

+IN THE NAME OF JESUS+

WELCOME to the Divine Service at Ascension of Christ! We pray that you will be richly blessed by God as you hear His Word, receive His gifts and worship Him with your prayer and praise!

TO OUR GUESTS Welcome, we are glad that you have chosen to celebrate Christmas with us this evening. Please don't hesitate to ask an usher or a greeter if you have any questions. Please be sure to introduce yourself to our Pastor. We invite you to consider Ascension of Christ if you looking for a church home. We gather every Sunday morning for Adult Bible Study at 9:00 a.m., the Divine Service at 10:15 a.m. immediately followed by Fellowship Hour, Children's Sunday School, and Youth Confirmation.

CHILDREN AT ASCENSION At Ascension, we want you to feel at home. First, please relax and enjoy your time here. Jesus knows that children tend to wiggle and squawk a bit, so please don't feel embarrassed by it. Your children are welcome here! To make it easier on your family, please dare to sit closer to the front where your children can easily see what's going on, note the colors, watch the pastors, wonder about those heads on the pulpit, and embrace the action at the altar. What Jesus does here is for them, too! As we go through the Divine Service, encourage them to join in on their parts: *Amen! Lord have mercy. And with your spirit. I believe! Our Father!* And please be sure to sing and pray your parts too! Children learn by following your lead. There are some busy bags in the back of the church for you and if you must take your children out of the church, please hurry back!

THE LORD'S SUPPER IS JOYFULLY RECEIVED HERE TODAY At the altar, our Lord Jesus Christ delivers His true body and blood into our mouths. His gift of body and blood given in, with, and under the bread and wine, bestows tremendous benefits. His body and blood forgives our sins, strengthens our faith, binds us to the Lord, and unites us with each other. In this is life and salvation. All members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have publicly confessed this sacred gift and its blessings and so are encouraged to commune. When you have examined yourself according to Christ's bidding (1 Corinthians 11:28), come to His Supper rejoicing, just as Jesus asks, knowing that our Lord meets you at His altar with joy. If you are a guest and would like to learn more about the practice of the Lord's Supper at Ascension of Christ, or if you are uncertain about whether you should receive the Lord's Supper, please speak with Pastor Loree before communing for the first time.

THE LITURGY FOR EPIPHANY Light eradicates darkness, illuminates creation's glory, and strips away the shroud of mystery. Christ is the light to which all kings and authorities bow down. He makes known the mysteries and salvation of God through the apostles and prophets. The Word and will of the Lord is no longer possessed by a singular people, nor is it cloaked in any kind of ambiguity. All are summoned and blessed to worship Christ. He is our exceeding joy in which our hearts thrill and exult.

All may light their candles for the closing hymn

HYMN TO DEPART

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR

1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion, Son of
3 Fair is the sun - shine, Fair is the moon - light, Bright the
4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions, Son of
God and Son of Man! Tru - ly I'd love Thee, Tru - ly I'd
spar - kling stars on high; Je - sus shines bright-er, Je - sus shines
God and Son of Man! Glo - ry and hon - or, Praise, ad - o -
serve Thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
pur - er Than all the an - gels in the sky.
ra - tion Now and for - ev - er - more be Thine!
Public domain

POSTLUDE

+GLORY BE TO GOD ALONE+

Stand

DISMISSAL

P The true body and precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart in peace.
C Amen.

THANKSGIVING AND POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
C *♪*and His mercy endures forever.
P 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 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.

+GOD BLESSES US AND SENDS US FORTH TO SERVE+

SALUTATION AND BENEDICAMUS

P The Lord be with you.
C *♪*And with your spirit.
P Bless we the Lord.
C *♪*Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift His countenance upon you and *†* give you peace.
C *♪*Amen. Amen. Amen.

+GOD GATHERS US BEFORE HIS HOLY PRESENCE+

Please note the ♪ symbol is used to indicate a sung response.

PRELUDE

Please stand at the sound of the chimes.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *THE FIRST NOWELL*

The first 'Nowell!' the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

*Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!!
Born is the King of Israel!*

They lookèd up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.

Refrain

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far
To seek for a king was their intent
And to follow the star wherever it went.

Refrain

Then enter'd in those wise men three,
Full rev'rently upon their knee
And offer'd there in his presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Refrain

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
And with his blood mankind hath bought.

