

ALL THE ENDS
OF THE
SEARCH HAVE
SEEN
THE SALVATION
OF OUR
GOD

Nebraska District Missionaries' Conference

Opening Service

observing

The Presentation of Our Lord

January 29, 2013

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church
Fort Collins, Colorado

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Thoughts as we gather... The second day of February, forty days after Christmas, is the day we remember the presentation of our Lord Jesus in the temple. Though we're a few days early, we are commemorating that event today. Simeon and Anna turn our attention to mission work. The words of Simeon foretell the work our Savior would do, work in which he graciously involves us as his instruments: "a light for revelation to the Gentiles." We follow the lead of the aged Anna, who, after seeing Jesus, spread the word about him.

There is righteousness and forgiveness for us this morning. These gifts come from our Savior, who, even as an infant, fulfilled the law for us and later gave his life as the perfect sacrifice. Our living Lord provides us with renewed strength to share these gifts by proclaiming his grace, which is indeed our light and redemption.

About the service... The order of service today is Divine Service II from *Christian Worship Supplement*. This version of the historic Western Liturgy provides new melodies for some canticles (the general Verse, *Agnus Dei*) and for others it provides metrical versions that can be set to a number of hymn tunes (*Gloria*, *Sanctus*, *Nunc Dimittis*). We will also make use of an alternate version of Simeon's Song, which, appropriately, is set to the tune of the hymn "Jerusalem, My Happy Home." For the psalm today, we will try speaking the words of the psalm in conjunction with singing the refrain. And our hymn of the day will be Luther's version of the Simeon's Song set to a new melody.

In his Word and his Sacrament, we see the Lord's salvation today! May his name be praised and his love proclaimed this morning and always.



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OUR PATH OF WORSHIP

Before the service begins, worshipers may wish to say a silent prayer to God. Helpful prayers may be found in the very front of the hymnals (located in each row), on pages 10 and 11 and pages 134-139. Those who will be receiving Holy Communion today may wish to read "Personal Preparation for Holy Communion" on page 156 in the front section of the hymnal.

Opening Hymn: "In His Temple Now Behold Him"

Christian Worship hymnal #77

Today we remember when the infant Jesus, the Word made flesh who "made his dwelling among us," was brought to the temple. Through Jesus, who was presented at the temple, we are presented as pure and holy to the Father.

After the hymn, please stand if you are able.

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

Our Confession of Sins

Ephesians 2:1; 1 John 1:8,9

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin. For faithless worrying and selfish pride, for sins of habit and sins of choice, for the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do, you should cast me away from your presence forever. O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

We spend a moment in quiet reflection and personal confession.

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We spend a moment in quiet reflection and personal confession.

Our Lord's Absolution

*Ephesians 2:4,5; John 20:23**

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins.

Hear the word of Christ through his called servant:

I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen!

“Lord, Have Mercy”

Mark 10:47

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: Christ, have mercy.

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

C: Amen.

* Because Jesus took away the guilt of the world (John 1:29), he authorized his followers to announce his pardon and forgiveness to all who are sorry for their sins. Jesus told his first disciples, “If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven” (John 20:23). Jesus’ forgiveness, proclaimed by his servants, “absolves” us, that is, it sets us free from the guilt of our sins.

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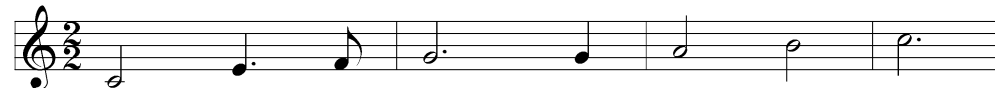
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“All Glory Be to God on High”

Echoing the Christmas angels (Luke 2:14), we praise our God for who he is and what he has done. (We sing to the tune of the Epiphany hymn “Jesus Shall Reign Where’er the Sun.”)



