



If
GOD
for^{be} us,
who
CAN BE
Against Us?

ROMANS 8:31

New Year's Eve
December 31, 2021
7:00 PM



Christ Lutheran Church
3509 SW Burlingame Rd.
Topeka, KS 66611
785-266-6263
www.christlcms.org
Rev. Ben Micheel, Pastor
Amanda Adams, DCE
Chris Francik, TLS Principal



As we gather, please take time to fill out the fellowship pad located near the center aisle in your pew. If you have any prayer requests, feel free to use a prayer request card from the pew rack in front of you, and place it in the offering plate after the sermon. (For those joining us online, please contact the church office.) We will include these requests in our prayers during worship, and share them with our prayer chain (if desired).

Welcome and Opening Prayer

763 When Peace, like a River

LSB 763



1 When peace, like a riv - er, at - tend - eth my way; When
2 Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come, Let
3 He lives— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought; My
4 And, Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight, The



sor - rows, like sea bil - lows, roll; What - ev - er my lot, Thou hast
this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, That Christ hath re - gard - ed my
sin, not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to His cross, and I
clouds be rolled back as a scroll, The trum - pet shall sound and the



taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul.
help - less es - tate And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
Lord shall de - scend; E - ven so it is well with my soul.



It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul.

Stand

Divine Service Setting One, page 151

✠ Confession and Absolution ✠

Confession, to confess to God our sins and sinful nature. Absolution, "To absolve of sin and wrongdoing," more specifically, to affirm God's forgiveness to all who sincerely confess their sins to Him.

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

Invocation

Matthew 28:19b; 18:20

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

C Amen.

Exhortation

1 John 1:8–9 151

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Commendation of the Passing Year

P We commend to the gracious love of the Triune God the year now ending. We remember with thanksgiving our times of worship in His house on weekends and festival days; baptisms, confirmations, weddings, anniversaries, and funerals. As we remember these things, we also recall the days and seasons of the church year.

The season of Advent, just passed, reminded us of Christ's "comings" and prepared us for this season of Christmas in which we see anew the Father's great love in sending His only-begotten Son, Jesus, into our human flesh for our salvation. The season of Epiphany recalled the visit of the gentile Magi to the infant King Jesus, proclaimed Him the Savior of all people, and concluded with His Transfiguration.

The season of Lent began with the most penitential day of all - Ash Wednesday. These forty days provided many occasions for reflection upon God's Word, repentant living as His baptized children, and preparation for the paschal feast. Holy Week began with Palm Sunday. We sang our "hosannas" as Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem. On Maundy Thursday we gathered with His disciples in the upper room and received the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. On Good Friday we stood at the foot of His cross witnessing the death of the Son of God in our place.

The next Sunday, Easter Sunday, we were greeted with the angel's proclamation of the Good News of Jesus' victorious resurrection and His conquering of sin, death, and the devil. During the great fifty days of the season of Easter, Christ appeared to His disciples, proclaimed Himself the Good Shepherd of His people, ascended in glory to His heavenly throne, and empowered His Church by sending the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

During the "green" season of Pentecost we continued to be nourished in our faith and life through His Word and the blessed Sacraments.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination. Consider: Have you loved God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength? Have you loved your neighbor as yourself?