Refrain

+GOD GATHERS US BEFORE HIS HOLY PRESENCE+

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the [†] Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

EXHORTATION

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Kneel/Stand Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

CONFSSION OF SINS

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

ABSOLUTION

P 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.

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

WE THREE KINGS



1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we
2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to
3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a
4. Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of
5. Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise; King and God and



tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain,
crown him a - gain, King for - e - ver, ceas - ing ne - ver,
De - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing, voi - ces rais - ing,
ga - the-ring gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing,
sac - ri - fice: Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,

Refrain



fol - lo - wing yon - der star.
o - ver us all to reign.
wor - shi - ping God on high.
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
sounds through the earth and skies.

O____ star of won - der,



star of light, star with roy - al beau - ty bright, west - ward



lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

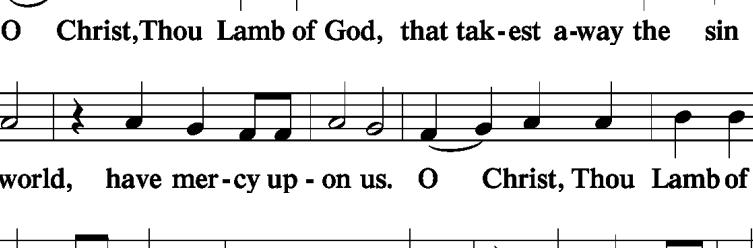
THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI


 The image shows a musical score for a hymn. The top line consists of two staves of music in G clef, B-flat key signature, and common time. The lyrics are: "O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us." The bottom line is a basso continuo line, indicated by a bass clef and a series of dots representing bass notes. The lyrics for this line are: "O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men." The music features various note values including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

LSB 399

LSB 397

INTROIT

Antiphon

Behold, the Lord, the Ruler | has come:

And the kingdom and the power and the glory are | in His hand.

Psalm

The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of up- | rightness;*
you have loved righteousness and hated | wickedness.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your com- | panions;*

your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and | cassia.

Gloria Patri

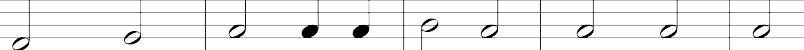
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

IS NOW,
Antiphon

Antiphon

Behold, the Lord, the Ruler + has come.
And the kingdom and the power and the glory are | in His hand

KYRIE


C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

A musical staff in G clef and common time. It contains seven measures. The first measure has a half note followed by a rest. The second measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter note. The third measure has a half note followed by a rest. The fourth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter note. The fifth measure has a half note followed by a rest. The sixth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter note. The seventh measure has a half note followed by a rest.

¶ Glory be to God on high: C and on earth peace, good - will toward

Psalm 45:6b–8a; antiphon: Mal. 3:1

men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,
 we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
 O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.
 O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;
 O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
 that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.
 Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re - ceive our prayer.
 Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up -
 on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on - ly art the Lord.
 Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,
 art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

SANCTUS

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;
 heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
 ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,
 bless-ed is He, bless - ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.
 Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

LORD'S PRAYER *chanted by the celebrant*

C For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
 glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

+GOD RECEIVES OUR PRAYERS AND OFFERINGS+

Kneel/Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN *BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE STARS*

LSB 400

+GOD GIVES US A FORETASTE OF THE FEAST TO COME+

Stand

PREFACE



P The Lord be with you.
C And with thy spirit.
P Lift up your hearts.
C We lift them up un - to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.
C It is meet and right so to do.

PROPER PREFACE

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And with your spirit.

P Let us pray. O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

+GOD SPEAKS TO US IN HIS WORD+

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 60:1-6

¹Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. ³And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. ⁴Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant;

]

your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

Isaiah 60: 6,1



All those from Sheba; they shall bring gold and incense and they shall proclaim the praises of the Lord.

Arise, shine, O Jerusalem:

For the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

EPISTLE

¹For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—²assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ⁷Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was

Stand

ALLELUIA



HOLY GOSPEL

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.
C ♫ Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have

Ephesians 3:1-12

given me by the working of his power. ⁸To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ¹⁰so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Matthew 2:1-12

of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." ⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had

NICENE CREED

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY

O MORNING STAR, HOW FAIR AND BRIGHT

LSB 395

SERMON

seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C ♫ Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

(Back of the Hymnal)