

SOLA SCRIPTURA ✘ SOLA GRATIA ✘ SOLA FIDE

Divine Service



Our Savior Lutheran Church

Westminster, Massachusetts

SCRIPTURE ALONE ✘ GRACE ALONE ✘ FAITH ALONE

1 Hager Park Road
(Junction 140, 2, and 2A)
Westminster, MA 01473

Our Savior Lutheran Church

December 5, 2021

office@oursaviorlcms.com
church: 978-874-2479
www.oursaviorlcms.com

Visitor, you are very welcome here.

Please contact us with questions or prayer requests, and come worship with us again. Our pastor would be very glad to meet with you. May our Lord's Word be a blessing to all who gather in His name.

For those caring for young children or who have difficulty standing for the prayers, hymns, or other parts of the service, please know that you may sit as you find need or comfort.

Don't be embarrassed if your children make noise during worship—all children do. We encourage families to worship together. If needed, there is a nursery available in the basement during service and Bible class.

Out of courtesy to your brothers and sisters, please turn off your cell phone ringer and refrain from leaving or entering the sanctuary during the readings and the prayers.

Holy Communion

We welcome to the Lord's Table members of Our Savior and members of sister congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Pastor Gregory would be very glad to instruct you so that you can confess Jesus Christ with us and receive His holy body and blood for forgiveness, life, and salvation.

Spiritual Care

Individual confession and absolution, spiritual care, and pastoral counsel are available by appointment. Please contact the church office to schedule a time.

Christian Education

Sunday School and Adult Bible Study follow the service. Pre-Kindergarten through seventh grade students meet in the basement, high school students in pastors' study, and adults in the sanctuary.

Serving in Worship Today

Celebrant	Rev. Peter Gregory
Liturgist	Ed Shaffer
Organist	Deborah Colageo
Acolytes	Matthew Connell, Andrew Gull

Advent Note

During Advent, the Divine Service changes. We use a different confession of sins. The Gloria in Excelsis (first sung by the angels to the shepherds when Jesus was born) waits for Christmas. Hymn stanzas replace the Sanctus and Nunc Dimittis. The liturgy for Holy Communion is shorter. These changes mark this as a season of repentant joy in preparation for the glorious celebration of our Lord's birth beginning on Christmas Eve.

Prayers for Worship

Remembering the Nativity of John: Almighty God, through John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, You once proclaimed salvation. Now grant that we may know this salvation and serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Remembering the Martyrdom of John: Almighty God, You gave Your servant John the Baptist to be the forerunner of Your Son, Jesus Christ, in both his preaching of repentance and his innocent death. Grant that we, who have died and risen with Christ in Holy Baptism, may daily repent of our sins, patiently suffer for the sake of the truth, and fearlessly bear witness to His victory over death; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Cover Image

St. John the Baptist
by Hans Holbein the Younger (1519–1520).

> Note: The offering of tithes and gifts will be received in the offering box as you enter the nave for the service.
They will be presented before the Lord's altar prior to the Prayer of the Church. <

OPENING HYMN—TUNE: TLH 61/LSB 347 – TEXT: LSB 347

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|--|--|
| <p>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.”</p> | <p>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.</p> |
| <p>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.</p> | <p>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.</p> |

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THE INVOCATION

Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]

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

Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with sincere hearts to confess our sins to God, our Father, and to plead in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ for His forgiveness.

*Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.*

Psalm 124:8

*I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,
and You forgave the guilt of my sin.*

Psalm 32:5

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

Almighty God, our Maker and our Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. And so we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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, so that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Absolution

[John 20:19–23]

Amen.

THE INTROIT

Luke 3:4b; Psalm 81:8, 10–11, 13

The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.”

Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!

O Israel, if you would but listen to Me!

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.

But My people did not listen to My voice;

Israel would not submit to Me.

Oh, that My people would listen to Me,

that Israel would walk in My ways!

THE GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

THE KYRIE

Mark 10:47

**Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.**

THE SALUTATION

2 Timothy 4:22

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

THE COLLECT

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. Amen.

The Reading of God's Word

from the Old Testament: Malachi 3:1–7b

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM

PSALM 66:1–12; antiphon v. 12b

We went through fire and through water;

yet You have brought us out to a place of abundance.

Shout for joy to God, all the earth;

sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise!

Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds!"

So great is Your power that Your enemies come cringing to You.

All the earth worships You and sings praises to You;

they sing praises to Your name.

Come and see what God has done:

He is awesome in His deeds toward the children of man.

He turned the sea into dry land;

they passed through the river on foot.

