

The Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Day

December 25, 2025



The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.

ABOUT THE COVER

We Have Seen His Glory captures the depth of John chapter one through vibrant colors and imagery. On the left side of the painting, John the Baptist points to the Word made flesh, the infant Jesus. Jesus shines as the only light source in the dark space. John the Gospel-writer's hand descends into the picture, pulling back this scene like a curtain and unveiling a glorious series of bright imagery. Each segment behind the curtain illustrates a moment from Jesus' ministry that reveals His glory. All of these are centered around the epitome of His glory, the cross, with the golden words, "It is finished."

The illustrations progress through the Gospel of John, starting with the first verse and ending with the last. From left to right, the illustrations depict: the Word's presence at creation, His fulfillment of the Mosaic Law, His first miracle of turning water to wine, His feeding of the 5,000, how He healed a blind man, Lazarus's grave cloths, the Son of Man lifted up like the bronze serpent, the resurrected Word's grave cloths, the angel at His empty tomb, the sending of His Spirit, Thomas' hand in His side, the miraculous catch of fish, and books that are unable to contain all of His other works.

All an average person could see from Christ's birth was a humble baby in a manger. Through the witness of John the Baptist and writings of John the Gospel-writer, we are able to see the true glory of God veiled in the flesh of a baby boy.

Theme of Today's Liturgy

In the beginning God created all things through His Word, His Son. But man fell into sin and all creation was cursed. God spoke His Word again, this time into the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle of our human nature: "*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us*" (*Holy Gospel*). The Son of God took on our flesh and blood and died on the cross in order that we might receive the right to become the children of God through faith. Baptized into Christ's body, we are made partakers of a new creation by "*the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit*" (*Epistle*). In Christ, the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man has truly appeared.

Guests

Welcome to the Divine Service! We are delighted to have you with us. If we can assist you in any way, please let us know. It is our prayer that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will strengthen and comfort you. Please note your attendance with us on the card in your pew and pass it towards the center aisle during the offering. We hope you will visit us again!

Our Belief and Practice Concerning the Lord's Supper

In the fullness of time, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. Until the end of time, His grace is still given to us as He promised it in the Sacrament of the Altar along with His true body and blood. As we receive His gift today, and because we care about the spiritual welfare of all who commune at the Lord's Table, guests desiring to commune today are asked to speak with Pastor Gerike before the service.

A Special Welcome to Those with Young Children

You and your children are welcome here. Jesus knows that children tend to wiggle and squawk, so don't feel embarrassed by it. Feel free to sit toward the front where your children can see easily. Encourage them to chime in on their parts: *Amen! And with thy spirit! Lord, have mercy! Our Father!* Sing, say, and pray your parts as best you can; your children learn by your example. If you and your child must leave for a moment, there is a children's area downstairs underneath the narthex. Please know that while you are caring for your children, the rest of us rejoice in our Lord's words, "Let the little children come to Me...for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Lk 18:16). You and your children are a gift to the church, so we will do our best to smile, encourage, and help you.

Bulletin Cover Art: *We Have Seen His Glory* (2024), oil painting by Sarah Marlatt, St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Hickory, North Carolina. For an explanation of the painting, see the facing page.

The Divine Service

†-- congregation stands

“This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” (Gen 28:17)

On the Use of Incense

Incense will be used in today’s service during the Procession, at the Holy Gospel, and the Offertory. To reduce any allergic difficulty, a pure frankincense resin with no additives is used, resulting in a clean burn. You may also sit further towards the back of the sanctuary to reduce exposure to the smoke.

The Preparation

Pre-Service Music

Please STAND for the Processional Hymn when the chime rings three times

† **Processional Hymn** 379 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

† **Confession and Absolution** *p. 184–185* **LEFT-HAND COLUMN**

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?