1 All glo - ry be to God on high!
2 Our grate - ful thanks to you we bring,
3 O Lamb of God, to you we pray.
4 You, Christ, are ho - ly— Lord a - lone;



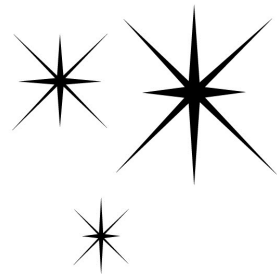
Your name, O Lord, we glo - ri - fy;
For your great glo - ry, heav'n - ly King,
You take all hu - man sin a - way.
The Fath - er's glo - ry you made known.



We praise you for your peace and grace,
For all, O Fath - er, you have done
Have mer - cy, Lord; re - ceive our prayer;
We by your Spir - it sing a - gain:

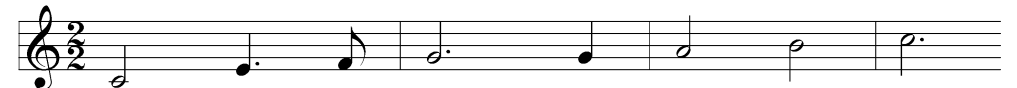


Your fav - or toward our fal - len race.
Through Je - sus Christ, your on - ly Son.
From God's right hand, your mer - cy share.
“All glo - ry be to God!” A - men.



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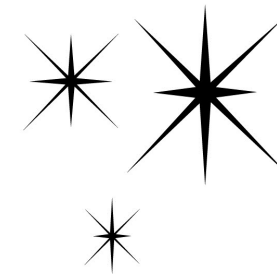
Your name, O Lord, we glo - ri - fy;
For your great glo - ry, heav'n - ly King,
You take all hu - man sin a - way.
The Fath - er's glo - ry you made known.



We praise you for your peace and grace,
For all, O Fath - er, you have done
Have mer - cy, Lord; re - ceive our prayer;
We by your Spir - it sing a - gain:



Your fav - or toward our fal - len race.
Through Je - sus Christ, your on - ly Son.
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THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer of the Day

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, grant that like Simeon and Anna of old, we may see with the eyes of faith him who is the glory of Israel and the light for all nations, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whom with you and the Holy Spirit we adore, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Please be seated.

First Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 1:21-28

The life and ministry of Samuel foreshadow the life and ministry of our incarnate Lord. Here, Hannah presents Samuel to the LORD at the tabernacle.

When the man Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the LORD and to fulfill his vow, Hannah did not go. She said to her husband, “After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the LORD, and he will live there always.”

“Do what seems best to you,” Elkanah her husband told her. “Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the LORD make good his word.” So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. When they had slaughtered the bull, they brought the boy to Eli, and she said to him, “As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD. I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.

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Psalm of the Day: Psalm 84

This psalm speaks of the blessedness of being in the LORD's house. Here the living God meets his people with his incomparable gifts. What a blessing not only to be served by the LORD, but also to be his instrument in bringing his gifts to people! **Today we will sing the refrain at the beginning of the psalm and where it is noted, and we will speak the words of the entire psalm together.**



How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty!

**My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.**

**Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young—
a place near your altar, O LORD Almighty, my King and my God.**

Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

Refrain

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.

**As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.**

They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

Hear my prayer, O LORD God Almighty; listen to me, O God of Jacob.

Refrain

Look upon our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one.

Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere;

**I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.**

**For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor;
no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.**

O LORD Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you.

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Second Scripture Reading: Hebrews 2:14-18

Jesus shared our humanity. Therefore, he knows human suffering and temptation. He can help us when we are tempted, and he has delivered us from sin and death.

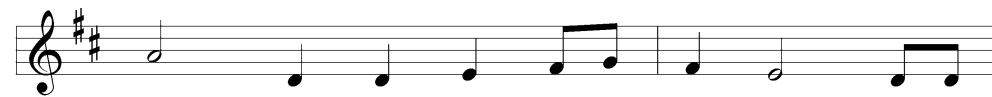
Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Alleluia Verse: Romans 10:17

A Christian custom is to sing “Alleluia” (which means “Praise the LORD”) before hearing the Gospel reading. We sing Alleluia, along with a Bible verse that reminds us of the power of God’s Word.



