



CONNECT CARDS

Guests and members, please:

- ♦ fill out a Connect card, or
- ♦ scan the QR code to connect with us online

Cards are in the pew racks in front of you. These methods include a space to share prayer requests with our pastors.

We look forward to praying for and connecting personally with YOU!

Serving Today...

Message:
Pastor Ben Oesch

Worship Assistant:
10:45 Travis Jarvi

Organist:
Gail Black



✠ IN THE NAME OF JESUS ✠

RINGING OF THE BELL *Please take this time to quiet voices as we prepare to worship.*

PRELUDE

INVOCATION

Divine Service, Setting 4 ~ LSB p. 203; Matthew 28:19b

Pastor (P): In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (C): Amen!

HYMN # 358:1, 3-4 "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"This is the Christ, our God Most High, who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be from all your sins to set you free.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below,
That in His kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us His glory share."

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SINS

Psalm 124:8; 130:3-4; Luke 18:13; John 20:19-23

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: **who made heaven and earth.**

P: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C: **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P: Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C: **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. 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!**

HYMN # 358:8, 12-13 "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"

Welcome to earth, O noble Guest, through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery that You might share Your joy with me.

And so it pleases You to see this simple truth revealed to me:

That worldly honor, wealth, and might are weak and worthless in Your sight.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, prepare a bed soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart for You to dwell within my heart.

SALUTATION AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

P: We pray: O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. 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!**

HYMN # 358:14-15 "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"

My heart for very joy must leap; my lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue that sweetest ancient cradlesong:

Glory to God in highest heav'n, who unto us His Son has giv'n!

While angels sing with pious mirth a glad new year to all the earth.

Please be seated.

GUESTS AND MEMBERS CONNECT *Let's get to know each other better!*

Please fill out the Connect Card, either by hand or with the QR code. Thank you!



¹Children's Bulletins are available on the Usher Stands as you enter the Sanctuary.

²**Offering—Mites Sunday** (4th Sundays of the month): A mite was a small coin of little value. Tiny amounts of money gathered together and given in faith and trust back to the Lord do "mite-y" acts in His kingdom!

For a history and explanation of mite boxes, and to deposit your change for this vital mission, look for the Mite Box in the sanctuary Welcome Center. You may add your coins to this mission box at any time of the month!

Gospel Reading: The Slaughter of the Innocents is a sobering event in the early years of Jesus' life. It highlights the lengths to which earthly forces may go to oppose God's Anointed One.

This story is rooted in Old Testament prophecy as well as consistent with historical accounts of Herod's atrocities: see Hosea 11:1; Jeremiah 31:15. Herod's rage is an example of a greater reality: worldly powers can—and often do—oppose the work of God. This hostility foreshadows the opposition Jesus faced throughout most of His ministry, culminating in His crucifixion.

Through these tragic circumstances, Scripture underscores God's grand plan of redemption, weaving every detail into the fulfillment of the Messiah's mission. Jesus is the Messiah, Immanuel, God-With-Us!

CHILDREN'S CHAT¹ *Pastor Ben*

OFFERING² AND PRAYER *For giving options: ShepherdHillsChurch.org/Give*

OLD TESTAMENT READING Jeremiah 31:15-17

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."

RESPONSE

A: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

EPISTLE READING Galatians 4:4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

RESPONSE

A: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

Please stand for the hymn and the reading of the Holy Gospel.

HYMN # 381 "Let Our Gladness Have No End" *Please use the hymnal for the lyrics.*

ACCLAMATION

A: The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 2nd chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord!**

THE HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-23

Now 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."

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and His mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and His mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

RESPONSE

A: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ!**

Please be seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY # 546 "O Jesus So Sweet, O Jesus So Mild"

O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild! For sinners You became a child.

You came from heaven down to earth in human flesh through human birth.

O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!

O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild! With God we now are reconciled.

You have for all the ransom paid, Your Father's righteous anger stayed.

O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!

O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild! Joy fills the world which sin defiled.

Whate'er we have belongs to You; O keep us faithful, strong, and true.

O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!

MESSAGE “After Christmas” text: Matthew 2:13-23

*After Christmas, the world still weeps and “Herods” still harm,
yet Christ remains steadfast, rescuing and protecting His children.*

Please stand.

STATEMENT OF FAITH ~ THE NICENE CREED

ALL: 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 be seated.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *During December, we pray with open hearts for the lonely.*

PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

One should examine himself before he eats the bread and drinks the cup; one who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 1Corinthians 11:2-29

Since those who take Christ's body and blood without understanding His true presence do so to their harm, and since the sacrament of Holy Communion is a faith statement confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt or hold a confession differing from that of this church and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and wish to receive the sacrament are asked first to speak with a pastor.

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Please stand.

HOLY COMMUNION ~ PREFACE

2 Timothy 4:22; Colossians 3:1; Psalm 136

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 good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

ALL: (sung) Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, glory in the highest:

*Refrain: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!

Word of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain:*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4

ALL: 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!

The children killed by Herod's command are traditionally considered the first martyrs for Christ, since their lives were taken in place of Jesus' life.

By all Your saints in warfare, for all Your saints at rest, Your holy name, O Jesus, forevermore be blessed!

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.

~H.B. Nelson,
LSB # 517:1 & 9

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The **Nicene Creed** is historically connected with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, because it stresses more fully the Biblical teaching that Jesus Christ is true God, which is intimately connected with Christ's true body and blood being present in Holy Communion. It dates back to the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.



Agnus Dei means "Lamb of God." Christ is our Good Shepherd, the Lamb of God, and the Priest who offers the sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. Truly, Jesus is Our All In All!

Benedicamus: Latin for "let us bless" or "let us say a good word." One of the Hebrew ideas of blessing is "to praise a person's ability for success as from a lesser person to a greater." God blesses us with His gifts of forgiveness and new life through the saving work of Christ on the cross. We, in turn, praise Him for His goodness to us!

~Rev. G. Zillinger

Lord, lay some soul
upon my heart
and love that soul
through me;
and may I gladly
do my part
to win that soul
for Thee. Amen!

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

PAX DOMINI ~ THE PEACE OF THE LORD

John 20:19

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always!

C: And also with you!

AGNUS DEI ~ LAMB OF GOD

John 1:29

P: Lamb of God, You came to take away the sin of the world;

C: have mercy on us, and give us Your peace. Amen!

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

- ♦ You will be ushered forward for Communion.
- ♦ When receiving the bread, please extend your hand palm up.
- ♦ If you are not communing but wish to come up and receive a blessing, you may keep your hands folded.
- ♦ Wine without alcohol is in the center of each tray; you may also request a gluten-free wafer.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

370 "What Child Is This"

937 "Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace" (the Song of Simeon)

Please stand.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P: God the Father, fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen!

BENEDICAMUS

Psalms 103:1

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

BENEDICTION ~ GOD'S GOOD-CREATING WORD OF BLESSING

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!

Please be seated.

HYMN # 390 "Let Us All with Gladsome Voice"

Let us all with gladsome voice praise the God of heaven,
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice, His own Son hath given.

To this vale of tears He comes, here to serve in sadness,
That with Him in heav'n's fair homes we may reign in gladness.

We are rich, for He was poor; is not this a wonder?
Therefore praise God evermore here on earth and yonder.

Christ, our Lord and Savior dear, be Thou ever near us.
Grant us now a glad new year. Amen, Jesus, hear us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

✠ TO GOD ALONE ALL GLORY! ✠



Please join us
for our Epiphany celebration January 6.
Happy New Year!