

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

3310 EAST PAWNEE

Wichita, KS 67218

316-685-6781

www.gracelutheran-wichita.org



Fourth Sunday in Advent

✠ RORATE COELI ✠

December 20, 2020

JOHN THE BAPTIZER POINTS EVERYONE TO THE MESSIAH

The coming of God in all His unveiled power at Mount Sinai was terrifying to the people of Israel. The thundering voice of the Lord puts sinners in fear of death (Deut. 18:15–19). God, therefore, raised up a prophet like Moses – the Messiah, the Christ. God came to His people veiled in human flesh. The skies poured down the Righteous One from heaven; the earth opened her womb and brought forth Salvation (Introit) through the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord (Luke 1:39–56). The fruit of her womb is the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the One whose sandal strap John was not worthy to loose (John 1:19–28). In Jesus we are delivered from fear and anxiety. In Him alone we have the peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:4–7).

COMMUNING AT THIS ALTAR

**GUESTS WISHING TO JOIN OUR CONFESSION AND RECEIVE THIS HOLY SACRAMENT
ARE ASKED TO MEET WITH THE PASTOR BEFORE COMMUNING FOR THE FIRST TIME.**

The Lord's Supper is joyfully received here today and every Lord's Day! 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 sacred meal life and salvation are given to us.

All members of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod have publicly confessed this sacred gift and its blessings, and so are encouraged to commune.

Every pastor and congregation of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod has publicly promised to practice closed communion, where all who come to the Altar bear witness to their oneness in the apostolic doctrine and faith (Acts 2:42). All this is done for the benefit and blessing of the Lord's people. Because we consider communing at this altar a public declaration of fellowship in what our church believes, teaches, and confesses, we ask that guests speak with the Pastor first.

When you have examined yourself according to Christ's bidding (1 Cor 11:28), come to His Supper rejoicing, just as Jesus asks, knowing that our Lord meets you at His altar with joy. Those coming to the altar for a blessing rather than the Holy Supper are asked to cross their arms over their chest.

As you commune, select either the individual cup or the common chalice.

Communicants who cannot easily come to the altar will be communed in the pew.

Please notify an usher or the Pastor beforehand if you need such assistance.

To help prepare yourself to receive the Lord's Body and Blood you may read "[Christian Questions with Their Answers](#)" found on pages 329 and 330 of the hymnal.

ADVENT RUBRICS

Unique to Advent and Lent the Liturgy drops the Greater Gloria ("Gloria in Excelsis"). The Church sets that magnificent hymn of praise aside until we hear the angels sing it at the birth of Christ! Also, you'll notice that as the weeks of Advent go forth there will be two collects: the collect of the day (particular to the readings appointed) as well as the collect for the first Sunday in Advent. Finally, you can't help but notice the Advent Wreath with four candles around the outside. This wreath is a calendar – slowing us down, week by week, drawing us in anticipation towards Christmas. Each of the four candles represents a different aspect of our waiting: Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. Three candles are blue; one is pink. The pink calls us to rejoice and find the refreshment needed in a period of fasting (there's something similar in Lent, too). Advent wreaths at home with daily family prayer and devotion is highly encouraged as well.

✠ THE DIVINE SERVICE ✠

Setting Three, Lutheran Service Book, p.184

HYMN OF INVOCATION ~ O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide

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△ Please stand and face the cross as it enters.

✠ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ✠

INVOCATION

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

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

C Amen.

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.

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

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.

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.

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

INTROIT

Ps. 19:1, 4-6; antiphon: Is. 45:8a



P Shower, O heavens, | from above,*

and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;

C let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear fruit;*

let the earth cause them | both to sprout.

P The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,*

and the sky above proclaims His | handiwork.

C Their measuring line goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end | of the world.*

In them He has set a tent | for the sun,

P which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his | chamber,*
and, like a strong man, runs its | course with joy.

C Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the | end of them,*
and there is nothing hidden | from its heat.

C *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.

**You may bow your head at this point
in praise of the Name of the Holy Trinity*

P Shower, O heavens, | from above,*
and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;

C let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear fruit;*
let the earth cause them | both to sprout.

