DECEMBER 10, 2023

A JOYFUL HOMECOMING

WELCOME

Welcome in the name of Christ Jesus. As we worship, we pray that you will open your heart in preparation as our Savior comes to us through the word and sacraments. If you are a guest, please sign your name, address and most importantly your phone number in



our Guest Book in the entrance and come and worship with us again. If we can be of assistance to you in your spiritual walk through life please let us know. We invite you to join us for refreshments after the service in the room adjoining the worship facility.

AS WE GATHER

In ancient days, God spoke through the prophet Isaiah to comfort His people with the assurance of pardon and a joyful return to their home. After the time of exile, He Himself would restore them, renew them, and return them to the land He had promised them on oath to their forefathers. As He was with His ancient followers, so He is with us. Our God is for us, not against us! In the mercy of our advent King, Jesus Christ, who came once and who will surely come again, we rejoice in His goodness and gather to receive all that He seeks to give.

COMMUNION PRACTICE

Lamb of God celebrates the Lord's Supper in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust in His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked first to speak with the Pastor or an elder. For further study, see MATTHEW 5:23ff; 10:32ff;18:15-35;26:26-29; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34.

CAUTION

It is prudent and wise to let our church family know you have broken people sitting around you; this is a place for the broken as Jesus describes in the gospels. We have/may have folks in the congregation that have been alcoholics, drug abusers, spousal abusers, formerly violent and even sexual offenders. This is a house for the broken. We certainly understand that this is a Lamb of God Lutheran Church Ministry and have taken diligent steps to create a safe environment for all who would like to worship our Father.

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO THOSE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN



We are very happy that you are here today, whether this is your first or fiftieth time with us. If you need a little help, please ask. There are many people here at Lamb of God who will lend you a hand.

Here are some suggestions to help make worship with your children easier:

Relax! Jesus knows that children tend to wiggle and squawk a bit, so please don't feel embarrassed by it. Your children are welcome at Lamb of God.

Please dare to sit toward the front, where your children can easily see the pastor, note the colors, embrace the action at the altar, and wonder at the symbols in the great stained-glass windows. What Jesus does here promises to engage them.

Explain the parts of the Divine Service to your children, encouraging them to chime in on their parts: *Amen! Lord have mercy! And with your spirit! I believe! Our Father!* All of this belongs to them, too.

Sing the hymns, pray, and voice the responses. Children learn by following your lead.

If you have to leave the service with your child, feel free to do so – but please hurry back! Like Jesus, we want your children in the Liturgy, not out (there are soft toys and books in the nursery, and activity sheets with colored pencils in the fellowship hall which can be brought into the worship hall to help engage your child)

Remember that the way we nurture children in church directly affects the way they respond to the Church, God, and to one another. Let them know that they are at home in this house of worship.

Please know that while you are caring for your children, the rest of us will be rejoicing in Jesus' words "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (LUKE 18:16)

We know that your children are a gift to the church, so we will do our best to welcome, smile, encourage, help, and bless you all.

+ PREPARATION +

HYMN OF INVOCATION

343 Prepare the Royal Highway



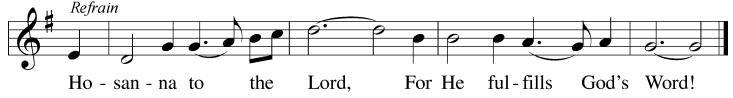
- 1 Pre pare the roy al high way; The King of kings is near!
- 2 God's peo-ple, see Him com ing: Your own e ter nal king!
- 3 Then fling the gates wide o pen To greet your prom-ised king!
- 4 His is no earth ly king dom; It comes from heav'n a bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear! Palm branch-es strew be - fore Him! Spread gar-ments! Shout and sing! Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring. His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry: God's prom-ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you! All lands, bow down be-fore Him! All na-tions, now a - dore Him! So let your praise be sound-ing For kind-ness so a - bound-ing:



Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt. Tune: Swedish, 17th cent.

Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110018177
Tune: Public domain

O INVOCATION

Matthew 28:19b; 18:20

- P In the name of the Father and of the

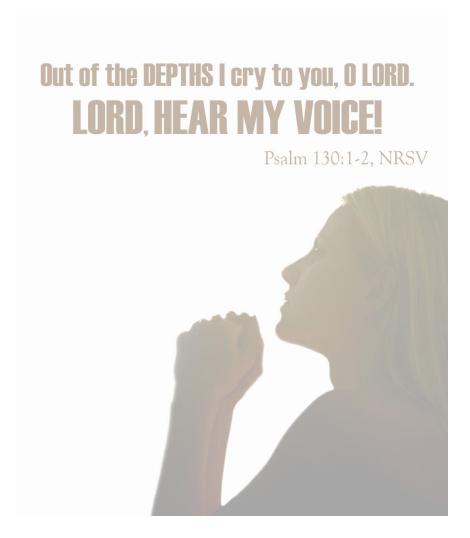
 → Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 27:13–14; 130:5

- I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!
- Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!
- P I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
- and in His word I hope.