The Service of the Word

† Introit

Psalms 98; antiphon: Isaiah 9

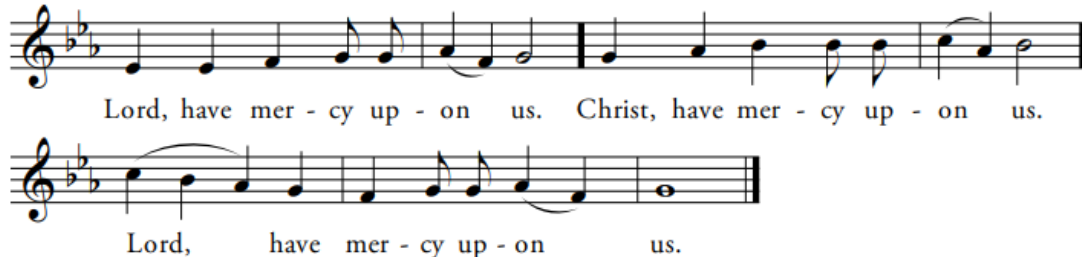


HOR unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is | given: *
and the government shall be upon His | shoulder:
and His name shall be called Wonderful | Counsellor, *
the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the | Prince of Peace.

O sing unto the LORD a | new song, *

for He has done | marv'lous things.
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.
 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is | given: *
 and the government shall be upon His | shoulder:
and His name shall be called Wonderful | Counsellor, *
the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the | Prince of Peace.

† Kyrie



† The Gloria in Excelsis

☐ Glo-ry be to God on high: ☐ And on earth peace, good will toward men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, *we wor-ship Thee*, we glo-ri-fy Thee,

we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glo-ry, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,

God the Fa-ther Al - might-y. O Lord, the on-ly be-got-ten

Son, Je-sus Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Fa-ther,

that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us.

Thou that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, *re-ceive our prayer*. Thou that

sit-test at the right hand of God the Fa-ther, have mer-cy up-on us.

For Thou on-ly art ho-ly, Thou on-ly art the Lord.

Thou on-ly, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost, art most

high in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A - men.

† Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spir - it.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

A-men.

Choral Meditation *Lo, How a Rose E'er Bloming*

setting by Michael Praetorius

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 9:2, 6–7

In those days: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone....For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.



Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Psalm 98



ALL the ends of the world have seen the salvation | of our God: *
Show yourselves joyful unto the LORD, | all ye lands
The LORD declared His sal- | vation; *
His righteousness has He openly shown in the sight of the | heathen.

Epistle

Titus 3:3–7

Beloved, we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This is the Word of the Lord.



Thanks be to God.

† Alleluia Verse

Liturgical Text

The congregation sings the threefold "Alleluia" before and after the Pastor sings the verse.



Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.



HOLY day has dawned up- | on us. *

Come, all ye nations, and wor- | ship the Lord.

† Sequence Hymn

382 stanzas 1–4

We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth



1 We praise You, Je - sus, at Your birth; Clothed in flesh You
2 Now in the man - ger we may see God's Son from e -
3 The vir - gin Mar - y's lul - la - by Calms the in - fant
4 The Light E - ter - nal, break - ing through, Made the world to



came to earth. The vir - gin bears a sin - less boy
ter - ni - ty, The gift from God's e - ter - nal throne
Lord Most High. Up - on her lap con - tent is He
gleam a - new; His beams have pierced the core of night,



And all the an - gels sing for joy. Al - le - lu - ia!
Here clothed in our poor flesh and bone. Al - le - lu - ia!
Who keeps the earth and sky and sea. Al - le - lu - ia!
He makes us chil - dren of the light. Al - le - lu - ia!

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† Holy Gospel

St. John 1:1–14 (NKJV)

The Lord be with you.



And with thy spir - it.

The beginning of the Holy Gospel according to St. John.



Glo-ry be to Thee, O Lord!

✠ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

† Nicene Creed *p. 191/inside back cover of hymnal*

Hymn of the Day 384 *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

Sermon

Offering/Offertory Hymn *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen (see page 13)*

Please note your attendance on the card in your pew and pass to the center aisle

† Announcements & Prayer of the Church

After each petition: Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

At the conclusion: ...one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Service of the Sacrament of the Altar

† Preface and Sanctus

The Lord be with you.



And with thy spir - it.

Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up un-to the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

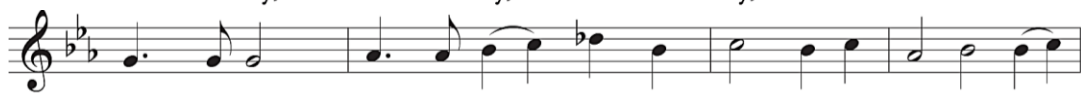


It is meet and right so to do.