KYRIE ~ Lord, Have Mercy

Mark 10:47



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



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

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

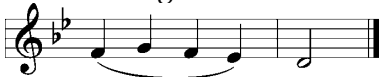
P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

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 A - men.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Deuteronomy 18:15-19

¹⁵“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers – it is to him you shall listen – ¹⁶just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ ¹⁷And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

Ps. 145:18,21

A The Lord is near to all who | call on Him,*
to all who call on | Him in truth.

C My mouth will speak the praise | of the Lord,*
and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and | ever.

EPISTLE READING

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

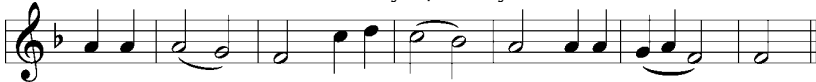
Stand

ALLELUIA and VERSE



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

P You are my help and my de- | liverer;
Do not delay, | O my God!



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

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:19-28

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.



C Glo-ry be to Thee, O Lord.

¹⁹And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?”

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

NICENE CREED

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 *Y
and was made man; in reverence

**And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

**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.**

Sit

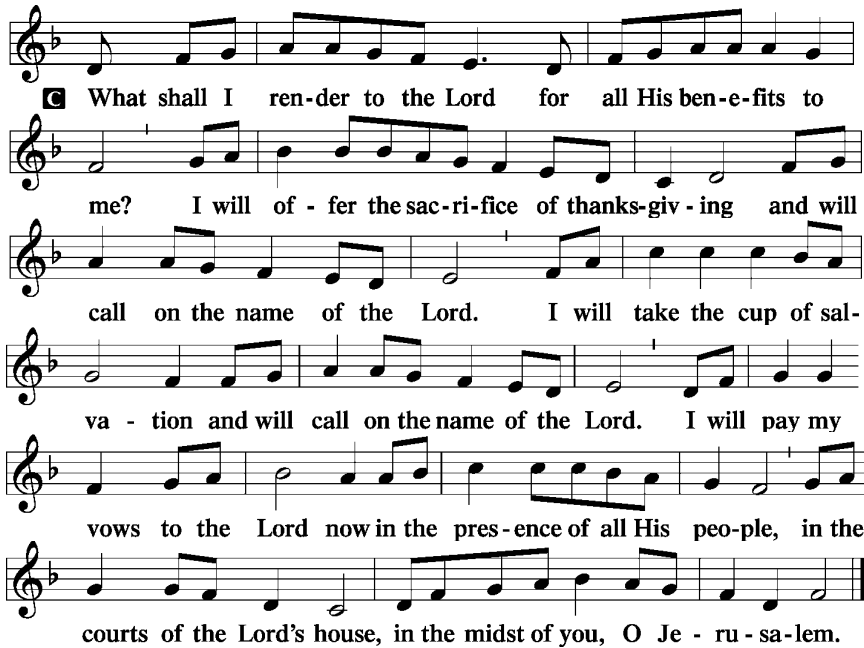
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SERMON

6

OFFERTORY ~ *What Shall I Render to the Lord*

Psalm 116:12-13, 17-19



C What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa-lem.

OFFERING ~ *Taken at the Door*

Please consider donating on-line: to [Grace](#) or to [Trinity](#).

Or, if you prefer, please mail your offering for the strength of the Church.

The offering is a joyful response of faith. It should be free, generous, and offered with thanksgiving to God.

The offering today goes toward the work and mission of the Church.

Guests, especially, should not feel obliged to give.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

After each petition respond: "Hear our prayer."

✠ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22



C And with thy spir - it.

P Lift up your hearts.