- With hope in the Lord's promises of renewal by His Word and Spirit, let us together confess our sins to Him.
- Out of the depths I cry to You, Lord!
- P Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to my pleas for mercy!
- If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities, I would have no hope.
- P But with You there is forgiveness, therefore we place our trust in You.
- Restore us, Lord God, and set us free from our sins.
- P Renew us in Your hope, that we may wait for Your salvation.
- Because of Your steadfast love for us in Christ, redeem us from all our iniquities. Amen.
- As we wait for Jesus' final coming, we place our hope and our confidence in the promises of His Word and find our home in the presence of His Spirit. Confessing our sins and turning away from them through lives of repentance, we are assured again this day of the Lord's steadfast love and plentiful redemption for us. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.



+ WORD +

INTROIT

Psalm 80:1, 8a, 9b, 7; antiphon: v. 3

- P Restore us, O God;
- let Your face shine, that we may be saved!
- P Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock!
- You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
- You brought a vine out of Egypt;
- it took deep root and filled the land.
- P Restore us, O God of hosts;
- let You face shine, that we may be saved!
 Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
- P Restore us, O God;
- let Your face shine, that we may be saved!

KYRIE Mark 10:47

- In peace let us pray to the Lord.
- C Lord, have mercy.
- P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.
- **C** Lord, have mercy.
- For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.
- C Lord, have mercy.
- For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.
- C Lord, have mercy.
- P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
- C Amen.

SALUTATION

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- Let us pray: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son.
- that by His coming we may rejoice in our eternal home;
- through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 40:1-11

- P The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 40.
 - ¹Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
 - ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.
 - ³A voice cries:
 - "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
 - ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
 - ⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
 - ⁶A voice says, "*Cry!*" And I said, "*What shall I cry?*" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
 - ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass.
 - ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.
 - ⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"
 - ¹⁰Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
 - ¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.
- **P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.

- P Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.
- Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.
- P Behold, your king is coming to you;
- righteous and having salvation.
- P Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
- From the house of the Lord we bless You.

EPISTLE 2 Peter 3:8–14

- P The Epistle is from 2 Peter, chapter 3.
 - ⁸But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.
 - ¹¹Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.
 - ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.
- **P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.





LSB 156



HOLY GOSPEL Mark 1:1–8

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

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way,

³the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,"

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

- P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to You, O Christ.



U HYMN OF THE DAY

344 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



- 1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc es ev - 'ry life from sin; Then cleansed be Make straight the our Sav - ior, Lord, Our 3 We hail Thee ref as uge
- 4 Lay on the sick Thy heal ing hand And make the
- 5 All praise, e ter nal Son, to Thee Whose ad vent





hearts pre - pare ter there. For Christ to come and en a - way Like flow'rs waste that with er and de - cay. 'ry place. Till of Thy face beau - ty springs in ev a - dore And Ho -Spir ly it ev er - more. we

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. Composite

Tune: adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

Text and tune: Public domain

SERMON



C: 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.

O PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P As we wait in love for the coming of our Lord, let us together, as His advent people, bring our prayers before Him.

Father in heaven, You prepare a heavenly home for all who trust in You and come into Your presence through faith in Your Son. By His coming into this world to save us from the devastation of our sins, dying and rising again to make us eternally Yours, we have been reconciled to You. We praise You, Father, for this amazing gift of love and ask that Your Holy Spirit keep Your steadfast love secure in our hearts throughout our days of waiting. Come, Lord Jesus, our gracious King!

To You alone our prayers we bring!

P Knowing that You have come once into this world, Lord Jesus, we are confident that You will come again. On that glorious Day when we are all gathered before You, when every knee will bow to You and every tongue confess Your holy name, we will receive the restoration of all things in heaven and on earth that Your Word has promised. Until Your final coming, O Lord, keep us secure in our salvation. Remind us that our waiting is because of Your patience, and that You call us to use this time we have been given to share Your precious Gospel with the world You died and rose again to save. Stir up the hearts of all who hear Your Word this day, that many will come to saving faith and experience the comfort of Your presence in their lives. Come, Lord Jesus, our gracious King!

To You alone our prayers we bring!

As wanderers in this land, O Lord, we experience various types of brokenness and pain, suffering and grief. We lift before You in prayer those we love, who are also loved by You. For those longing for food and shelter, grant Your mercy. For those needing protection and peace, grant Your Spirit. We pray for those in our families and connected to our family of faith who have special concerns of body and spirit, [especially . . .]. Grant that all who wander find their home in You alone, O Lord. Come, Lord Jesus, our gracious King!