It is truly meet, right, and salutary ... evermore praising You and saying:



Ho - ly, — ho - ly, — ho - ly, — Lord God of



Sab - a-oth; heav - en and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho -



san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is — He that com - eth in the



name of the Lord! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

† The Lord's Prayer

† The Words of Christ's Testament

† Pax Domini & Agnus Dei

The peace of the ☩ Lord be with you always.



A - men.



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.



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a - way the



sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Guests: *if you have not previously received Holy Communion at Mount Calvary, please speak with Pastor Gerike before approaching the altar for the first time.*

Communicants: *you may receive the Body of Christ either in the hand or directly in the mouth. If you receive the Blood of Christ from the chalice, please take the bottom of the chalice with a hand to help guide it to your mouth.*

Communicants are invited to pray the following before receiving the Sacrament:

O Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof;
but speak only Your Word, and my soul will be healed.

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?
I will take the Cup of Salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord.

If you are not receiving Communion, you are invited to pray:

O Lord Jesus Christ, as the hem of Your garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch Your body, grant through Your tender mercy that my soul may be healed by like faith in You, whom I cannot now sacramentally receive; who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Distribution Hymns

621 *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*
380 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
393 *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*
360 *All My Heart Again Rejoices*
362 *O Sing of Christ*

† Dismissal

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul unto life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

Amen.

† Nunc Dimittis *and the remainder of the service p. 199 and following*

† Hymn 386 *Now Sing We, Now Rejoice*

Postlude

“Blessed are those who dwell in Your house, ever singing Your praise!”

Psalms 84:4

Merry Christmas!

Upcoming Holy Days:

First Sunday after Christmas: Sunday, December 28 at 10:00 am

New Years' Eve: Wednesday, December 31 at 6:30 pm

Second Sunday after Christmas—Cantata Service, January 4 at 10:00 am

The Epiphany of Our Lord: Tuesday, January 6 at 6:30 pm.

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

1. God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ, our Savior
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy!
2. From God, our heav'nly Father,
A blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name.
O tidings of comfort and joy!
3. "Fear not" then said the angel,
"Let nothing you affright;
This day is born the Savior,
A Babe of glorious might.
See, death and hell and Satan
This Child shall put to flight."
O tidings of comfort and joy!
4. Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
In Christian faith and charity
Each other now embrace,
This holy tide of Christmas
Reveals to us God's grace.
O tidings of comfort and joy!

Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church

A congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

402-551-0244

www.mountcalvary-lcms.org

The Reverend Andrew Gerike, Pastor
pastor@mountcalvary-lcms.org
Study Hours: Tues–Fri 8:30a.m.–12:00 p.m.
afternoons by appointment

Church Office
Ms. Melissa Kern, Secretary
office@mountcalvary-lcms.org
Mon thru Fri 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Our Service Schedule:

The Divine Service with Holy Communion is offered every Sunday and on holy days as announced. Vespers is prayed in Advent & Lent on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm.

Receiving Communion at Mt. Calvary: We care about the spiritual welfare of all who commune at the Lord's Table. If you are a guest and desire to commune, please speak to one of the pastors before the service. Our altar is open to those who confess oneness with us in doctrine, are members of our congregation or of a sister congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and are not under church discipline in another congregation.

Adult Christian Education is taught every Sunday morning at 8:45 in the sanctuary.

Sunday School for children ages 3-12 is year-round. Lessons are Bible-story based and activities are designed to reinforce the biblical lesson.

Pastoral Consultation based on the Holy Scriptures is available from the pastor by appointment

The Sick and Homebound are visited regularly by the pastor. Please contact the Church Office if you know of any parishioner in need of pastoral visitation.

Serving Today

Organist – Annika Buckley

Elder – Rich Marunda

Acolytes – Thaddaeus Fusselman & Michael Gerike

Thurifer – Elijah Gerike

Counters – Carlene Lange & Carrie Rhine

Ushers – Nathaniel Kemper, Paul Luedeman, Chris Blank, Ben Grindstaff

Flutist – Evelyn Vanek

Trustee – Renee McArthur