

Notes:

## ORDERING INFORMATION

### PARAMENTS AND LITURGICAL DESIGN

Massmann Studios. [www.massmannstudios.com](http://www.massmannstudios.com) They are the American Lutheran suppliers for Slabbinck and the sole supplier for Panarotto. They are a full service house including design, renovation, construction, and chancel appointments. They have booth at the conference.

### EMAIL SERVICES

Mailchimp. [www.mailchimp.com](http://www.mailchimp.com) Free if you will take their badge. Otherwise \$50 annually. Great service.

### CANDLES

Mt. Sinai Orthodox Church Products.  
<http://www.orthodoxsupply.com/candles.htm>  
100% Beeswax candles, order by pound.  
3635 Cottage Grove Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403.  
(800) 867-3036

### CLIPART

Clip Art for Year A, or B, or C by Steve Erspamer.  
<http://www.ltp.org> Liturgy Training Publications  
3949 South Racine Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60609  
800-933-1800. Comes with a book and CD. \$35

### PALMS

Meyer Vogelpohl. <http://www.mvchurchgoods.com/>  
Large Palm Strips, 100 per package, 24"-36".  
10311 Julian Dr. Cincinnati, OH 45215.  
(800) 543-0264

### PARISH BREWER

He's mine. Get your own.

# CHORAL RECOMMENDATIONS

*Teach worship in the mission setting by using your choir to make worship excellent. Use liturgical pieces and seasonal pieces that are both accessible and memorable. These pieces will work for a choir of any size but are especially commended for use in a small choir. Many of these recommendations are either liturgical pieces or psalm arrangements.*

*This list is provided by the Rev. Aaron L. Christie:*

## ADVENT

Creator of the Stars of Night, GIA G-5890  
Savior of the Nations, Come, CPH 98-3100  
Prepare the Royal Highway MSM-50-0038  
Come, Lord! Maranatha, OCP 20317

## CHRISTMAS

Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming, GIA G-5217  
Peace Came to Earth, CPH 98-3376  
Today Is Born Our Savior, GIA G-5950

## EPIPHANY

Rise Up and Shine!, GIA G-4431

## LENT

Psalm 130 "If You, O God", GIA G-4129  
Hear Me, O My Precious Love, CPH 98-3799  
Ah, Holy Jesus, Augsburg 11-10572  
Adoramus Te, GIA G-4884  
Behold, before Our Wondering Eyes, OCP 20062  
Lord, Let at Last Thine Angels Come, GIA G-4680

## EASTER SEASON

The Tomb Is Empty, GIA G-6158  
Easter Alleluia, GIA G-5019  
These Things Did Thomas Count as Real, CPH 98-3901  
You, Jesus, Are My Shepherd True, CPH 98-3891  
The Lord Is My Shepherd, OCP 20056

## ASCENSION

Ascendit Deus, GIA G-5685  
Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled, GIA G-4349

## PENTECOST

Veni Sancte Spiritus, CPH 98-3943  
Come Down, Creator Spirit, OCP 20240

## REFORMATION

God Is Our Refuge and Strength, CPH 98-3835  
In Christ Alone, Hope Publishing Company C-5398

## SAINTS TRIUMPHANT

Blest Are They, GIA G-2958

## CHRIST THE KING

O, Worship the King, GIA G-5810  
Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending, CPH 98-3890

## LITURGICAL SELECTIONS

Festival Gloria, CPH 98-3915  
We All Believe in One True God, GIA G-4926  
A New Magnificat, Augsburg 11-10479  
We Praise You and Ackn. You, O God, CPH 98-3921  
Agnus Dei, Morning Star MSM-50-6403  
Mass of Creation, GIA G-2777  
German Mass, GIA G-2848R

## EVENING PRAYER

Psalm 141: Let My Prayer Rise Up, GIA G-3599  
Now Rest Beneath Night's Shadow, CPH 98-3113  
Thy Holy Wings, Morning Star MSM-50-5552

## VARIOUS

Springs of Water, Bless the Lord, OCP 20178  
The Glory of the Lord, GIA G-5460  
If You Will Trust the Lord to Guide You, MSM-50-9108  
Where Your Treasure Is, GIA G-5443

*Here are a few more liturgical pieces well suited to teaching worship in the mission setting. These have all been used at our congregation, Faith, in Sharpsburg, Georgia. Buy them; use them. -- JES*