There did we rejoice in Him, who rules by His might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—

let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

Bless our God, O peoples;

let the sound of His praise be heard,

who has kept our soul among the living

and has not let our feet slip.

For You, O God, have tested us;

You have tried us as silver is tried.

You brought us into the net;

You laid a crushing burden on our backs;

You let men ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water;

yet You have brought us out to a place of abundance.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

We went through fire and through water;

yet You have brought us out to a place of abundance.

from the Letters: Philippians 1:2–11

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HALLELUJAH AND VERSE

Luke 3:4b, 6

*Hallelujah! Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight;
all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Hallelujah!*

from the Holy Gospel: Luke 3:1–20

Glory be to You, O Lord!

After the reading:

Praise be to You, O Christ!

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Having heard the Word, what do you believe?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY – TUNE: TLH 63/LSB 344 & TEXT: LSB 344

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|---|--|
| <p>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!</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
|---|--|
- △ 5 All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit evermore.**

The Sermon

Luke 3:1–20

THE OFFERTORY HYMN – TUNE LSB 442 – TEXT: LSB 334, STANZAS 1, 4

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|--|--|
| <p>1 O Lord, how shall I meet You,
How welcome You aright?
Your people long to greet You,
My hope, my heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord most holy,
Your lamp within my breast
To do in spirit lowly
All that may please You best.</p> | <p>2 Love caused Your incarnation;
Love brought You down to me.
Your thirst for my salvation
Procured my liberty.
Oh, love beyond all telling,
That led You to embrace
In love, all love excelling,
Our lost and fallen race.</p> |
|--|--|

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The Presentation of the Offering

I will offer the thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the LORD.

O LORD, my strength, I love You.

The Prayer of the Church

after each petition:

*Lord, in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.*

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

We give You thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, 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. Send Your Spirit, we pray, on this bread and wine that they may also be the Body and Blood of Him who is coming in the clouds, that even now He may come to us and into us with grace and pardon. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

**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.**

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

The Words of Institution

Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25

THE PAX DOMINI

John 20:19

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

THE AGNUS DEI

John 1:29

**O Christ, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world,
grant us Your peace. Amen.**

Holy Communion

> *Note about Holy Communion: All who receive Holy Communion here must first be instructed. Our pastor will be very glad to instruct you. Please contact the office for an appointment. Those who have not been instructed may come forward with their arms crossed to receive a blessing.* <

DISTRIBUTION HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 336

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| <p>1 Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
Once for ev’ry sinner slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of His train:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.</p> | <p>3 Those dear tokens of His passion
Still His dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To His ransomed worshipers.
With what rapture, with what rapture,
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!</p> |
| <p>2 Ev’ry eye shall now behold Him
Robed in glorious majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold Him,
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
Deeply wailing,
Shall their true Messiah see.</p> | <p>4 Yea, amen, let all adore Thee,
High on Thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the pow’r and glory,
Claim the kingdom as Thine own.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and Thou alone!</p> |

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Arise, O Christian people!
Prepare yourselves today;
Prepare to greet the Savior,
Who takes your sins away.
To us by grace alone
The truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven
To all the world is shown.</p> <p>2 Prepare the way before Him;
Prepare for Him the best.
Cast out what would offend Him,
This great, this heav'nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way:
The lowly valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing,
His path all even lay.</p> | <p>3 The humble heart and lowly
God raises up on high;
Beneath His feet in terror
The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right,
That heeds God's invitation
And makes true preparation—
It is the Lord's delight.</p> <p>4 Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus;
Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive You
This blessed Adventtide.
From stall and manger low
Come now to dwell within me;
I'll sing Your praises gladly
And forth Your glory show.</p> |
|---|---|

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|--|--|
| <p>1 At the name of Jesus
Ev'ry knee shall bow,
Ev'ry tongue confess Him
King of glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure
We should call Him Lord,
Who from the beginning
Was the mighty Word.</p> <p>2 At His voice creation
Sprang at once to sight,
All the angel faces,
All the hosts of light,
Thrones and bright dominions,
Stars upon their way,
All the heav'nly orders
In their great array.</p> | <p>3 Humbled for a season,
To receive a name
From the lips of sinners
Unto whom He came,
Faithfully He bore it
Spotless to the last,
Brought it back victorious
When from death He passed;</p> <p>4 Bore it up triumphant
With its human light,
Through all ranks of creatures
To the central height,
To the throne of Godhead,
To the Father's breast,
Filled it with the glory
Of that perfect rest.</p> |
|--|--|

Continued on the next page.

5 In your hearts enthrone Him;
 There let Him subdue
 All that is not holy,
 All that is not true:
 Crown Him as your captain
 In temptation's hour;
 Let His will enfold you
 In its light and pow'r.