Colossians 3:1



C We lift them up un - to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

Psalm 136

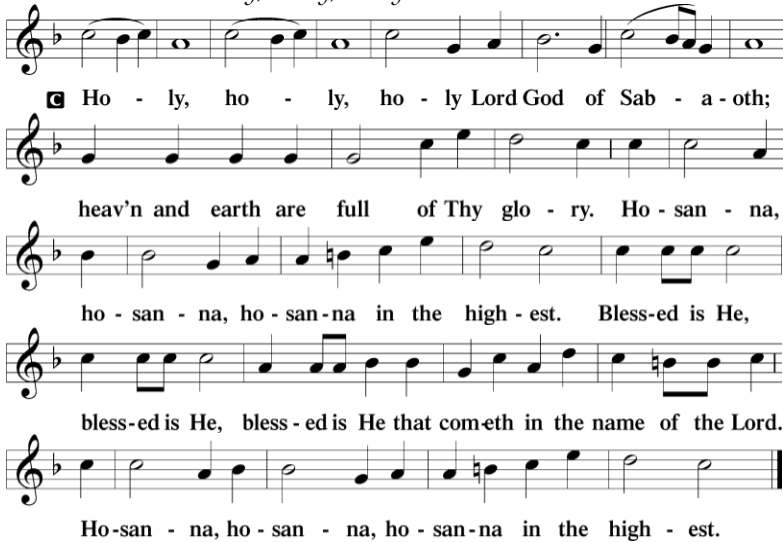


C It is meet and right so to do.

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 ~ *Holy, Holy, Holy*

Isaiah 6:3, Matthew 21:9



Q 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

Matthew 6:9-13

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 WORDS OF OUR LORD

Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25

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."

PAX DOMINI ~ *The Peace of the Lord*

John 20:19

P The peace of the ☩ Lord be with you always.



A - men.

AGNUS DEI ~ *Lamb of God*

John 1:29



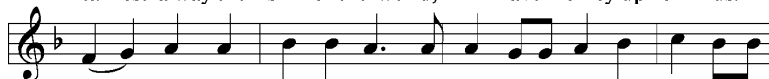
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the



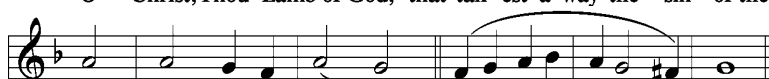
world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that



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.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION

Please take a moment and read 'COMMUNING AT THIS ALTAR' in the front cover of the bulletin. Guests are invited to please speak with the Pastor before communing for the first time.

Prayer Before Reception of Holy Communion

O Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof; but speak only Your Word, and my soul will be healed. I will take the Bread of Heaven and call upon the Name of the Lord. What shall I give to the Lord for all that He has given to me? I will take the Cup of Salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS ~

<i>Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come</i>	350
<i>Prepare the Royal Highway</i>	343
<i>When All the World Was Cursed</i>	346
<i>Hark the Glad Sound!</i>	349

Prayer After Reception of Holy Communion

I live, and yet not I, but Christ lives in me. What we have received with our mouths, O Lord, let us keep with faithful hearts, that this Gift given us in earthly time may bring us to eternal salvation. Amen.

Additional prayers to prepare for receiving the Sacrament are found in the front cover of the hymnal.

NUNC DIMITTIS ~ Song of Simeon

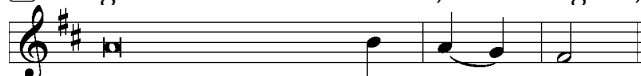
Luke 2:29-32



C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-
 cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
 which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
 a light to light - en the Gen - tles and the glo - ry of Thy
 peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
 to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A-men.

THANKSGIVING

A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

A 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 A - men.

SALUTATION and BENEDICAMUS

P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

A Bless we the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

△ Please remain standing and face the cross in reverence as it processes out.

CLOSING HYMN ~ Creator of the Stars of Night

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ADVENT

Entering His Courts with Joy!

GRACE AND TRINITY

ADVENT AND CHRIST-MASS SCHEDULE

✠ Order of Compline ✠

Wednesdays, 7:00pm ~ Trinity Lutheran Church

Dinner at 6pm

12/2/20 ~ Midweek I

Ad Te Levavi

12/9/20 ~ Midweek II

Populus Zion

12/16/20 ~ Midweek III

Gaudete

12/23/20 ~ Midweek IV

Rorate Coeli

ChristMass Services:

12/24/20 ~ ChristMass Eve Candlelight Lessons and Carols

Grace Lutheran Church ~ 7:00pm

12/24/20 ~ ChristMass Eve Divine Service (Midnight Mass)

Trinity Lutheran Church ~ 11:00pm

12/25/20 ~ ChristMass Day Divine Service

Grace Lutheran Church ~ 10:00am

12/31/20 ~ Eve of the Circumcision and Naming of Jesus

(New Year's Eve Divine Service)

Grace Lutheran Church ~ 5:30pm

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." ~ Luke 2:11