GIA Cantor's Book of Gospel Acclamations, Batastini, G-4987

Pilgrim Song (Psalm 121), GIA-5228  
Lamb of God, Kenneth Kosche, AM660  
Advent Gathering Song, GIA-4131  
To You, O God (Psalm 25), GIA G-5237  
Melodic Gloria, GIA G-2955  
Verse of Day for All Saints, MSM-80-810  
Taize, Jesus Remember Me, GIA G-3430  
Songs and Prayers from Taize, GIA G-3719  
Farewell to Alleluia, Farlee, Augsburg 11-10064

## GATHERING RITES

Lead us to your light (Advent), GIA G-5523  
Emmanuel Comes (Advent), MSM-50-0050  
The Time of Fullfillment (Lent), GIA G-3906

## SERVICE FOLDER NOTES

Use the service folder as a teaching tool. Here are notes for various parts of the service that we use as footnotes. Again with the disclaimer for copyrighted sources. The ones below can give you a flavor of what we do.

### KYRIE, LORD HAVE MERCY

The word *Kyrie* (kir- ee—ay) is a Greek word from the phrase *Kyrie eleison* which means, “Lord, have mercy!” This is the most heartfelt cry of a believer to his Lord. It is not a cry for forgiveness, but a cry for mercy that our Lord and King hear us and help us in our necessities and trouble. Christians have been praying the *Kyrie* at Sunday worship for more than 1700 years (that’s why its name is Greek, the language most commonly spoken at the time). This morning, may it also be our heartfelt cry to our Lord and King.

### THE LORD’S PRAYER

For 500 years, it has been the widespread custom of the Lutheran Church to ring the church bell three times during the Lord’s Prayer. Rung at the beginning, middle and end of the prayer, it allowed even the sick and absent across the countryside to join the Church in praying the “Our Father.”

### HOSANNA!

The word “*hosanna*” is a Hebrew word that means “*Lord, save us!*” The crowds cried, “*Hosanna!*” at Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem, and it is still the cry of Christians today. The Lord has saved us! Hosanna!

### FATHER WE PRAISE YOU

We worship our God this morning with the ancient song of praise, *Christe Sanctorum*. This hymn was written by Gregory the Great in the 6th century A.D., and it reflects the wonderful legacy that historic Christianity has left for the Church today.

### THE EVENING HYMN

This ancient Latin hymn “*Te lucis ante terminium*” was written around 500 AD and has been sung in the service of Prayer at Close of Day for 1500 years. It is a quiet and peaceful hymn whose simple melody suggests the simplicity of a believer’s peace and rest with God. Note the appropriateness of the text for this Evening Hymn.



### YOU ARE GOD; WE PRAISE YOU *TE DEUM*

The *Te Deum* is an ancient song of the Church and considered the finest Latin hymn. It has been sung by Christians for 1500 years. This Latin hymn is one of praise to the Triune God and was written by Ambrose on the occasion of Augustine’s baptism. What a beautiful confession of our God and Savior! This song of praise adds our voices to the choirs of angels and martyrs in glorifying our God.

### PASCHAL CANDLE – FOR FUNERAL

The Paschal Candle is a symbol of the Resurrection. A new candle is brought in and dated during the Easter Vigil each year. It is lit for three occasions: during the Easter season, at baptisms, and at funerals. The Apostle Paul explains the extraordinary connection between these three events in Romans 6:

“Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

\_\_\_\_\_ was baptized and given new life in Christ. He/She is now united with his risen Lord in the glories of Paradise. The candle reminds us that because Christ lives forever, so does our friend.

### THE PRAYER OF THE DAY FOR ASCENSION

The Venerable Bede was an English monk who lived around 700 AD. Known as “the Teacher of the Middle Ages,” Bede’s best known contribution is the system of dating events by years before or after Christ. Bede died in 735 AD on the Feast of the Ascension, and the words he spoke on his deathbed serve as the Prayer of the Day for the Festival of the Ascension of our Lord. The words themselves flow from the great ascension texts. The prayer sets the tone for the Sunday, beginning with a note of triumph and ending with a supplication for the Spirit and His Work. Today we see that Christ rules all things for his Church.

