

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 12, 2021

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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	Tim Terhune
Organist	Anne Bennet
Acolytes	Ben Paradis Eli Roach

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

For right reception of the Lord's Supper: O Lord, our God, in Holy Baptism You have called us to be Christians and granted us the remission of sins. Make us ready to receive the most holy body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of all our sins, and grant us grateful hearts that we may give thanks to You, O Father, to Your Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament: Blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, You have given Yourself to us in this holy Sacrament. Keep us in Your faith and favor that we may live in You even as You live in us. May Your body and blood preserve us in the true faith to life everlasting. Hear us for the sake of Your name. Amen.

Cover Image

"St. John the Baptist in Prison Receives Christ's Answer" by Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–1678)

> 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 272 – TEXT: LSB 346

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| <p>1 When all the world was cursed
By Moses' condemnation,
Saint John the Baptist came
With words of consolation.
With true forerunner's zeal
The greater One he named,
And Him, as yet unknown,
As Savior he proclaimed.</p> <p>2 Before he yet was born,
He leaped in joyful meeting,
Confessing Him as Lord
Whose mother he was greeting.
By Jordan's rolling stream,
A new Elijah bold,
He testified of Him
Of whom the prophets told:</p> | <p>3 Behold the Lamb of God
That bears the world's transgression,
Whose sacrifice removes
The devil's dread oppression.
Behold the Lamb of God,
Who takes away our sin,
Who for our peace and joy
Will full atonement win.</p> <p>4 O grant, dear Lord of love,
That we receive, rejoicing,
The word proclaimed by John,
Our true repentance voicing,
That gladly we may walk
Upon our Savior's way
Until we live with Him
In His eternal day.</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

Philippians 4:4; Psalm 146:5-8

Gaudete! Rejoice in the Lord always;

again I will say, Gaudete! Rejoice!

Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob,

whose hope is in the LORD his God,

who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,

who keeps faith forever;

who executes justice for the oppressed,

who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

the LORD loves the righteous.

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. 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. Amen.

The Reading of God's Word

from the Old Testament: Zephaniah 3:14–20

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM

Psalm 85; antiphon v. 2

You forgave the iniquity of Your people;

You covered all their sin.

LORD, You were favorable to Your land;

You restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of Your people;

You covered all their sin.

You withdrew all Your wrath;

You turned from Your hot anger.

Restore us again, O God of our salvation,

and put away Your indignation toward us!

Will You be angry with us forever?

Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

Will You not revive us again,

that Your people may rejoice in You?

Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,

and grant us Your salvation.

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

that glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;

righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Faithfulness springs up from the ground,

and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Yes, the LORD will give what is good,

and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him

and make his footsteps a way.

**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.**

*You forgave the iniquity of Your people;
You covered all their sin.*

from the Letters: Philippians 4:4–7

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HALLELUJAH AND VERSE

Matthew 11:10b

*Hallelujah! Behold, I send my messenger before Your face,
who will prepare Your way before You. Hallelujah!*

from the Holy Gospel: Luke 7:18–35

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 60 – TEXT: LSB 345

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| <p>1 Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding!
“Christ is near,” we hear it say.
“Cast away the works of darkness,
All you children of the day!”</p> <p>2 Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.</p> | <p>3 See, the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from heav’n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all, to be forgiv’n;</p> <p>4 So, when next He comes in glory
And the world is wrapped in fear,
He will shield us with His mercy
And with words of love draw near.</p> |
|---|--|

△ 5 Honor, glory, might, dominion
To the Father and the Son
With the ever-living Spirit
While eternal ages run!

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The Sermon

Luke 7:18–35

THE OFFERTORY HYMN – TUNE TLH 61 – TEXT: LSB 347, STANZAS 3 & 4

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|---|---|
| <p>1 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 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 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.

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.