6 Christians, this Lord Jesus
 Shall return again
 In His Father's glory,
 With His angel train;
 For all wreaths of empire
 Meet upon His brow,
 And our hearts confess Him
 King of glory now.

△ 7 Glory then to Jesus,
 Who, the Prince of light,
 To a world in darkness
 Brought the gift of sight;
 Praise to God the Father;
 In the Spirit's love
 Praise we all together
 Him who reigns above.

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THE POST-COMMUNION HYMN—TUNE & TEXT: LSB 936, STS. 1, 4

Following the common dismissal for Holy Communion, we stand and sing these hymn stanzas based on the Benedictus (Luke 1:68–79), the Song of Zechariah, father of John the Baptist.

1 Sing praise to the God of Is - ra - el! Sing praise for His
 4 O bright, ris - ing Sun, now shine on us In need of il -
 vis - i - ta - tion! Re - deem - ing His peo - ple from their sin,
 lu - mi - na - tion; Come scat - ter the shades of sin and death
 Ac - com - plish - ing their sal - va - tion, Up - rais - ing a
 And shat - ter their dom - i - na - tion. Be guid - ing our
 might - y horn with - in The house of His ser - vant Da - vid!
 foot - steps on the path Of peace, in Your pres - ence dawn - ing!

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Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!

And His mercy endures forever!

THE THANKSGIVING COLLECT

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, we thank and praise You for feeding us the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send us Your Holy Spirit that, having with our mouths received the holy Sacrament, we may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE SALUTATION

2 Timothy 4:22

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

THE BENEDICAMUS

[Psalm 103:1]

Bless we the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

THE BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26

The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

HYMN TO DEPART – TUNE & TUNE: LSB 508, STANZAS 1, 5–7

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 The day is surely drawing near
 When Jesus, God's anointed,
 In all His power shall appear
 As judge whom God appointed.
 Then fright shall banish idle mirth,
 And flames on flames shall ravage earth
 As Scripture long has warned us.</p> | <p>3 May Christ our intercessor be
 And through His blood and merit
 Read from His book that we are free
 With all who life inherit.
 Then we shall see Him face to face,
 With all His saints in that blest place
 Which He has purchased for us.</p> |
| <p>2 My Savior paid the debt I owe
 And for my sin was smitten;
 Within the Book of Life I know
 My name has now been written.
 I will not doubt, for I am free,
 And Satan cannot threaten me;
 There is no condemnation!</p> | <p>4 O Jesus Christ, do not delay,
 But hasten our salvation;
 We often tremble on our way
 In fear and tribulation.
 O hear and grant our fervent plea:
 Come, mighty judge, and set us free
 From death and ev'ry evil.</p> |

God's People at Prayer

For Home Devotions

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

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

Readings from Holy Scripture

These may be read in the morning and evening, as suggested here, or in any way that best works with your schedule.

	Morning Prayer	Evening Prayer
Su	Isaiah 11:1–12:6	2 Peter 2:1–22
M	Isaiah 14:1–23	2 Peter 3:1–18
Tu	Isaiah 24:1–13	1 John 1:1–2:14
W	Isaiah 24:14–25:12	1 John 2:15–29
Th	Isaiah 26:1–19	1 John 3:1–24
F	Isaiah 26:20–27:13	1 John 4:1–21
Sa	Isaiah 28:14–29	1 John 5:1–21

The Sacrament of the Altar

*As the head of the family should teach it
in a simple way to his household*

What is the benefit of this eating and drinking? These words, "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins," show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things? Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: "forgiveness of sins."

Luther's Small Catechism © 1986 Concordia Publishing House, cph.org.

Verse for Meditation

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth. Our God comes; He does not keep silence.

Psalms 50:2–3a

Hymn

The hymn stanza may be sung or spoken.

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!

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. *LSB 344:1, 3*

Daily Prayer

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

The following topics may guide your prayer each day.

- Su For God's name to be kept holy through pure teaching and holy living
- M For God's kingdom to come and increase through the gift of the Holy Spirit
- Tu For God to hinder every evil plan and purpose of the world, the devil, and the sinful nature
- W For daily bread and contentment in all things
- Th For forgiveness of our sins and of those who sin against us
- F For protection in the midst of temptation
- Sa For rescue from all evils of body and soul and, when our last hour comes, a blessed end

The Lord's Prayer

Collect of the Week

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. Amen.

Readings for the Third Sunday in Advent, Dec. 12

Zeph. 3:14–20; Psalm 85; Phil. 4:4–7; Luke 7:18–35