## HYMN NOTES

Use the service folder as a teaching tool. Here are some notes that we put as footnotes in our service folder. Disclaimer: many of these notes have been summarized from various copyrighted sources—chiefly, *Christian Worship: Handbook (NPH)*. These are for demonstrative purposes. We try to have one or two notes every service. The ones below can give you a flavor of what we do.

Hymn: #177, *Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest*

Written in 900 AD, this Latin hymn “*Veni, Creator Spiritus*” has been praised as the greatest Latin hymn ever composed next to the “*Te Deum laudamus*.” It is most often ascribed to Rhabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mainz. The earliest use of the hymn was at Vespers during the week of Pentecost, and it came to be used at Terce (9 a.m., the hour that the apostles received the Holy Spirit) in the late tenth century. The singing of this hymn in medieval services was apparently done with great dignity, accompanied by the use of incense, lights, bells, and rich vestments. The earliest mention of the hymn for the ordination service is its use in 1049 AD at the Synod of Rheims. In 1307 AD it was included with the English coronation rite for King Edward II and has been used continuously at English coronations ever since.

Hymn: #179, *Hail Thee, Festival Day*

This hymn was written by Venatius Fortunatus in 575 AD. This has been sung by the Christian Church at the beginning of Pentecost services for nearly 1500 years.

Hymn: #196, *Lord God, to You We All Give Praise*

This hymn was written in September of 1543 for the Festival of St. Michael and All Angels. The author is Philipp Melanchthon, one of the heroes of the Lutheran Reformation. Melanchthon was a prodigy, completing his bachelor of arts degree at age 14, and his Masters at age 17. By age 21 he was a professor of Greek at the University of Wittenberg. His classes were so popular he at times lectured to classes of 1500 students. He was a faculty colleague of Dr. Martin Luther and, guided by Luther, was also the author the Augsburg Confession, a monumental contribution to Lutheranism. He is buried in the Castle Church of Wittenberg, opposite Luther’s pulpit-side grave.

Hymn: #203, *Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word*

This hymn was written by Dr. Martin Luther in 1541 because of a grave and growing threat. Militant Islam was on the move. Seeking to conquer the West and force conversion, the armies of Islam conquered much of the Mediterranean world. They conquered right up to Vienna, the gateway to Europe. A service of prayer for the safety of Christendom was held in 1541, and Luther wrote this hymn for the boys choir. It is a prayer that

God preserve his people regardless of the evil aims of this world.

Hymn: #363, *Savior of the Nations, Come*

These words were written by Ambrose, one of the greatest teachers of the Christian Church. Ambrose was the bishop of Milan, Italy over 1600 years ago. At Ambrose’s time there were many who denied that Jesus, our Savior, is truly God. But in his writings and in his hymns Ambrose taught the truth, that baby in the manger is God! We marvel, just like Ambrose, that God was willing to be born in Bethlehem. The awe and amazement expressed in this hymn has not been lost to us so many years later. His love will always cause us to sing praise!

Hymn: #377, *Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice*

This hymn by Martin Luther was the first congregational hymn we wrote. Because of its clear and straightforward teaching of God's grace it became a popular evangelism tool in Germany. One of Luther's contemporaries wrote, "I do not doubt that through this one hymn of Luther many hundreds of Christians have been brought to the true faith."

Hymn: #379, *Amazing Grace—How Sweet the Sound*

One of the most well-known hymns in the world, “Amazing Grace” was written by John Newton, a slave trader and sea captain who knew well both sin and grace. Brought to faith by God, John Newton left that world behind and served as a pastor for 35 years. His grave marker in an England cemetery is engraved with words he wrote for himself: *John Newton, clerk, once an Infidel and Libertine, a servant of slavers in Africa, was, by the rich Mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the Faith he had long labored to destroy.*

Hymn: #517, *Almighty Father, Strong to Save*

William Whiting wrote this hymn in 1860 for a pupil about to sail for America. It has become known as the sailor’s hymn, and its opening lines are inscribed over the chancel of the chapel at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. It was the favorite hymn of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was sung at the signing of the Atlantic Charter in 1941, at Roosevelt’s funeral in Hyde Park, New York, in 1945, and for the funeral service of John F. Kennedy in 1963. The tune MELITA

composed for this hymn takes its name from the ancient Roman name of the island of Malta where Paul was shipwrecked and in peril on the sea.