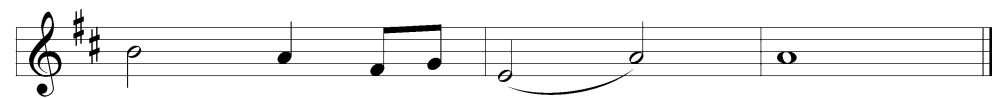
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!



Faith comes from hear - ing the mes - sage, and the



mes - sage is heard through the Word of Christ. Al - le -



lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Please stand as we hear the Gospel reading—a customary way of showing special reverence to our Savior. We also speak words of acclamation to Christ, our King, who is here with us in his Word.

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Gospel of the Day: Luke 2:22-40

M: The Holy Gospel, according to Saint Luke, chapter two.

C: **Glory be to you, O Lord!**

Jesus is presented in the temple. Simeon and Anna praise their long-expected Savior.

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you now dismiss your servant in peace.
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

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The Nicene Creed

With Christians around the world and in ages past, we confess our faith in the true God. Today we note particularly how Jesus, the eternal Son of God, “shared our humanity” to save us.

C: 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 fully 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 and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.

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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 fully 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.

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Hymn of the Day: "In Peace and Joy"

This is Martin Luther's version of the Song of Simeon, set to a new melody.



1. In peace and joy I now de - part As my Lord
2. Christ Je - sus brought this gift to me, My faith - ful
3. You sent the peo - ple of the earth Their great sal -
4. Christ is the hope and sav - ing light Of those in



wills it; Se - rene and qui - et is my heart; Now glad - ness
Sav - ior, Whom you al - lowed my eyes to see By your great
va - tion; Your in - vi - ta - tion sum - mons all From ev - 'ry
blind - ness; He guides and com - forts those in night By his great



fills it. This the Lord has prom - ised me, That
fa - vor. Now I know he is _____ my life, My
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death is but a slum - ber. _____ In peace and joy. —
friend when I am dy - ing. _____ In peace and joy. —
ev - 'ry place re - sound - ing. _____ In peace and joy. —
joy, re - ward, and glo - ry. _____ In peace and joy. —

Sermon

Luke 2:22-40

What Did You Expect?

Hymn of the Day: "In Peace and Joy"

This is Martin Luther's version of the Song of Simeon, set to a new melody.



1. In peace and joy I now de - part As my Lord
2. Christ Je - sus brought this gift to me, My faith - ful
3. You sent the peo - ple of the earth Their great sal -
4. Christ is the hope and sav - ing light Of those in



wills it; Se - rene and qui - et is my heart; Now glad - ness
Sav - ior, Whom you al - lowed my eyes to see By your great
va - tion; Your in - vi - ta - tion sum - mons all From ev - 'ry
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Sermon

Luke 2:22-40

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THANKSGIVING

Gathering of Our Offerings

We bring our offerings to God in grateful response to his love. No certain amount is demanded, for the Bible teaches, “Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). These offerings support the proclaiming of the good news about Jesus, both here and around the world. (A designation for this morning’s offerings will be chosen during the conference.)

*Those who will be receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to read **PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION** on page 156 in the front of the hymnal. The questions and answers there help us reflect on our need for God’s forgiveness and on how God delivers his forgiveness to us through his Word and through Holy Communion.*

After the offering, please stand as we pray.

The Prayer of the Church

The pastor leads a prayer on behalf of many people and needs.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is good and right so to do.**

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who who came as the Light of the world so that the world may have light and life through him.