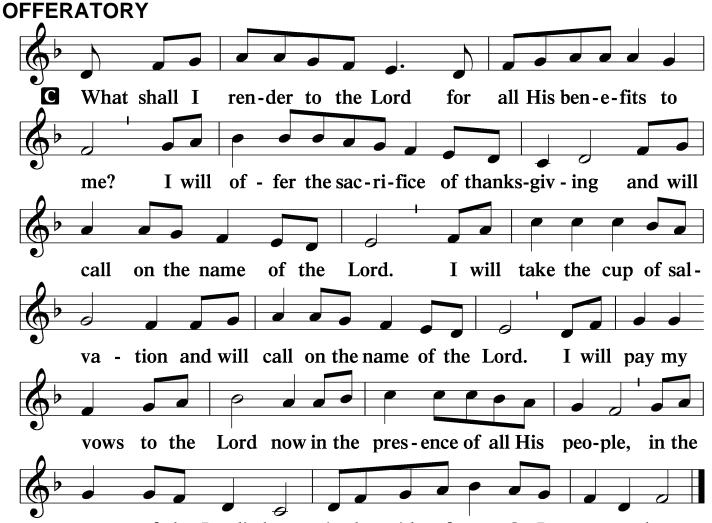
To You alone our prayers we bring!

P Comforting Spirit, fill our land, our homes, our workplaces, our schools, and all our interactions with others with Your blessings. Allow this season of waiting and preparation to refocus our hearts and minds upon Your mission for our congregation and for us as individual members of this household of faith. Stir up our hearts to make known to all the wonders You have done, so that more souls may be brought to saving faith and many would join with us in saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, our gracious King!"

To You alone our prayers we bring!

Confident in our coming King and Savior, we entrust our prayers into the good and gracious hands of our sovereign God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who lives and reigns, both now and forever.

C Amen.



courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa-lem.



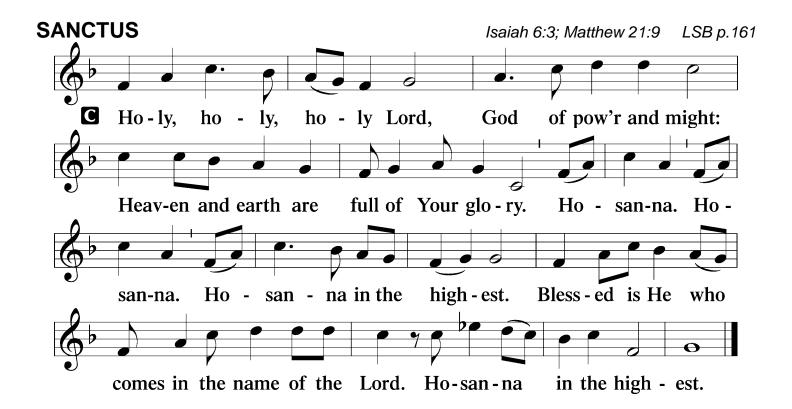
+ SACRAMENT +

O PREFACE

- P The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.
- P Lift up your hearts.
- **W**e lift them to the Lord.
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

It is truly good, 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 be found by Him without spot or blemish and at peace 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:



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have patiently shown mercy to us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
- We thank You for the homecoming You promise to all who come to You through faith in Jesus Christ. Send to us Your comforting Spirit as we joyfully remember our Redeemer and receive Him who comes to us in His body and blood. Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

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."

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13 LSB p.162

Cour 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.

PAX DOMINI

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C Amen.

WE SHARE THE PEACE





619 Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior

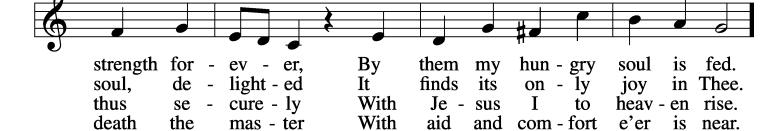


1 Thy bod - y, for Say - ior, Thy blood which giv'n O me, 2 With Thee, Lord, Ι am now nit - ed; Ι live in u -

With Thee, Lord, I am now u - nit - ed; I live in 3 Who can con-demn me now? For sure - ly The Lord is

4 Though death may threat - en with dis - as - ter, It can - not 5 My heart has now be - come Thy dwell-ing, O bless - ed,







Shall

Lord, may Thy bod-y and Thy blood Be for my soul the high-est good!

live

in

joy

Text: Friedrich Christian Heyder, 1677–1754; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, abr. Tune: Emskirchner Choral-Buch, 1756, Leipzig

es

tell - ing,

prais

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110018177
Tune: Public domain

e

- ter - nal - ly.



