

*For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all; for this holy house, for all who worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord; **let us pray to the Lord. REFRAIN***

*That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor; that we may live out truth and justice and grace, let us pray to the Lord; **let us pray to the Lord. REFRAIN***

*For peace in our hearts, for peace in our homes, for friends and family; for life and for love, for our work and our play, let us pray to the Lord; **let us pray to the Lord. REFRAIN***

*For your Spirit to guide; that you center our lives in the water and the Word; that you nourish our souls with your body and blood, let us pray to the Lord; **let us pray to the Lord. REFRAIN***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. **By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-10

¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;

⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples;
the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 72

Worshipers are invited to sing the refrain as indicated below. The choir will present the psalm text.



In his time the right - eous shall flour - ish.

*Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son; that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice; that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the little hills bring righteousness. He shall defend the needy among the people; he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor. **REFRAIN***

*He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another. He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth. In his time shall the righteous flourish; there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more. Blest be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous deeds! And blest be his glorious name forever, and may all the earth be filled with his glory. Amen. **REFRAIN***

SECOND LESSON

Romans 15:4-13

⁴Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰and again he says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹²and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand if you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

All worshipers will sing the Alleluia.

The Choir will sing the acclamation.



Prepare the way of the Lord. All flesh shall see the salvation of God.

GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

The holy gospel, according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

SERMON

Please stand if you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY “He Came Down”

ELW 253

THE NICENE CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed.

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church,
the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of promise, your reign has come near. Call your people to the way of repentance and inspire your church to bear fruit in the world through acts of faithful service. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, we pray for the wolf and the lamb, the lion and the calf, and all species whose lives are intertwined. Repair and preserve ecosystems that all life on earth may be sustained. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, teach those with power and privilege to serve the vulnerable. Give to all leaders wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, and a heart of compassion for the world you so love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the poor, set tables of abundance in all places where hands are empty, where stomachs ache with hunger, and where hearts and minds suffer pain. Feed and heal all who are in need. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of hope, renew in your people all joy and peace in believing, especially those facing anxiety, depression, or alienation (*especially...*) Guide this community of faith to welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of eternal life, you promise to take away our sin and gather us in your care forever. We give thanks for those who now rest from their labors on earth, freed from pain and the power of death. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You hear the cries of our hearts, O Lord. Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in each day and hour we may love and serve our neighbors, in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

RECEIVING OUR OFFERING

ANTHEM “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” - R. A. Hobby

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Please stand if you are able.

Let us pray. Giver of every good thing, we set before you the gifts that you have already given to sustain our lives and to share with others. **Help us to be good stewards of the earth and all that is in it, and let our lives be a testimony to the abundant feast you prepare for all who hunger. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

ELW 193a



heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come now with joy to Emmanuel's table. Feast at the banquet of hope and love.

LAMB OF GOD

ELW 195

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

MUSIC DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

“Joyous Light”

- Valerie Floeter

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Please stand if you are able.

Let us pray. God of abundance, we give you thanks that in this holy meal you have invited us to feast with you and one another.

May the taste of your love remain with us, and may our words and our work in your name invite others into your bountiful grace. Send us from your table to proclaim your presence, even as we await the glorious coming of Christ our Savior. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”
Stanzas 1 - 2

ELW 490

SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

POSTLUDE

“Siciliana”

- John Alcock

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