

## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION **ESTABLISHED BY CHRIST** *1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

Our congregation believes that Holy Communion is a gift of Christ to His Church. The apostle Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1 Corinthians 11:28-29). Out of loving concern for the communicants and from our understanding of the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions, we request that those who commune here:

- 1. Be Baptized Christians**
- 2. Have received special instruction on the essence and significance of the Lord's Supper.**
- 3. Are mature enough to examine themselves, recognizing their sin and their need for God's grace through His special means.**
- 4. Profess the "real presence" of Christ in this Sacrament, that is, confessing the true presence of Christ's body in the bread and His blood in the wine.**
- 5. Have faith in the Savior's words, "Given and shed for you."**
- 6. Recognizing that participation at our table indicates public agreement with our understanding of this blessed Sacrament.**

Holy Communion is celebrated each 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 9:00 AM  
and each 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday at 5:00 PM.

Uninstructed children are invited to come forward with their parents to receive a blessing.

### IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS TO REVIEW

Q. Do you acknowledge your sins and are you willing to turn from them with the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit?

**A. Yes, I acknowledge my sin and seek the Lord's mercy.** *1 John 1:8-9*

Q. Do you believe that God, for Jesus' sake, has forgiven you all your sins?

**A. Yes, Christ died for me, and suffered the punishment that I deserve.** *Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 6:21, 23*

Q. Do you believe that the Lord offers Christians His body and blood in, with, and under the bread and the wine for the strengthening of faith and the forgiveness of sins?

**A. Yes, I believe the Scripture which teaches, "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?"** *1 Corinthians 10:16*

Q. Should Christians with weak faith receive the Sacrament?

**A. The Sacrament is especially offered for those weak of faith.** *Isaiah 42:3; John 6:37*

**FOR WHERE THERE IS FORGIVENESS OF SINS, THERE IS ALSO LIFE AND SALVATION**

### Non-Alcoholic Fruit of the Vine

Persons who have a preference for no alcohol are invited to receive Holy Communion using non-alcoholic grape juice. The juice is located in the center circle of each individual tray and is lighter in color.

**I O G D**

*in omnibus glorificetur Deus  
that in all things God may be glorified*  
Romans 15:5-6      1 Peter 4:7-11

***Giving Thanks to God Through Worship!***

**Welcome!** We hope that your time in worship will encourage and strengthen your relationship with God. We share the greatest hope through the One who loves you most – Jesus Christ! We invite all worshipers today to fill out the Fellowship Pew Pad during the offering portion of worship. You are also invited to make a prayer request on the green card, which is in the pew rack and then place the card in the offering plate or hand them to an usher. We pray God’s blessings upon you and invite you to worship with us every Saturday at 5:00 pm and Sunday morning at 9:00 am.

**THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE (December 15 – December 21)**

**James 1:5:** *If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. (NLT)*

**THE ADVENT WREATH**

The Advent wreath is one of the most popular symbols used by Christians during the season of Advent. These wreaths, consisting of a circle of evergreen branches set around four candles, are used in both churches and Christian homes. The evergreen circle stands for the eternal life that Christ has won for all believers. The burning candles represent the coming of Christ as the light of the world (John 1:4-9). A candle is lit on the first Sunday of Advent, with another one lit on each succeeding Sunday.

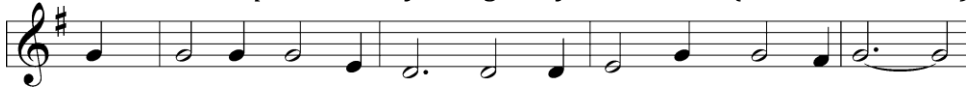
The colors of the Advent candles can vary. Zion’s wreath consists of three blue candles and one rose-colored or pink candle. The blue candles signify the hopeful anticipation of the season; the joyfully colored pink candle is reserved for the third Sunday in Advent (today!) traditionally known as *Gaudete Sunday*, which means “rejoice” in Latin. – from Philippians 4:4, *Rejoice...the Lord is near!*

**PRE-SERVICE MUSIC****WELCOME**

## ✚ DIVINE SERVICE SETTING THREE ✚

(Lutheran Service Book page 184)

### OPENING HYMN *"Prepare the Royal Highway" – LSB 343 (Stand on verse 4)*



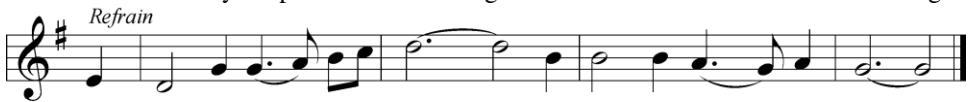
1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!  
2 God's peo - ple, see Him com - ing: Your own e - ter - nal king!  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom - ised king!  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



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



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



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

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### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** Amen. [Matthew 28:19b; 18-20]

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, calling on Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*  
Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**People: who made heaven and earth. *[Psalm 124:8]***

Pastor: I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,

**People: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. *[Psalm 32:5]***

*Silence for reflection on God's word and for self-examination*

Pastor: Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**People: O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Pastor: God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

**People: Yes.**

Pastor: Let it be done for you as you believe.