DISTRIBUTION HYMN

366 It Came upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,

2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un - furled, 3 All you, be - neath your heav - y load, By care and guilt bent low,

3 All you, be - neath your heav - y load, By care and guilt bent low, 4 For lo, the days have come to pass By prophets seen of old,



From an - gels bend - ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold: And still their heav'n-ly mu - sic floats O'er all the wea - ry world. Who toil a - long a drea - ry way With pain - ful steps and slow: When down in - to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore - told.



"Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king." A - bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-'ring wing, Look up, for gold - en is the hour, Come swift - ly on the wing, His word of peace shall to the earth God's an - cient prom-ise bring,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay To hear the an - gels sing. And ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds The bless - ed an - gels sing. The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an - gels sing. And all who take this gift will hear The song the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–76, alt. Tune: Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900 Text and tune: Public domain







DISTRIBUTION HYMN

347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People



1 "Com - fort, com - fort ye My peo - ple, Speak ye peace," thus 2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, Blot - ting out each

2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, B 3 Hark, the her - ald's voice is cry - ing II

In the des - ert

4 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed;

long was crook - ed; Make the rough - er



"Com - fort those who sit saith our God; in dark-ness, Mourn-ing de-served His an - ger All dark mis - deed: that well He no Call - ing re - pen-tance, and near, sin - ners to Since the plac - es plain. Let your hearts be and hum - ble. As true be -



'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye Je - ru - sa - lem to hath suf - fered man - y a day, more will see heed. She or that warn - ing here. O King - dom now is cry o - bey! glo - ry ho reign. For fits His ly the of the Lord



Of the waits peace that for them: Tell her that her Now her griefs have passed God will change her a - way; God pre - pare for Let the val leys Now a way; Now o'er shed And all flesh shall earth is a - broad.



sins I cov - er
pin - ing sad - ness
rise to meet Him
see the to - ken

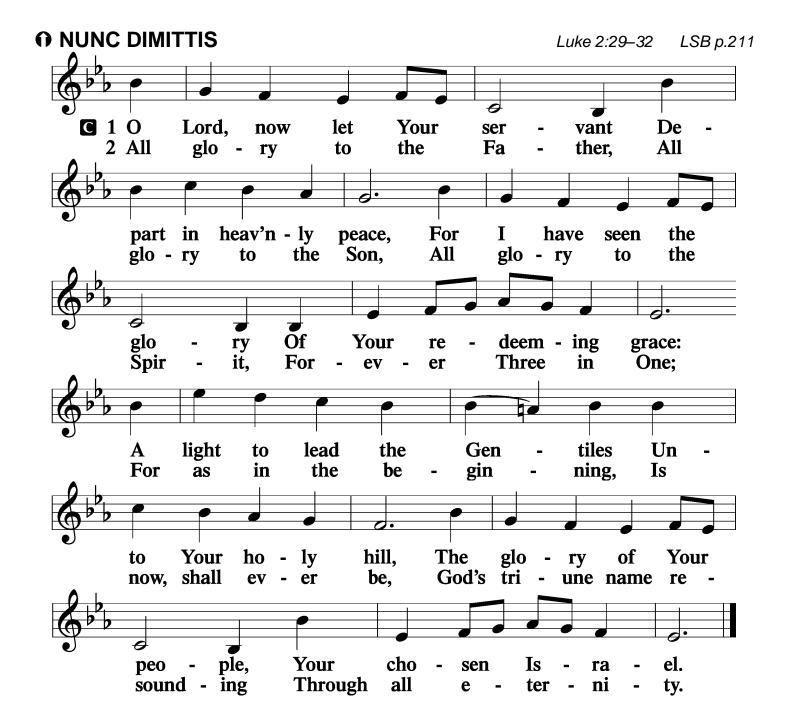
Text: Johann Olearius, 1611–84; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

And war - fare is o - ver." her now er - spring - ing glad - ness. In to ev hills And the bow down to greet That His Word bro - ken. is nev - er

Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois

Text and tune: Public domain





POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

2 Peter 3:14

- Let us pray: O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in steadfast love sent Your only-begotten Son into this world of sin, we thank You that for His sake You look upon us "without spot or blemish, and at peace."
- We praise You for the lasting home You give us as we trust in You.
- We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

O ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BIRTHDAYS

BENEDICTION

Psalm 130:5; Numbers 6:24-26

- P I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
- and in His word I hope.
- C Amen.





From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee. Born to reign in us for-ev-er, Now Thy gra-cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art, By Thine own e - ter-nal Spir-it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, Joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart. By Thine all-suf-fi-cient mer-it Raise us to Thy glo-rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt.

Tune: Southern Harmony, 1835, New Haven

Text and tune: Public domain

DISMISSAL

- P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.
- Thanks be to God! Alleluia, Amen!