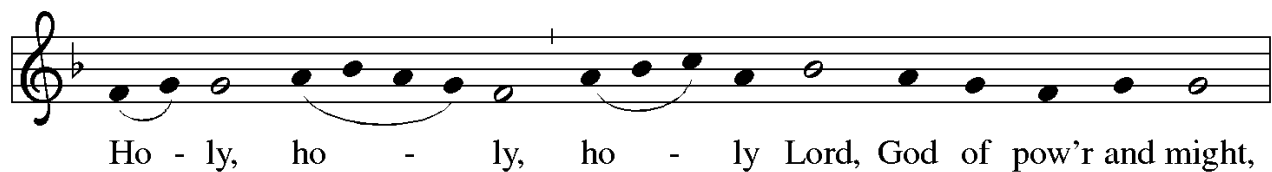
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh  
you have opened the eyes of faith  
to a new and radiant vision of your glory,  
that, beholding the God made visible,  
we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.  
And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

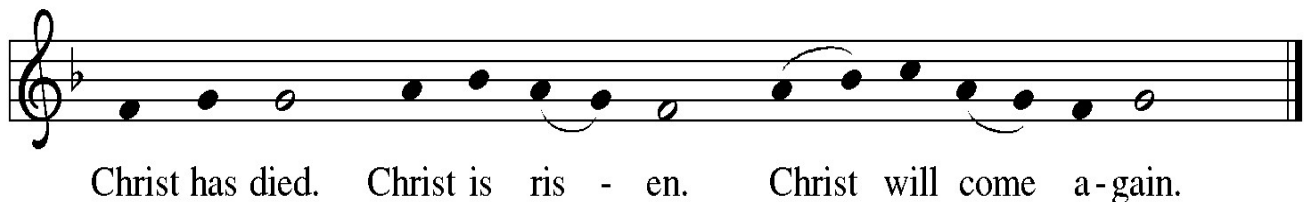
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

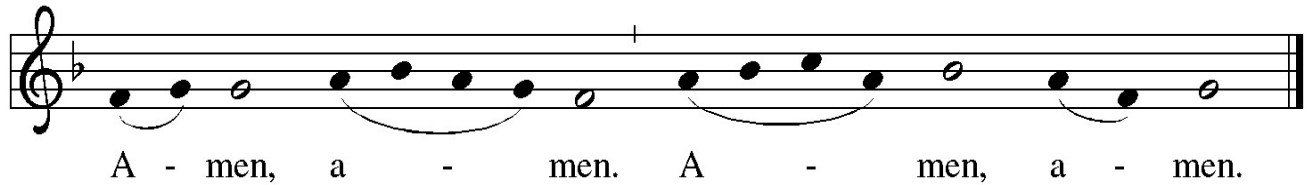


With this bread and cup  
we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.  
We look with hope for his coming.  
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.  
Come among us.  
Bless this meal.  
May your Word take flesh in us.  
Awaken your people.  
Fill us with your light.  
Bring the gift of peace on earth.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,  
Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,  
Power of the Most High,  
one God, now and forever.



### LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

### COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest!

Come to the table of peace

### LAMB OF GOD

*Lamb of God, p. 164, will be sung before communion.*

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. A - men.

*Please be seated. To receive the elements, please come up the left hand aisle to the altar and return to your seat on the right. Grape juice is also available in pre-poured glasses.*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**Amen.**

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*Please stand.*

God our redeemer,  
you have fed us at this table  
with gifts of grace, truth, and life.  
As you have gathered us in joy,  
send us forth as messengers of your peace.  
Make us shine with the good news of your glory,



born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

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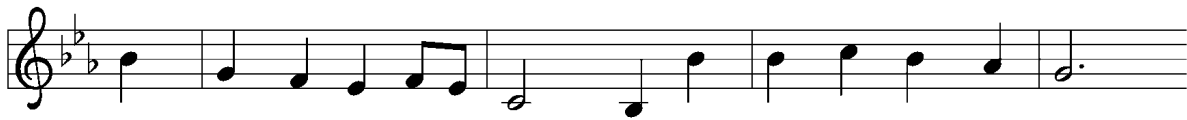
### **BLESSING**

God bless you and keep you,  
✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth,  
and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **SENDING SONG**

*O Lord, Now Let Your Servant ELW 313*



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n-ly peace,  
2 Then grant that I may fol - low your gleam, O glo - rious Light,



for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:  
till earth-ly shad - ows scat - ter, and faith is changed to sight;



a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,  
till rap-tured saints shall gath - er up - on that shin-ing shore,



the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.  
where Christ, the bless-ed day - star, shall light them ev - er - more.

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886–1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis  
Music: KUORTANE, Finnish folk tune  
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress

## DISMISSAL

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Christ the Savior is born!  
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

*Esther-Ruth Teel*

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**Thank you for worshipping with us!**

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**NEXT WEEK: January 7 The Baptism of Our Lord, worship at 11am.**

**Get to know Pastor Katherine!**

**Pastor Katherine would LOVE to get to know you!** Please be in touch via a phone call to the church or email: [pastor@SaintJohnsLutheranMontreal.org](mailto:pastor@SaintJohnsLutheranMontreal.org)

Pastor Katherine would be honoured to pray for you and with you. Please be in touch for all pastoral care via the pastor's email address or by calling the church office (contact info below).

**Regular office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-2pm.**

### **Upcoming Events**

- **January 7: Baptism of our Lord, 11am**
- **January 14: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany, 11am**

**We are thankful for your donations!** Donations in person are welcome as well as:

- Cheque, payable to St John's Lutheran
- [CanadaHelps](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119180826RR0001-st-johns-lutheran-church/) [www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119180826RR0001-st-johns-lutheran-church/](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119180826RR0001-st-johns-lutheran-church/)
- Interac transfer: [secretary@saintjohnslutheranmontreal.org](mailto:secretary@saintjohnslutheranmontreal.org)

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[www.saintjohnslutheranmontreal.org](http://www.saintjohnslutheranmontreal.org)

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