Confession of Sins

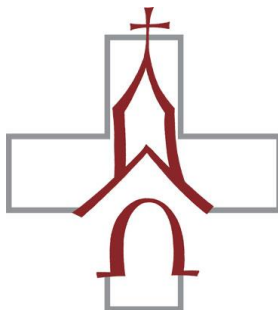
LSB 151

- P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Absolution

[John 20:19–23] LSB 151

- P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

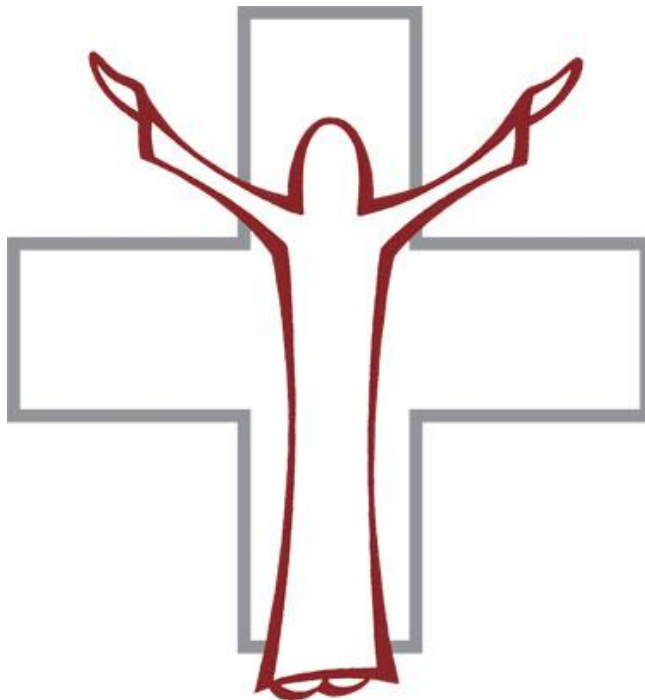


Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 98:1–3; antiphon: Psalm 124:8

- P** Our help is in the name of the LORD,
C **who made heaven and earth.**
- P** Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
C **His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.**
- P** The LORD has made known his salvation;
C **he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**
- P** He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
C **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 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** Our help is in the name of the LORD,
C **who made heaven and earth.**



Kyrie

Mark 10:47 152

A Greek phrase meaning, "Lord, have mercy!" A brief prayer not only imploring God's mercy but rejoicing in it through Jesus Christ.

P In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P 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 mer - cy.

P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



C A - men.

This Is the Feast

Revelation 5:12-13; 19:5-9 LSB 155



C This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 — Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose
2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and
3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and
4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to
5 For the Lamb who was slain has be -



blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*
hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*
join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*
gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

“Salutation” is a word from Latin meaning, “to salute” or “to greet.” “Collect” (KAH-lekt), a brief structured prayer, usually consisting of five parts: address to God, basis for the prayer, petition, desired benefit or result, and trinitarian conclusion. The Collect of the Day also “collects” the message of the day’s Gospel reading.

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Eternal God, we commit to Your mercy and forgiveness the year now ending and commend to Your blessing and love the times yet to come. In the new year, abide among us with Your Holy Spirit that we may always trust in the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Epistle

Romans 8:31b–39

A The Epistle is from Romans, chapter 8.

If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

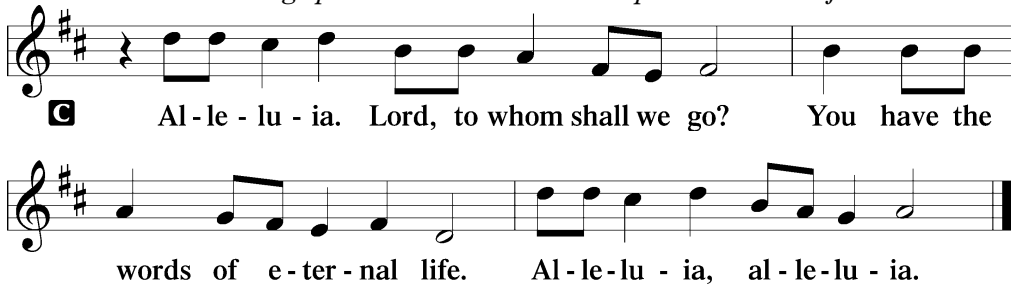
³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia and Verse

Hebrew word meaning "praise the LORD." Also spelled "Hallelujah".



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Luke 12:35–40

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twelfth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

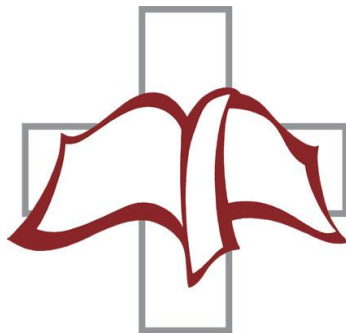
³⁵[Jesus said:] “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.

³⁷Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes.

Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! ³⁹But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**



Nicene Creed

Creed comes from the Latin "credo" which means "I believe." We confess our Christian faith in one of the three creeds (short statement of belief) agreed upon by the ancient church.

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.