CONSECRATION HYMN—TUNE: TLH 62—TEXT: LSB 357, ST. 1

**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: TLH 91—TEXT: LSB 352

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| <p>1 Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept His word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner's help and friend.</p> | <p>3 Abram's promised great reward,
Zion's helper, Jacob's Lord—
Him of twofold race behold—
Truly came, as long foretold.</p> |
| <p>2 What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets' heart inspired,
What they longed for many'a year,
Stands fulfilled in glory here.</p> | <p>4 As Your coming was in peace,
Quiet, full of gentleness,
Let the same mind dwell in me
Which is Yours eternally.</p> |

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith,
Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again
As the glorious king to reign,
I with joy will see Your face,
Freely ransomed by Your grace.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN – TUNE: TLH 305 – TEXT: LSB 636

1 Soul, adorn yourself with gladness,
Leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,
Come into the daylight's splendor,
There with joy your praises render.
Bless the One whose grace unbounded
This amazing banquet founded;
He, though heav'nly, high, and holy,
Deigns to dwell with you most lowly.

2 Hasten as a bride to meet Him,
And with loving rev'rence greet Him.
For with words of life immortal
He is knocking at your portal.
Open wide the gates before Him,
Saying, as you there adore Him:
Grant, Lord, that I now receive You,
That I nevermore will leave You.

3 He who craves a precious treasure
Neither cost nor pain will measure;
But the priceless gifts of heaven
God to us has freely given.
Though the wealth of earth were proffered,
None could buy the gifts here offered:
Christ's true body, for you riven,
And His blood, for you once given.

4 Now in faith I humbly ponder
Over this surpassing wonder
That the bread of life is boundless
Though the souls it feeds are countless:
With the choicest wine of heaven
Christ's own blood to us is given.
Oh, most glorious consolation,
Pledge and seal of my salvation!

5 Jesus, source of lasting pleasure,
Truest friend, and dearest treasure,
Peace beyond all understanding,
Joy into all life expanding:
Humbly now, I bow before You;
Love incarnate, I adore You;
Worthily let me receive You
And, so favored, never leave You.

6 Jesus, sun of life, my splendor,
Jesus, friend of friends, most tender,
Jesus, joy of my desiring,
Fount of life, my soul inspiring:
At Your feet I cry, my maker,
Let me be a fit partaker
Of this blessed food from heaven,
For our good, Your glory, given.

(Continued on the next page.)

7 Lord, by love and mercy driven,
 You once left Your throne in heaven
 On the cross for me to languish
 And to die in bitter anguish,
 To forego all joy and gladness
 And to shed Your blood in sadness.
 By this blood redeemed and living,
 Lord, I praise You with thanksgiving.

8 Jesus, bread of life, I pray You,
 Let me gladly here obey You.
 By Your love I am invited,
 Be Your love with love requited;
 By this Supper let me measure,
 Lord, how vast and deep love's treasure.
 Through the gift of grace You give me
 As Your guest in heav'n receive me.

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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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THE THANKSGIVING

Psalm 107:1

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: TLH 52 – TEXT: LSB 515

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| <p>1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing,
And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising
And soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
At midnight comes the cry.</p> <p>2 The watchers on the mountain
Proclaim the Bridegroom near;
Go forth as He approaches
With alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting;
The gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory;
The Bridegroom is at hand.</p> | <p>3 The saints, who here in patience
Their cross and suff'rings bore,
Shall live and reign forever
When sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory
The Lamb they shall behold;
In triumph cast before Him
Their diadems of gold.</p> <p>4 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, O Sun so longed for,
O'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption
That sets Your people free!</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
M	Isaiah 29:1–14	Jude 1–25
Tu	Isaiah 29:15–30:14	Revelation 1:1–20
W	Isaiah 30:15–26	Revelation 2:1–29
Th	Isaiah 30:27–31:9	Revelation 3:1–22
F	Isaiah 32:1–20	Revelation 4:1–11
Sa	Isaiah 33:1–24	Revelation 5:1–14
S	Isa. 34:1–2; 34:8–35:10	Revelation 6:1–17

The Sacrament of the Altar

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

What is the Sacrament of the Altar? It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

Who receives this sacrament worthily? Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training. But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, for the words "for you" require all hearts to believe.

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

Hymn

The hymn stanza may be sung or spoken.

Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept His word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner's help and friend. *LSB 352:1*

Verse for Meditation

Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.
The Lord is at hand.

Philippians 4:4–5

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

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. Amen.

Readings for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, December 19

Micah 5:2–5a; Psalm 80:1–7;
Hebrews 10:5–10; Luke 1:39–56