Hymn: #529, *Built on the Rock*

Nicolai Gundvig was a Lutheran pastor and educator in Denmark. He wrote this song in 1837. For 30 years the old cathedral church of our Lady in Copenhagen was in ruins. It had been bombed by the English during the Napoleonic Wars. The pile of rubble from the old church was a striking reminder that yes, “crumbled have spires in ev’ry land”, but yet God builds his church out of us the “living stones.”

Hymn: #571, *From Greenland’s Icy Mountains*

This amazingly popular hymn was composed in twenty minutes for a special Pentecost service in 1819 at Wrexham, England. The author, Reginald Heber, was urged by the vicar of Wrexham to write something for the morning’s service. Since the vicar was also his father-in-law, Heber agreed and composed this Pentecost hymn that has lasted generations.

Hymn: #618, *Before the Lord We Bow*

The author of this hymn was Francis Scott Key, whose fame comes from writing the “Star Spangled Banner.” He wrote this as a hymn of thanksgiving for the Fourth of July, 1832. Our theme today centers on the growth of God’s kingdom. This hymn seems especially apt: we thank God for the earthly kingdom we inhabit, but also join in voicing our hope that this nation will send forth a glorious band of believers on the Day of Resurrection (verse 5). May God bless the growth of his kingdom in our nation and around the world!

*Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring* by J.S. Bach.

This extremely popular piece of music was written by one of the greatest composers of all time, Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach was a confessional Lutheran living in Germany during the 1700s. Most of his compositions were pieces written for the church at which he served. The piece sung today is just three minutes of a full cantata Bach composed for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. We sang it on August 15, the Festival of St. Mary, Mother of our Lord. Composed originally in 1716 in Weimar, Cantata 147 was revised by Bach during his Leipzig years, and premiered in an expanded version in 1723 for the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is the feast which commemorates the visitation of the archangel Gabriel to the young, betrothed but as yet unwed Mary to announce that she would become the Mother of God.

### *Magnificat*

Mary’s Song to God is called the *Magnificat*. The title comes from the first line of the song in Latin: *Magnificat anima mea*—“My soul magnifies the Lord.” The *Magnificat* has been used in evening services by the Christian Church since at least 500 AD.

Martin Luther once wrote: “Now, in all of Scripture I do not know anything that serves such a purpose so well as this sacred hymn of the most blessed Mother of God, which ought indeed to be learned and kept in mind by all who would rule well and be helpful lords. In it she sings sweetly about the fear of God, what sort of Lord he is, and especially what his dealings are with those of low and high degree. Let someone else listen to his love singing a worldly ditty; this pure virgin well deserves to be heard by prince and lord, as she sings him her sacred, chaste, and salutary song. It is a fine custom, too, that this canticle is sung in all churches daily at vespers (the evening service), and in special and appropriate settings that set it apart.”



## SERVICE INTRODUCTIONS

*Use the service folder as a teaching tool. We use the inside cover of each week's bulletin to describe the theme for the week, the prayer of the day, and the context of the Church Year. Whenever there's a special service, we will also use space to teach about the day, the service, or the ritual actions involved. Some samples are included below.*

### SERVICE NOTES:

#### THE FESTIVAL OF ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

Were you ever afraid of the dark? I was. When I was a little boy, I was afraid of the dark because I couldn't see, and who knows what might be out there, lurking in your closet or under your bed...

As adults we still tend to fear things that we can't see. Though now, it's about perspective. As you lie in bed late at night, and you are woken by that strange noise in the house...you fear it, because you don't know if it's that precariously stacked pile of toys falling over, or an unexpected houseguest... Perspective makes all the difference, right?

Michael is one of two angels that the Bible names for us. The other is the great messenger of God's grace, Gabriel. Gabriel's job was to announce the remarkable works of God's salvation to the waiting world. Michael's job is different.

Michael is called the archangel, that is, the leader of the angels. The Bible says that he is in charge of the great army of angels that God uses to protect and care for us. This is the day we remember God's great love in giving us these amazing protectors, the angels.

Today we're celebrating the Festival of St. Michael and All Angels. For 1500 years the Christian Church has celebrated this festival near the autumnal equinox, the day of 12 hours of sunlight and 12 hours of darkness. As Christians watched the autumn nights grow longer and the days grow shorter, they were reminded of the struggle between good and evil—between the forces of light and the forces of darkness—between the angel armies of God and the demonic forces of Satan. And so, every year as autumn darkened into winter, the Church celebrated the Feast of the Archangel, and remembered that Michael and All the Angels fought on their side.