In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: May He who began this good work within you bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Philippians 1:6*  
The peace of the Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Almighty God, as we light the candles on this wreath marking our days of preparation for Christ's advent, stir up within us Your Spirit, that we may remember, rejoice and give thanks for Your faithfulness and for all Your blessings.

People: **Father, enlighten us with Your grace, that we may welcome others as You have welcomed us. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

**HYMN**      *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" – LSB 357*

2 O come, Thou Wis - dom from on high, Who or - d'rest  
7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind In one the  
all things might - i - ly; To us the path of  
hearts of all man - kind; Bid Thou our sad di -  
knowl - edge show, And teach us in her ways to go.  
vi - sions cease, And be Thy - self our King of Peace.  
*Refrain*  
Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el  
Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Tune and text: Public domain

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

*Sit*

## OLD TESTAMENT: ISAIAH 35:1-10

Even the wilderness and desert will be glad in those days. The wasteland will rejoice and blossom with spring crocuses. <sup>2</sup>Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers and singing and joy! The deserts will become as green as the mountains of Lebanon, as lovely as Mount Carmel or the plain of Sharon. There the LORD will display his glory, the splendor of our God. <sup>3</sup>With this news, strengthen those who have tired hands, and encourage those who have weak knees. <sup>4</sup>Say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, and do not fear, for your God is coming to destroy your enemies. He is coming to save you.”

<sup>5</sup>And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf. <sup>6</sup>The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy! Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the wasteland. <sup>7</sup>The parched ground will become a pool, and springs of water will satisfy the thirsty land. Marsh grass and reeds and rushes will flourish where desert jackals once lived.

<sup>8</sup>And a great road will go through that once deserted land. It will be named the Highway of Holiness. Evil-minded people will never travel on it. It will be only for those who walk in God’s ways; fools will never walk there. <sup>9</sup>Lions will not lurk along its course, nor any other ferocious beasts. There will be no other dangers. Only the redeemed will walk on it. <sup>10</sup>Those who have been ransomed by the LORD will return. They will enter Jerusalem singing, crowned with everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be filled with joy and gladness.  
(NLT)

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: Thanks be to God. *(Responses are spoken)*

## NEW TESTAMENT: JAMES 5:7-11

<sup>7</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. <sup>8</sup> You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.

<sup>9</sup> Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door!

<sup>10</sup> For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy. (*NLT*)

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

### "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" – LSB 338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy peo - ple free;  
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; Born a child and yet a king!



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



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



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

Text and tune: Public domain

## THE HOLY GOSPEL: MATTHEW 11:2-15

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

<sup>2</sup>John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, <sup>3</sup>“Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?”

<sup>4</sup>Jesus told them, “Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—  
<sup>5</sup>the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.” <sup>6</sup>And he added, “God blesses those who do not fall away because of me.”

<sup>7</sup>As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. “What kind of man did you go into the wilderness to see? Was he a weak reed, swayed by every breath of wind? <sup>8</sup>Or were you expecting to see a man dressed in expensive clothes? No, people with expensive clothes live in palaces. <sup>9</sup>Were you looking for a prophet? Yes, and he is more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say, ‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way before you.’ <sup>11</sup>“I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is! <sup>12</sup>And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it. <sup>13</sup>For before John came, all the prophets and the law of Moses looked forward to this present time. <sup>14</sup>And if you are willing to accept what I say, he is Elijah, the one the prophets said would come. <sup>15</sup>Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand! (*NLT*)

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us..

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*Sit*



# HYMN

## *"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People" – LSB 347 (Stand on verse 4)*



1 "Com - fort, com - fort ye My peo - ple, Speak ye peace," thus  
 2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, Blot - ting out each  
 3 Hark, the her - ald's voice is cry - ing In the des - ert  
 4 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed; Make the rough - er



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



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



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



sins I cov - er And her war - fare now is o - ver."  
 pin - ing sad - ness In - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.  
 rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.  
 see the to - ken That His Word is nev - er bro - ken.

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# THE SERMON

**James 1:5:** "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking." (NLT)

*After the sermon please rise and sing:*

## **GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND**

*The Sh'ma*

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*O God, hear the prayers and petitions of Your people. We do not make requests of You because we are righteous, but because of Your great mercy (Daniel 9:18).*

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

#### *Brief silence*

God, our Father, Your Son calls us to pray with confidence. Give us Your Spirit to see You in the person of Your Son, knowing that He and none other is the One who came to bear our sins and be our Savior. Encourage us in true faith and fill us with joy, knowing He will come again to make all things new. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Father in heaven, since You graciously rule Your people, bless and guide all who are in authority to rule justly. Stir up Your Spirit among Your people, that we may believe Your Word and live holy lives. Sustain the faith of all who suffer persecution and death for the name of Christ, and keep us in true faith in Your Kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus, You gave bread to the hungry, sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf; You made the lame to walk and cleansed lepers; You raised the dead and preached Good News to the poor. Help again Your people — the hungry, the poor and unemployed, the sick, the dying, the grieving and all who are anxious of heart *especially* ...Graciously give them all that they need for their well-being, give them ears to hear the Good News of life and salvation, and quiet their fears with Your love. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Father, forgive us our sins and cleanse us from unrighteousness. Soften the hearts of those who reject Your Word, and renew those whose faith is faltering. Open our ears to Your call of repentance and to Your promise of mercy. Grant us to come to Your table in true faith, gladly receiving Christ's body and blood and the forgiveness He promises. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Father, into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Sit*



