

# CHRISTMAS EVE ORDER OF SERVICE

St Pauls Lutheran Church, Greenwood  
2025



**24 December 2025**  
**Christmas Eve**

**A warm welcome to all those who are worshipping with us tonight!**

*Within a manger, divine love infiltrates our languishing world steeped in sin. Without God's pivotal action in this nativity, we could not know, experience, or express genuine love. God in Christ manifests love, grace, and mercy among us! Jesus' total forgiveness is so comprehensive that it abolishes sin and keeps those who confess His name loved and loving. On this night, wrapped in His forgiveness, we behold the love of God, Immanuel—God with us.*

**HYMNS:**361 622 (Lutheran Hymnal, printed in program) 364 370 375 363

(Tonight's hymns, except for 622, are from the LSB. A hymn sheet is available at the back of the church if you do not have your LSB with you.)

## THE ORDER OF SERVICE

*Stand*

- P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

*Sit*

**Hymn 361**

*Stand*

## Confession and Absolution

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

*Kneel/Sit*

- 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.

**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.

*Stand*

## Service of the Word

**Introit**

*Psalm 110:1-4*

**The LORD says to my Lord:**

“Sit at my right hand,  
until I make your enemies your footstool.”

<sup>2</sup>The LORD sends forth from Zion  
your mighty scepter.

Rule in the midst of your enemies!

<sup>3</sup>Your people will offer themselves freely  
on the day of your power,  
in holy garments;

from the womb of the morning,  
the dew of your youth will be yours.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD has sworn  
and will not change his mind,



# Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 204



**P** Glory be to God on high:



**C** 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;  
2 To You, O sole-be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;  
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!  
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.  
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shipped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—  
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,  
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.  
Where You in pow'r are seat - ed At God's right hand on high—  
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

# Salutation and Collect of the Day



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.

**P** Let us pray:

**C** O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Sit*

### First Reading

*Isaiah 7:10-14*

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup>“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” <sup>13</sup>And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Second Reading

*1 John 4:7-16*

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. <sup>15</sup>Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup>So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## Alleluia

LSB 190




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

## Holy Gospel

Matthew 1:18–25

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



Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,  
and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

## Nicene Creed

**☩** 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.

He will come again with glory to judge 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 together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and  
glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*Sit*

## Hymn 622 (LH)

1

Behold, a Rose is growing  
Of loveliest form and grace,  
As prophets sang, foreknowing;  
It springs from Jesse's race,  
And comes a little flower,  
In midst of coldest winter,  
At deepest midnight hour.

2

Isaiah had foretold it  
In words of promise sure,  
And Mary's arms enfold it,  
A virgin meek and pure.  
Through God's eternal will,  
This child to her is given  
At midnight calm and still.

3

This flower, whose fragrance tender  
With sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels with glorious splendour  
The darkness everywhere.  
True man, yet very God,  
From sin and death He saves us  
And lightens every load.

4

O Saviour, child of Mary,  
Who felt our human woe;  
O Saviour, King of glory,  
Who does our weakness know:  
Lead us at length, we pray,  
To the bright courts of heaven  
And to the endless day.

*Stand*

## Sermon

### Hymn 364 (*No Collection will be received tonight*)

*Stand*

## Offertory

*LSB 192*

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it

from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
 tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

## Prayer of the Church

*Sit*

## Hymn 370

# Service of the Sacrament

## Preface

*LSB 194*

**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And with thy spir - it.  
**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.

**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; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. 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

*LSB 195*

**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,

bles - ed is He, bles - 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

LSB 196

- C** 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

LSB 197

- 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

LSB 197



- P** The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



- C** A - men.

## Agnus Dei

LSB 198

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 Hymn 375

*Stand*

The Lord's Supper has always been seen as a sign of unity between those who commune together at the Lord's Table (1 Cor. 10:17). When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper in a church body that has a confession of faith, they thereby declare that they believe that they are one in faith with those who commune with them. We ask visitors who are communicant members in a church not in fellowship with this congregation, or are unfamiliar with the AELC Statement of Faith to refrain from communing tonight. However, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing. Please show this by crossing your arms across your chest when you come to the communion rail.

# Nunc Dimittis

LSB 211

**C** 1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -  
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All  
part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the  
glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the  
glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:  
Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;  
A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -  
For as in the be - gin - ning, Is  
to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your  
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -  
peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.  
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

# Thanksgiving

LSB 200

**P** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
**C** and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

**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 in 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.



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.

### Benedicamus

*LSB 202*



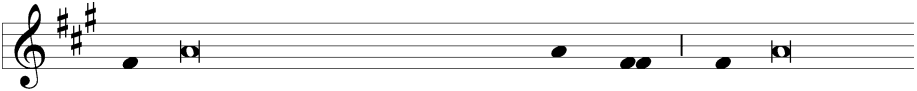
**P** Bless we the Lord.



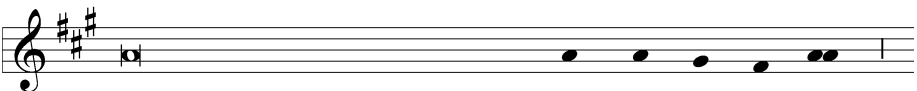
**C** Thanks be to God.

### Benediction

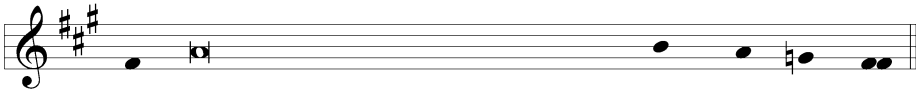
*LSB 202*



**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



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



**■** A-men, a-men, a - men.

*Sit*

## Hymn 363

### Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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### CHRISTMAS DAY

8.00am LOWOOD HC

8.30am OAK LR

9.00am TMBA LR

9.00am GRN LR

9.30am AUB LR