You see, angels are one of God's answers to our fears. God wants to give us the proper perspective as we go through this life. No matter what sounds we hear, or dilemmas we face, or tragedies we endure...God's message for us is: Don't be afraid, because we are not alone.

### SERVICE NOTES:

#### TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

For more than 500 years, the Church has celebrated the Sunday known as the Festival of the Transfiguration. The word "transfiguration" simply means "a change in appearance." It refers to the account in the Gospel lesson for today when Jesus shined forth in all his heavenly glory.

Jesus gave his disciples a glimpse of his glory, because the cross was coming. Jesus left that mountain and headed to Jerusalem where he would suffer, die, and rise again for all mankind.

Transfiguration Sunday signals the end of the season of Epiphany. When we next meet, it will be the season of Lent, a time of reflection on our Savior's suffering. So on this day, we say our last Alleluias until the Day of Resurrection.

### SERVICE NOTES:

#### THE FESTIVAL OF THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

Today we celebrate the Festival of the Epiphany of Our Lord. Epiphany is Christendom's second oldest festival; it has been celebrated continuously by the Church for nearly 1900 years.

The festival was originally a general celebration of the incarnation of Jesus Christ which included the commemoration of his birth, the visit of the Magi (Wise Men), all of Jesus' childhood events up to and including his baptism. Today, the Eastern Orthodox church celebrates Epiphany as the festival of Christ's birth, and the Western Church stresses the visit of the Magi.

The season of Epiphany (the Greek word for "appearance") celebrates God's revealing or manifesting of Jesus' identity as true God, Messiah, and Savior of the world. Epiphany not only commemorates the fact that Jesus appeared to save us, but that God revealed the identity of Jesus to the world.

The season of Epiphany will conclude on February 3, with the festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord.

**SERVICE NOTES:  
REFORMATION**

Today we celebrate the Festival of the Reformation of the Church. What does that mean? It means that today we remember why we're called Lutherans.

The effect of the Lutheran Reformation of the Church on the history of the world can hardly be overstated. Quite simply, it caused one of the most profound sea-changes in history. In fact, when *US News and World Report* ranked the most important events of the last 1000 years, the Lutheran Reformation placed second, right behind Gutenberg's moveable type printing press. Now consider that for a minute... That means that they considered the Lutheran Reformation to be of greater significance than the discovery of the New World (number 3 on the list).

But why? And who was this Luther guy? He was a monk, a priest, a professor at a little university in Wittenberg, Germany. Why would a guy like that be listed at the third most influential person of the last 1000 years (*1000 Years and 1000 People*, Gottlieb and Bowers)? More important than Einstein, Edison, George Washington, etc.?

Why? All for the reason that we call ourselves "Lutherans" and celebrate this Festival of the Lutheran Reformation.

During the dark days of the Middle Ages, the truth of God's Word was hidden away in monasteries. The church of that day was not teaching that we are saved by Jesus' death and resurrection. Instead, people were told that they needed to try and earn their way to heaven—or worse, that they had to *buy* their way to heaven. The truth of God's word was rejected, and the traditions of men put in its place.

Dr. Luther changed all that on October 31, 1517, when he nailed 95 Statements for Debate on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. He said that the Bible should be our only source of teaching, not manmade traditions. He showed that God saved us by grace alone, by faith alone. He returned the Bible into the hands of the people, and quite literally changed the world.

Today, we are not here to celebrate a man. We're here to celebrate the grace of God who reformed his Church, and brought back the pure and simple teaching that had been lost: Jesus Christ died and rose for me, so I will be in heaven forever. Period.

By Grace Alone. By Faith Alone. By Scripture Alone

**SERVICE NOTES:  
ASH WEDNESDAY**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the Christians 40-day journey with the Lord to the cross and tomb, preparing for the proclamation of Easter. The 40 days are reminiscent of several biblical events: Jesus' 40-day fast at the beginning of his ministry, Moses' stay on Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law, Elijah's fast on his way to the mountain of God.