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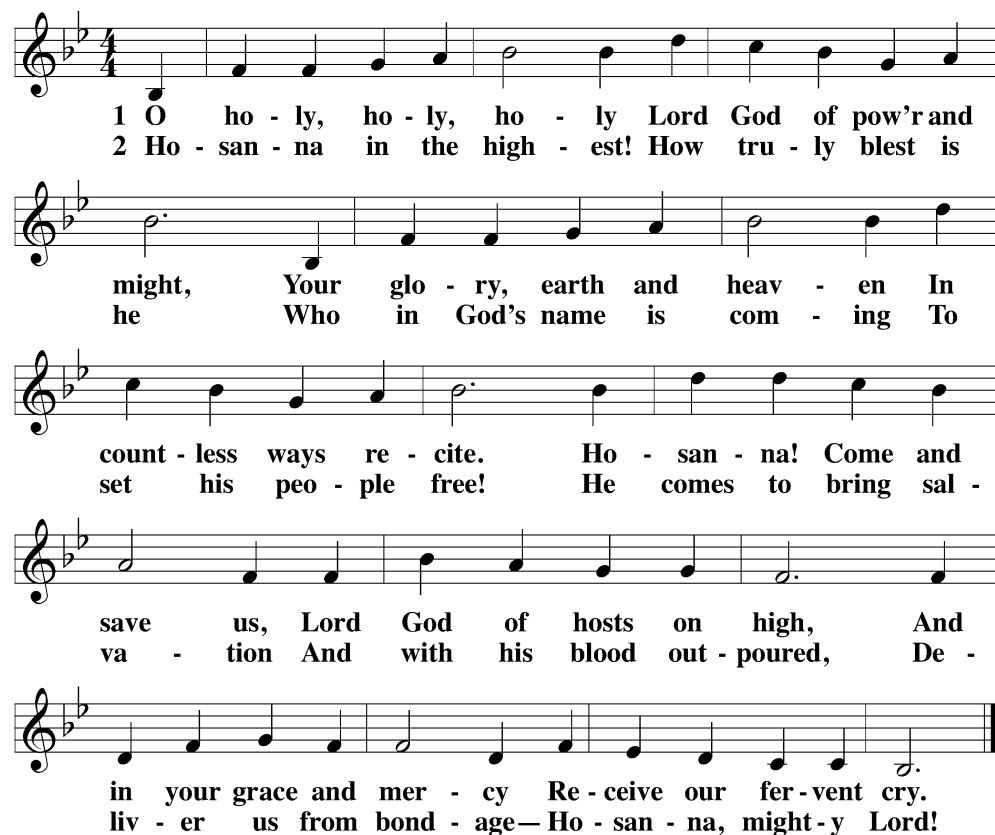
M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who who came as the Light of the world so that the world may have light and life through him.

M: Therefore with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

The Song of Saints and Angels

Isaiah 6:1-3; Matthew 21:9*

(We sing to the tune of the hymn "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You," hymn 19 in our hymnals.)



1 O ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of pow'r and
2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How tru - ly blest is
might, Your glo - ry, earth and heav - en In
he Who in God's name is com - ing To
count - less ways re - cite. Ho - san - na! Come and
set his peo - ple free! He comes to bring sal -
save us, Lord God of hosts on high, And
va - tion And with his blood out - poured, De -
in your grace and mer - cy Re - ceive our fer - vent cry.
liv - er us from bond - age—Ho - san - na, might - y Lord!

