



“I Thank My God for You!”

Sunday, December 5, 2021 9:00AM

Worship Service

As We Gather

Preparing for Christmas, we buy presents, attend social gatherings, decorate, make plans to gather with family, and some will brace for the pain of grief that can be so difficult this time of year. In the middle of all our preparing, today the voice of John the Baptist rings out, “Prepare the way of the Lord.” Undergirding all the preparing we are doing is preparing for the Lord. John calls us to “bear fruits in keeping with repentance.” In worship, we do just that. We repent. We turn again to God, seeking His mercy, receiving His forgiveness, partaking of His grace. This leads to bearing the fruit of the Spirit. John highlights the fruit of generosity and contentment. What fruit is God calling you to bear as you prepare for Christmas?

OPENING HYMN

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

LSB 343

- 1 Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!
Let ev’ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory
Foretold in sacred story: Refrain
- ref Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God’s Word!
- 2 God’s people, see Him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God’s promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! Refrain
- 3 Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev’ry nation
Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him!
All nations, now adore Him! Refrain
- 4 His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav’n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness so abounding: Refrain

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Stand

INVOCATION

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

C Amen.

EXHORTATION

LSB 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.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

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

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 81:8, 10–11, 13; antiphon: Luke 3:4b

P The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."

C **Hear, O My people, while I admonish you! O Israel, if you would but listen to Me!**

P I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

C **But My people did not listen to My voice; Israel would not submit to Me.**

P Oh, that My people would listen to Me, that Israel would walk in My ways!

C **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 The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."

KYRIE [Sing]

LSB 152

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

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

C **Lord, have mercy.**

A 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 mercy.**

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

C **Lord, have mercy.**

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

C **Amen.**

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Malachi 3:1–7b

¹“Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵“Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

⁶“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

Philippians 1:2–11

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

CHORAL ANTHEM

“A Tiny Child Will Come”

arr. Besig & Price

Stand

ALLELUIA AND VERSE

LSB 156

C Alleluia.

**Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 3:1–20

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

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

⁵Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall become straight,

and the rough places shall become level ways,

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

⁷He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” ¹¹And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. ¹⁹But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reprovved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

LSB 344

1 On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;

Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!

2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.

3 We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away
Like flow'rs that wither and decay.

4 Lay on the sick Thy healing hand
And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face
Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.

△ 5 All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit evermore.

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SERMON

"I Thank My God for You!"

Philippians 1:3

Stand

NICENE CREED

**☩ 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.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P As we prepare our hearts and minds for Christ's coming, we turn to the Lord in prayer.

A brief time of silence may be observed.

P O Wisdom from on high, guide Your Church throughout the world to repent—to turn each day to You, confessing our sins and being restored by You to bear the fruit of the Spirit. Move the leaders, pastors, teachers, and all the people of our Synod to bear fruits in keeping with repentance. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Desire of nations, bless the leaders of nations, our president and Congress, our governors and local leaders. Move all leaders to cease envy and boastfulness, injustice and corruption. Guide our leaders to be honorable people who do not neglect the poor and who strive toward the flourishing of all human beings. Bless those who serve in our armed forces and lift up refugees and all victims of war. Bring peace between us and our enemies and let Your peace reign over this broken world. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Dayspring from on high, come to the aid of all who are in need. As You humbly entered this world as a vulnerable baby, help all of us to enter humbly the lives of those who are sick, facing surgery, or dying, to offer comfort and hope, [*especially . . .*]. Bring healing according to Your will and peace to those whose suffering endures. Thank You for the work of doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals who work toward healing and restoration of wholeness. Guide scientists searching for cures for diseases that bring suffering to the world that their work might lead to healing for many. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Key of David, let Your joy, forgiveness, and peace flow freely in and among the families of this congregation. Empower parents and grandparents to love their children and children to love their parents. Watch over all who travel and comfort families who are separated by many miles. Guide families to be places where Your love is demonstrated to strangers as well as to friends. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Lord of might, empower us to hear the words of John the Baptist afresh today. Lead us to repent of those things that hinder our trust in You and fill us by the Holy Spirit to bear much fruit. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Immanuel, You deliver Your people even from the grip of death. Comfort those who mourn and use us to express the hope that comes from trusting in You. Bring us to be with them on that great day to come, and until that day give us grace to endure life's difficulties, while also abiding in Your love. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P You, O Lord, know the thoughts of our hearts and hear those prayers that come to You in sighs too deep for words. All our prayer we entrust to You in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

LSB 160

P The Lord be with you.

C And also 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, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. 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

LSB 161

C Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LSB 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 kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P 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."

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

PAX DOMINI

LSB 163

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

AGNUS DEI

LSB 163

C Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION

Sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Hark the Glad Sound"

LSB 349

- 1 Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.
- 2 He comes the pris'ners to release,
In Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

3 He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
To enrich the humble poor.

4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With Thy beloved name.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN

“Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”

LSB 347

1 “Comfort, comfort ye My people,
Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God;
“Comfort those who sit in darkness,
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem
Of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover
And her warfare now is over.”

2 Yea, her sins our God will pardon,
Blotting out each dark misdeed;
All that well deserved His anger
He no more will see or heed.
She hath suffered many_a day,
Now her griefs have passed away;
God will change her pining sadness
Into ever-springing gladness.

3 Hark, the herald's voice is crying
In the desert far and near,
Calling sinners to repentance,
Since the Kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet Him
And the hills bow down to greet Him.

4 Make ye straight what long was crooked;
Make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
As befits His holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
Now o'er earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token
That His Word is never broken.

Text: Public domain

Stand

THANK THE LORD

LSB 164

C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name.

**He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.**

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

A 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 Amen.

BENEDICTION

LSB 166

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 Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

LSB 649

- 1 Blest be the tie that binds
 Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
 Is like to that above.

- 2 Before our Father’s throne
 We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
 Our comforts and our cares.

- 3 We share our mutual woes,
 Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows
 The sympathizing tear.

- 4 When here our pathways part,
 We suffer bitter pain;
Yet, one in Christ and one in heart,
 We hope to meet again.

- 5 From sorrow, toil, and pain,
 And sin we shall be free
And perfect love and friendship reign
 Through all eternity.

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