899 Across the Sky the Shades of Night

LSB 899



1 A - cross the sky the shades of night This New Year's Eve are
 2 Be - fore the cross sub - dued we bow, To You our prayer ad -
 3 We gath - er up in this brief hour The mem - 'ry of Your
 4 We now re - mem - ber, as we pray, Our dear ones in Your
 5 Then, gra - cious God, in years to come, We pray Your hand may



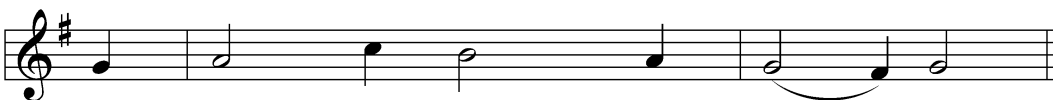
fleet - ing. We deck Your al - tar, Lord, with light, In
 dress - ing, Re - count - ing all Your mer - cies now, And
 mer - cies: Your won - drous good - ness, love, and pow'r Our
 car - ing Who bright - ly shine in end - less day, Past
 guide us, And, on - ward through our jour - ney home, Your



sol - emn wor - ship meet - ing; And as the year's last
 all our sins con - fess - ing; Be - seech - ing You this
 grate - ful song re - hears - es; For You have been our
 death and all de - spair - ing. At our life's end, Lord,
 mer - cy walk be - side us Un - til at last our



hours go by, We raise to You our ear - nest cry,
 com - ing year To keep us in Your faith and fear
 strength and stay In man - y a dark and drea - ry day
 as Your own, Bring us with them a - round Your throne,
 ran - somed life Is safe from per - il, toil, and strife



Once more Your love en - treat - ing.
 And crown us with Your bless - ing.
 Of sor - row and re - vers - es.
 The joys of heav - en shar - ing.
 When heav'n it - self shall hide us.

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Offering

If you brought your gift, tithe, or offering with you today, you may place it in the offering plate as it passes. We also have multiple options for electronic giving. You can sign up for online giving at pushpay.com/pay/christlcms for a one-time or recurring gift. Direct links with more information are available on the church website (christlcms.org/giving).

For those joining us remotely, you may use the electronic giving methods listed above, or you may mail your offering to the church office (3509 SW Burlingame Rd, Topeka, KS 66611).



SCAN ME

Retirement of a Debt

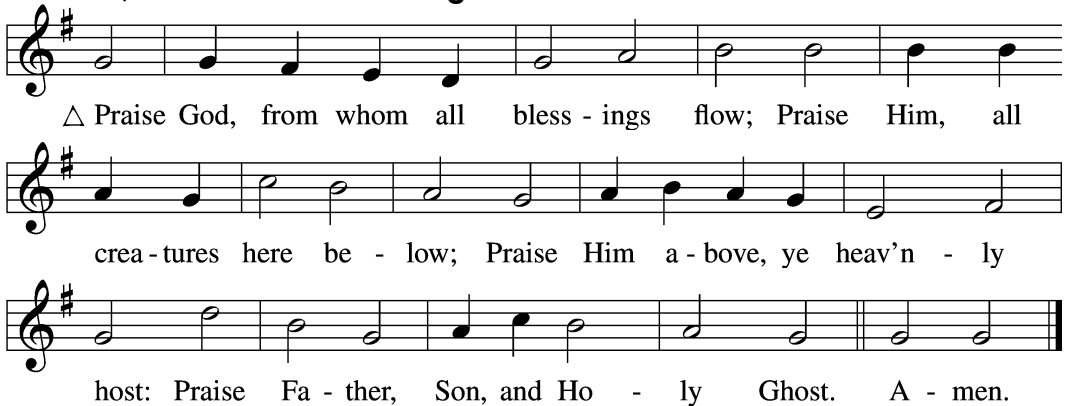
- P** Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, it is with joy and gratitude that we announce the retirement of the debt for the Schemm Family Life Center.
- P** In thanksgiving to God, we now burn this mortgage in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Stand

While the mortgage is being burned, the congregation may join in the singing of the Common Doxology (Hymn 805).

805 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

LSB 805



△ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all
creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'n - ly
host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

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P Let us pray.

Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks that You have guided us in wisdom and given us the courage and resources for fulfilling the retirement of our debt. With gratitude we remember our years of planning and work. Continue to grant us unity of counsel, purity of intention, and the holy purpose to nurture Your people by Word and Sacrament and to extend Your Church for the salvation of the world; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Prayer of the Church

1 Timothy 2:1-4

*At the end of each petition, the pastor will say, "Lord, in Your mercy," to which the congregation will respond, "**Hear our prayer.**"*

P ...through Jesus Christ, Your son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

2 Timothy 4:22; [Colossians 3:1]; [Psalm 136] LSB 160

P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface (Full)

P 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; 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

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9 161

(SAHNK-toose), "Sanctus" is Latin for "holy".



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -



san-na. 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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

161

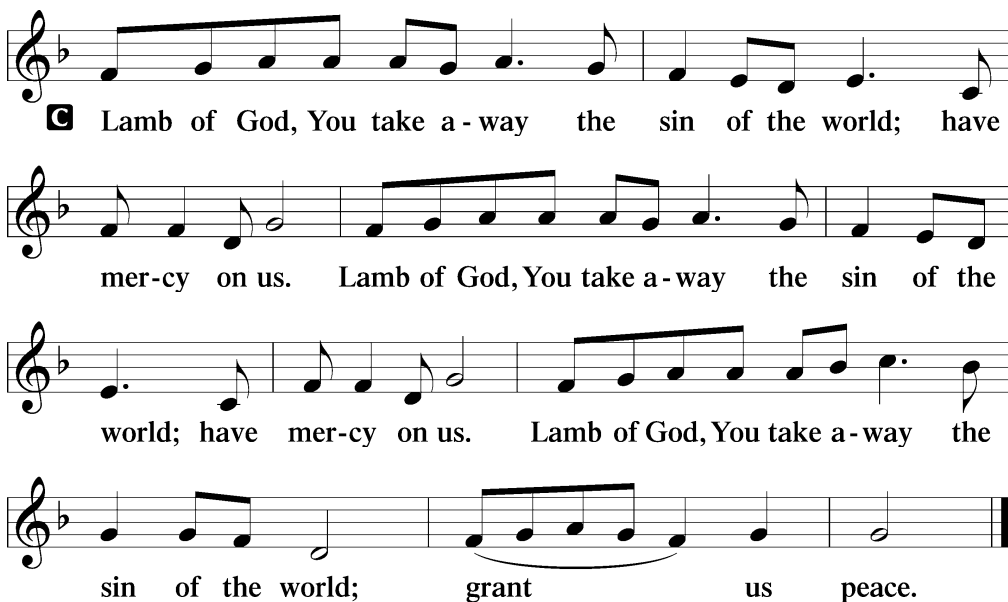
P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His

Agnus Dei

John 1:29 LSB 163

(AHG-noose DAY-ee). Latin for "Lamb of God."



□ 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.

Sit

Distribution

Communion is reserved for those who are members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod or members of a church body in fellowship with the LCMS unless special arrangements have been made with the pastor. The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first. Then they will distribute it to those who cannot come up to the altar rail due to physical ailments. Following that the ushers will dismiss the people from their pews to go to the altar rail. The congregation will be ushered down the middle aisle to go up to the rail and when dismissed from there will use the side aisle to return to their seats. All are invited up to receive a blessing.



897 O Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly

LSB 897



1 O re - joice, ye Chris - tians, loud - ly, For our joy has
 2 See, my soul, thy Sav - ior choos - es Weak - ness here and
 3 Lord, how shall I thank Thee right - ly? I ac - knowl - edge
 4 Je - sus, guard and guide Thy mem - bers, Fill them with Thy



now be - gun; Won - drous things our God has done.
 pov - er - ty; In such love He comes to thee.
 that by Thee I am saved e - ter - nal - ly.
 bound-less grace, Hear their prayers in ev - 'ry place.



Tell a - broad His good - ness proud - ly, Who our race has
 Nei - ther crib nor cross re - fus - es; All He suf - fers
 Let me not for - get it light - ly, But to Thee at
 Fan to flame faith's glow - ing em - bers; Grant all Chris - tians,



hon - ored thus, That He deigns to dwell with us.
 for thy good To re - deem thee by His blood.
 all times cleave And my heart true peace re - ceive.
 far and near, Ho - ly peace, a glad new year!