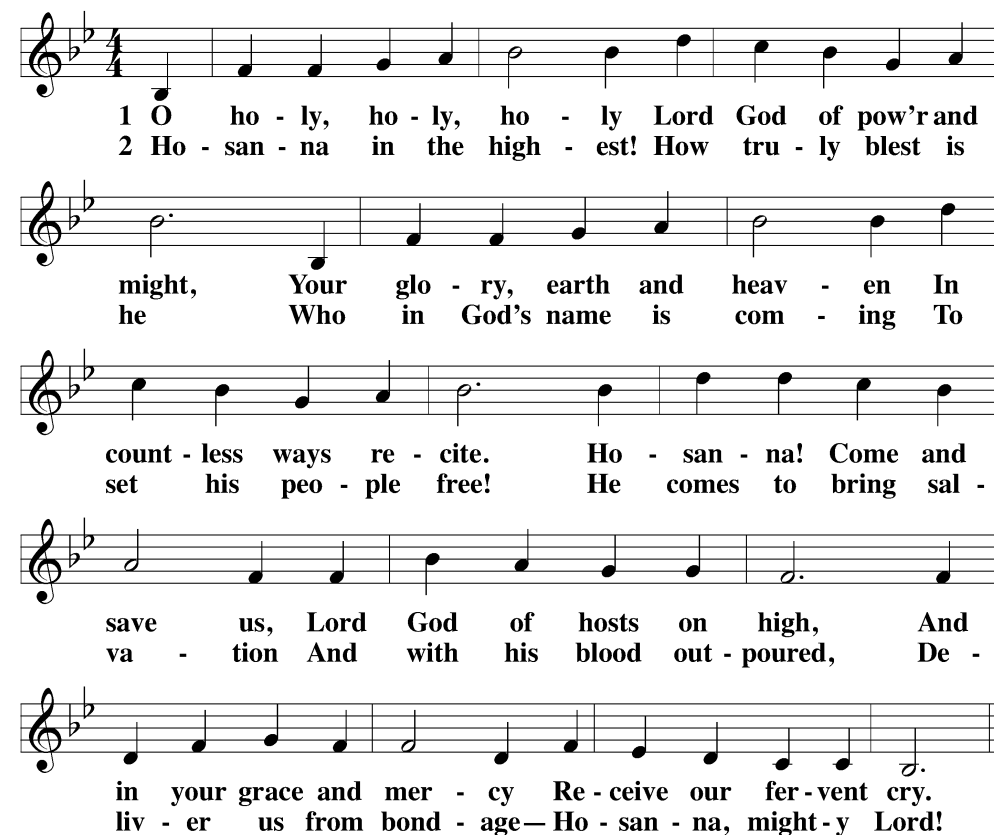
* In this song we praise God, who is present with us in his Supper. The song echoes the angels that the prophet Isaiah saw around God's throne (Isaiah 6:1-3). The angels sang because they were in the presence of God. We, too, sing because we are in the presence of God: Jesus is really present in his body and blood, which we receive in Holy Communion. The song also reminds us of the people who hailed Jesus as king when he entered Jerusalem to die (Matthew 21:9). They sang "Hosanna," which means, "Lord, save us!" Our Lord does save us through his sacrificial death. (This song is sometimes known as the Sanctus, its first word in Latin.)

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

M: All glory and splendor, thanks and praise are yours, O Lord, heavenly Father.

You pierced the gloomy darkness of sin and unbelief
with the brilliant light of your Son.

You guided the Magi to worship the Christ
and revealed the mystery of your eternal plan to save both Jew and Gentile.

You declared Jesus your beloved Son at the Jordan River and,
with your Spirit, you anointed him to be the Savior of all people.

Bless our reception of your Son's body and blood that we may shine with the joy of faith.
Use this most Holy Sacrament to illumine our lives and minds with Christ's forgiveness,
peace, and comfort. Refresh our faith, and help us to reflect his truth and grace to the
world. We ask this that you may receive endless honor, glory, and praise from every tribe
and language and people and nation.

C: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

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

Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

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

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

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Our Song to the Lamb

John 1:29; Revelation 5:12



Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



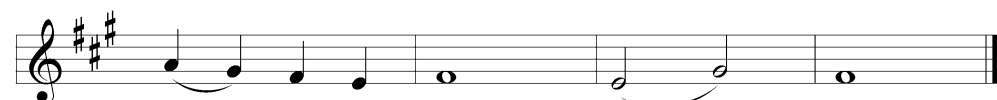
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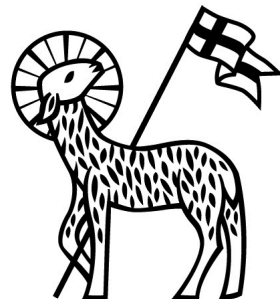


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grant us your peace. A - men.