Ash Wednesday begins the Christian's Lenten journey with a reminder of our mortality and a call to repentance. The ancient practice of imposing ashes on the foreheads of the faithful gives Ash Wednesday its name. The church father Tertullian (AD 160-215) writes of the practice as a public expression of repentance and of our human frailty that stands in need of Christ. The ashes remind us forcefully of our need for redeeming grace as they recall words from the rite for Christian burial: "...earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust..." words that will someday be spoken over us all.

**SERVICE NOTES:  
ADVENT**

Advent is a Latin word that means "coming." The season of Advent is the four week period before Christmas that the Church uses to remember the "coming" of the Christ. We celebrate that he came once as a baby in Bethlehem, and that he will come again at the end of time.

The image on the next page depicts the Annunciation, or the moment when the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that Jesus would be born of her. Above kneeling Mary is the dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Gabriel said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."



**SERVICE NOTES:****LENT**

The word Lent comes from an Old English word for spring (“lengthen,” the time of the year when the days grow longer). For the last 1700 years, the Church has set aside the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter as a time of special preparation. It is a time of repentance and renewal.

During Lent, our rejoicing is muted as we remember our Lord’s suffering and death. But it is with a purpose: we know that the Lord who died took up his life again on Easter Sunday morning. So our 40 days of Lent are ones lived in the certain hope of the resurrection.

The color of the season is purple. Purple is the ancient color of royalty. We have this kind of king: he wore a crown of thorns and carried a cross for us. Thanks be to God!

For the precise counters in the congregation, the Church speaks of 40 days of Lent because they did not count the Sundays, which retained their significance as “little Easters.”

**SERVICE NOTES:****MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**The Day:** Just as Ash Wednesday begins Lent so Maundy Thursday marks the end of Lent proper and the beginning of the Three Holy Days of Christendom (the Triduum). The theme of the celebration is the Lord’s new command (*mandatus*, Latin, became *maundy* in Old English) to his disciples of all time to love each other as he has loved. The institution of the Lord’s Supper sets forth the depth of Jesus’ love and gives power to the Church to live out his command. As with Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday occupies a unique place in the church calendar. It is a festival in which reconciliation is solemnly expressed, and in which the congregation makes its transition from preparation for the celebration of the mystery of the Passion and Resurrection to the celebration itself.

**The Service:** Compline (kom’ plin) is an ancient rite of the Church. For centuries, compline was the final service of the day before one retires for the night. The congregation gathers in silence and meditation. Preservice music is omitted and the lighting is subdued to foster contemplation. This is a time for prayer and meditation. The believer finds peace in God’s forgiveness and security under the shadow of his wings.

**The Stripping of the Altar:** The post-communion action of the stripping the altar has its roots in the early Church. The congregation sings a hymn as the communion vessels, cross, and candles are carried from the chancel. Once the communion vessels and appointments are removed, the altar, which represents the body of Christ, becomes the focus. The altar is

solemnly stripped of its vestments in token of the abandonment of Jesus in Gethsemane. The altar is left completely bare for Good Friday.

**The Dismissal:** The service concludes after the stripping of the altar. There is no closing blessing or closing hymn. Rather, the services of the Three Days flow into one another, as the congregation leaves to reassemble on Good Friday for our service of Tenebrae. Dismiss yourself when you are finished with your prayers and meditation.

**SERVICE NOTES:****TENEBRAE**

**The Day:** Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter commemorate the central events of the Christian Church. Good Friday is the solemn celebration of the Lord’s suffering and death on the cross. Our remembrance of Jesus’ death, while solemn, is not a message of gloom, but a service of adoration of the Son of God as he gives up his life. We gather here today to celebrate the sacrifice of the cross. So we remember his passion, but do so with a triumphant note—for we know in his resurrection, Christ has conquered sin, death, and the devil.

**The Service:** Tenebræ (ten’ eh bray) is an ancient rite of the Church. The Latin word “tenebræ” means “darkness.” During this service the candles will be extinguished and lights will be progressively dimmed. In this we remember that God the Father cloaked the land with darkness during the death of his Son (Mt 27:45).

This service is a time for prayerful meditation. There is no preservice music. The altar remains stripped bare. There are moments of extended silence for meditation on the magnitude of Christ’s sacrificial love.

**The Dismissal:** The service concludes with the final song, *Lord, Let at Last Your Angels Come*. There is no closing blessing or closing hymn. The congregation may remain for prayer and meditation. The congregation will dismiss themselves and leave God’s house in silence, to return and gather for the Easter Vigil.