Refrain
 Joy, O joy, be - yond all glad - ness, Christ has done a -



way with sad - ness! Hence, all sor - row and re - pin - ing,



For the Sun of Grace is shin - ing!

898 The Ancient Law Departs

LSB 898



- 1 The an - cient Law de - parts, And all its fears re - move,
 2 The Light of Light di - vine, True bright - ness un - de - filed,
 3 His in - fant bod - y now Be - gins the cross to feel;
 4 To - day the name is Thine At which we bend the knee.
 △ 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, For Thy re - deem - ing love,



For Je - sus makes with faith - ful hearts A cov - e - nant of love.
 He bears for us the pain of sin, A ho - ly, spot-less child.
 Those pre-cious drops of blood that flow For death the vic-tim seal.
 They call Thee Je - sus, child di-vine; Our Je - sus deign to be.
 With Fa - ther, Spir - it, ev - er one In glo-rious might a - bove.

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900 Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love

LSB 900



- 1 Je - sus! Name of won-drous love, Name all oth - er names a - bove,
 2 Je - sus! Name de - creed of old, To the maid-en moth - er told,
 3 Je - sus! Name of price - less worth To the fall - en of the earth
 4 Je - sus! Name of mer - cy mild, Giv - en to the ho - ly Child



Un - to which must ev - 'ry knee Bow in deep hu - mil - i - ty.
 Kneel-ing in her low-ly cell, By the an - gel Ga - bri - el.
 For the prom - ise that it gave, "Je - sus shall His peo-ple save."
 When the cup of hu-man woe First He tast - ed here be - low.

- 5 Jesus! Only name that's giv'n
 Under all the mighty heav'n
 Whereby those to sin enslaved
 Burst their fetters and are saved.

- 6 Jesus! Name of wondrous love,
 Human name of God above;
 Pleading only this, we flee
 Helpless, O our God, to Thee.

Tune and text: Public domain

Stand

Thank the Lord

[Psalm 105:1-3, 42-43]; [1 Chronicles 16:8-10] LSB 164



C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re-calls His prom-is - es and leads His peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

Post-Communion Collect

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.

Luther's Evening Prayer

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.
Amen.



Invocation for the New Year

P With hopeful hearts, Lord, we await the beginning of the New Year. Fill each day and every season with Your presence. May we walk from week to week ever more closely with You. May Your light brighten our every pathway. By Your grace bring us all at last to eternal life in Your glorious presence. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Light of the world.

C Amen.

Benediction

Numbers 6:24–26 166

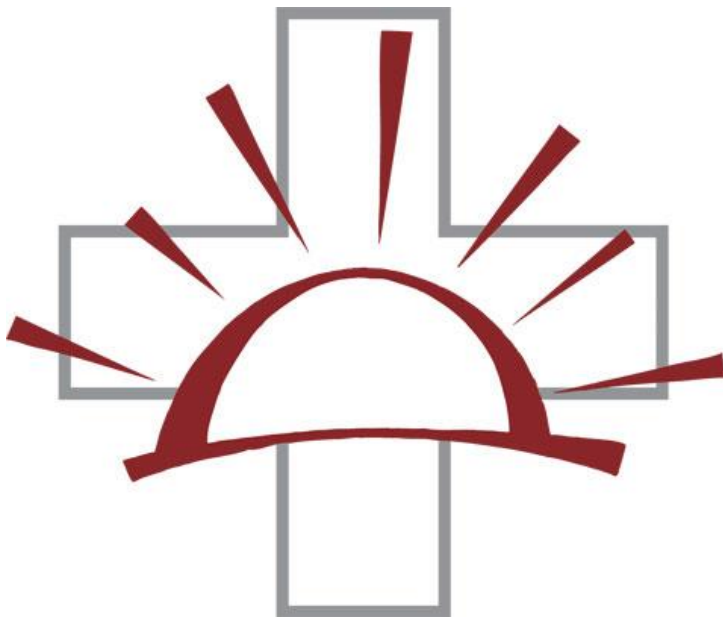
A final blessing from God before we leave.