Please be seated.



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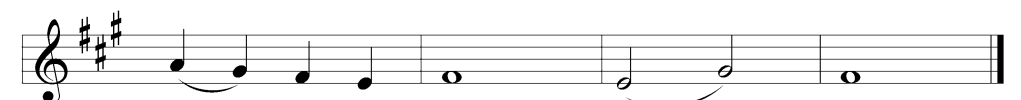
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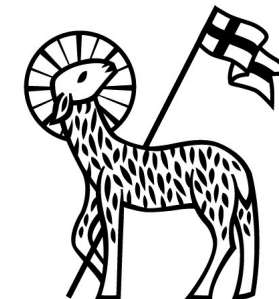


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Please be seated.



The Distribution of Holy Communion

During the distribution, we will sing these hymns, as time permits:

“O Light of Gentile Nations”

Christian Worship hymnal #78

“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

Christian Worship Supplement #771

“Rise, O Light of Gentile Nations”

Christian Worship hymnal #577

After the distribution is complete, please stand at the minister’s direction.

“Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace”

Like Simeon, we have seen our Lord’s salvation. Therefore we can depart His house—and this life—in peace. (We sing to the tune of the hymn, “Jerusalem, My Happy Home,” hymn 215.)

1. Lord, bid your ser - vant go in peace; — your
2. This is the Sav - ior of the world, — the
3. With saints of old, — with saints to come, — To

word is now — ful - filled. — These eyes have seen — sal -
Gen - tiles' prom - ised light, — God's glo - ry dwell - ing
you we lift — our voice; — To Fa - ther, Son, — and

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Closing Prayer

M: We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Lord's Blessing

Numbers 6:24-27

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen!

Please remain standing for the closing hymn.

Closing Hymn: "Lord, You I Love with All My Heart"

Christian Worship hymnal #434, stanzas 1 and 3

The final stanza of this beloved hymn reminds us of Simeon's song. Because we have seen the Lord's salvation, we can pray confidently, "Lord, let at last your angels come... that I may die unfearing." We will sing the first stanza with the organ, then the third stanza a capella.

Please be seated after the hymn.

A Few Moments for Reflection and Prayer

Take a moment to recall something from today's message, from one of the Scripture readings or from a song during the service. Or pray again the Prayer of the Day:

Almighty and ever-living God, grant that like Simeon and Anna of old, we may see with the eyes of faith him who is the glory of Israel and the light for all nations, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whom with you and the Holy Spirit we adore, now and forever. Amen.

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Announcements

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Artwork by Ian Welch, www.paramentics.com. Used by permission.

Further notes on the service and worship folder:

A distinguishing feature in Divine Service II is the Prayer of Thanksgiving (sometimes called the Eucharistic Prayer). Luther excised this section of the Liturgy because it had become polluted by numerous prayers to the saints and other false teaching. In recent years, however, the Prayer of Thanksgiving has been restored by many Lutherans in a shorter and doctrinally sound form. The chief benefit of the Prayer of Thanksgiving is that it gives worshipers an additional opportunity to remember the saving work of our Savior and to thank him for it—a fitting part of our preparation for the Sacrament. It also serves as a short and powerful summary of our Lord’s work that can speak the gospel to visiting guests.

In addition to the general Prayer of Thanksgiving printed in Divine Service II, **prayers for each season** are offered on the electronic version of CWS (look for the RTF file “Thank Pr” in the “Liturgy RTF” folder). Today we are praying the Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Epiphany season.

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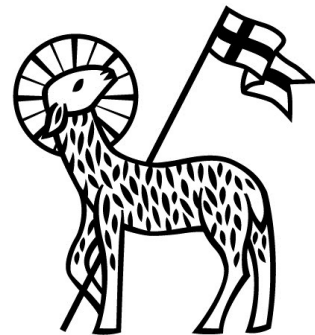
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As a sample, here are the three images for Saints Triumphant Sunday:



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