## SHARING GOD'S BLESSINGS: THE OFFERING

*Commit yourselves to the LORD and serve Him only. – 1 Samuel 7:3*

Because we value your presence in worship and desire to serve you as best as we can, please use this time to complete the Fellowship Pew Pad and pass it to your neighbor. Prayer requests may be made by filling out the green card in the pew rack in front of you and placing it in the offering plate.

## MUSICAL OFFERING

### + SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +

## PREFACE

**Pastor:** The Lord be with you. *[2 Timothy 4:22]*

**People:** And also with you.

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Pastor:** Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your boundless mercy You sent Your servant, John the Baptist, to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of heaven draws near. With thankful hearts we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus," confident that in His body and blood, given us to eat and drink, we receive the forgiveness of sins and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

## LORD'S PRAYER

**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

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." [Mark 14: 22-24]

## PAX DOMINI *≈ The Peace of the Lord*

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you. [John 20:19]

People: Amen.

## AGNUS DEI *≈ "Lamb of God"* LSB 163

**G** 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.

## DISTRIBUTION *(Please be seated)*

*Our belief and practice concerning Holy Communion is written on page 2 of this worship folder. Reception of Communion indicates that you share our confession. If a gluten free wafer is needed, please inform the pastor as you proceed to Communion.*

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

### "Lamb of God" – LSB 550



1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, But You have  
2 Your Gift of love they cru - ci - fied, They laughed and  
3 I was so lost, I should have died, But You have



sent Him from Your side To walk up - on this guilt - y  
scorned Him as He died: The hum - ble King they named a  
brought me to Your side To be led by Your staff and



sod, And to be - come the Lamb of God.  
fraud, And sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God.  
rod, And to be called a lamb of God.



O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the ho - ly Lamb of God!



O wash me in His pre - cious blood, My Je - sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

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*"Once He Came in Blessing" – LSB 333*

1 Once He came in bless - ing, All our sins re -  
 2 Now He gent - ly leads us; With Him - self He  
 3 Soon will come that hour When with might - y  
 4 Come, then, O Lord Je - sus, From our sins re -

dress - ing; Came in like - ness low - ly,  
 feeds us Pre - cious food from heav - en,  
 pow - er Christ will come in splen - dor  
 lease us. Keep our hearts be - liev - ing,

Son of God most ho - ly; Bore the cross to  
 Pledge of peace here giv - en, Man - na that will  
 And will judg - ment ren - der, With the faith - ful  
 That we, grace re - ceiv - ing, Ev - er may con -

save us; Hope and free - dom gave us.  
 nour - ish Souls that they may flour - ish.  
 shar - ing Joy be - yond com - par - ing.  
 fess You Till in heav'n we bless You.

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*After distribution please stand to sing:*

**NUNC DIMITTIS** (*Tune only: VENI EMMANUEL, LSB 357*)

**Lord, let Your servant go in peace. Your gracious word I now recall.  
 My eyes have seen salvation here, glory for Israel, light for all.  
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

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## POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

Pastor: The body and blood of the Lord strengthen and preserve you steadfast in the true faith to life everlasting. Depart with joy and with confidence in + His peace.

**People: Amen!**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: We pray together:

**All: Heavenly Father, God of all grace, govern our hearts so that we may never forget Your blessings but always thank and praise You for all Your goodness in this life until, with all Your saints, we praise You eternally in Your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## THE BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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. *[Numbers 6:24-26]*

**People: Amen.**





## CLOSING SONG

### *"Sent Forth by God's Blessing" – LSB 643*



1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing, Our true faith con-fess-ing,  
2 With praise and thanks-giv-ing To God ev-er-liv-ing,  
The peo-ple of God from His dwell-ing take leave.  
The tasks of our ev-'ry-day life we will face.  
The Sup-per is end-ed. O now be ex-tend-ed  
Our faith ev-er shar-ing, In love ev-er car-ing,  
The fruits of this ser-vice in all who be-lieve.  
Em-brac-ing His chil-dren of each tribe and race.  
The seed of His teach-ing, Re-cep-tive souls reach-ing,  
With Your feast You feed us, With Your light now lead us;  
Shall blos-som in ac-tion for God and for all.  
U-nite us as one in this life that we share.  
His grace did in-vite us, His love shall u-nite us  
Then may all the liv-ing With praise and thanks-giv-ing  
To work for God's king-dom and an-swer His call.  
Give hon-or to Christ and His name that we bear.

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## POSTLUDE