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



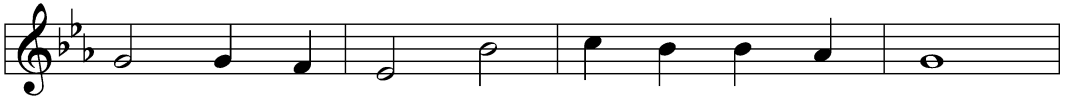
C A - men.

Sit



878 Abide with Me

LSB 878



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
 2 I need Thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
 3 Come not in ter - rors, as the King of kings,
 4 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.
 What but Thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
 But kind and good, with heal - ing in Thy wings;
 Earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
 Who like Thy - self my guide and stay can be?
 Tears for all woes, a heart for ev - 'ry plea.
 Change and de - cay in all a - round I see;



Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, O a - bide with me.
 Come, Friend of sin - ners, thus a - bide with me.
 O Thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.

- 5 I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
 Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
 I triumph still if Thou abide with me!
- 6 Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
 Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
 Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
 In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

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-- Announcements --

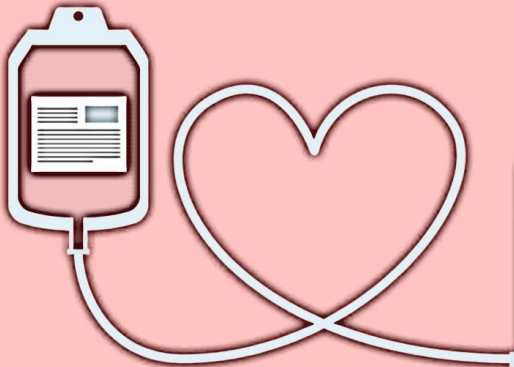
Remembered in our Prayers

Charlie P., Alice M., Luke H., Julie J., Don L., Jerry M., Jean B. (sister Pauline C.'s sister), Judy (Colleen B.'s neighbor), Noel (Colleen B.'s brother), Kathy (Brenda Z.'s sister-in-law), Shirley (Frank J.'s grandmother), Melanie (Sharon L.'s daughter), Ella (Marsha S.'s granddaughter), Jeanette W., Lisa (Judy K.'s sister), Randy (Carol J.'s son), Madison L., Steve (Rachel M.'s father), Vikki N., Matt N., Lynn M., Virginia C., Leonard (brother of Jeanette B.), Phil B., JoAnn (friend of Nancy P.), Evelyn (mother of Sandy S.), Marjean P., Ted M., Adam (Jamie H.'s son), Carolyn S., Caleb (Dana N.'s nephew), Abigail (Pastor's niece), Robert P., Jen (Donna B.'s niece), Walt M., Principal Francik and family as he prayerfully considers a call to another school, and others named in your heart. Pray for the Topeka Rescue Mission, Chelsea Irwin and missionaries around the world. We pray especially for those around the world being persecuted for their faith in the one, true God and the suffering they endure. Please continue to pray for Pastor Ben, DCE Amanda, our staff and their families as they do our Lord's work here at Christ Lutheran. We pray for the staff and students of Topeka Lutheran School and the Center for Young Children. We also pray for those who serve in the armed forces, first responders, and for our country and government. Prayers of thanksgiving for our Lord and Savior and the new life we have in Him.

Pray WITHOUT
CEASING

Our Times Are in His Hands

The Church and the world are awake, but for very different reasons. The world counts down to midnight; the Church watches eagerly for her Master who is *“coming at an hour” we “do not expect”* (Luke 12:40). For many, the changing year brings regrets, fears and desperate wishes for improvement. The world delights in smooth talk and illusions of prosperity at any cost (Is. 30:9–10). It has already forgotten *“the Holy One of Israel”* born six days earlier (Is. 30:11). The Church ends the calendar year differently. *“In returning and rest ... in quietness and in trust,”* that is, in repentance and faith, for the Holy One saves us, and He is our strength (Is. 30:15). Our times are in His hands (Ps. 31:15), the hands of Mary’s Son — God not only with us, but for us (Matt. 1:23). So, who could be against us? If God has given His Son, *“how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”* (Rom. 8:31–32). The Church dresses for action not in fear, but in hope; Christ is coming to serve her with His gifts (Luke 12:37). Who is there to condemn us for the passing year? Christ has died, is raised and intercedes for us! What distress will the new year bring? Nothing can *“separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Rom. 8:34–39)!



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