

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 4, 2022

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church: 978-874-2479
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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 silence your cell phone 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. Children meet in the basement, high school students in pastors' study, and adults in the sanctuary. Coffee and refreshments are served in the basement directly after service.

Serving in Worship Today

Preacher & Celebrant	Pastor Peter Gregory
Liturgist	Tim Terhune
Organist	Anne Bennet
Acolytes	Simeon Gregory, Landon Vega

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

Before service: 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 our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Before communion: Lord Jesus, You invite all who are burdened with sin to come to You for rest. We now come at Your invitation to the heavenly feast You have provided for Your people on earth. Preserve us from impenitence and unbelief, cleanse us from our unrighteousness, and clothe us with the righteousness purchased with Your blood. Strengthen our faith, increase our love and hope, and assure us a place at Your heavenly table, where we will eat eternal manna and drink of the river of Your pleasure forever and ever. Amen.

Cover Illustration

"St. John the Baptist Preaching in the Desert"
by Anton Raphael Mengs (ca. 1774). Public Domain.

THE OPENING HYMN – TUNE: TLH 61 – TEXT: 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.**

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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. Wherefore 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 Declaration of Grace

Mark 16:16; John 1:12

Amen.

THE INTROIT

Isaiah 40:3b; Psalm 105:4–8

In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Seek the LORD and His strength;
seek His presence continually!

Remember the wondrous works that He has done,
His miracles, and the judgments He uttered,

O offspring of Abraham, His servant,
children of Jacob, His chosen ones!

He is the LORD our God;
His judgments are in all the earth.

He remembers His covenant forever,
the word that He commanded, for a thousand generations.

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: Isaiah 11:1–10

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Blessèd be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things

Give the King Your justice, O God,
and Your righteousness to the royal Son!

May He judge Your people with righteousness,
and Your poor with justice!

Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness!

May He defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!

May they fear You while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!

May He be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth!

In His days may the righteous flourish,
and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

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.

Blessèd be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things

from the Letters: Romans 15:4–13

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 Gospels: Matthew 3:1–12

Glory be to You, O Lord!

After the reading:

Praise be to You, O Christ!

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 – TEXT: LSB 344, STANZAS 1–4

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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> |
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The Sermon

Matthew 3:1–12

THE OFFERTORY HYMN – TUNE: TLH 63 – TEXT: LSB 344, STANZA 5

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

Text: Public domain

The Presentation of the Offering

Psalms 116:17; 18:1

*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 PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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:

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.

CONSECRATION HYMN – TUNE TLH 58 – TEXT: LSB 334, STANZAS 1 & 6

**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.**

**2 He comes to judge the nations,
A terror to His foes,
A light of consolations
And blessed hope to those
Who love the Lord's appearing.
O glorious Sun, now come,
Send forth Your beams so cheering,
And guide us safely home.**

Text: Public domain

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. <

Psalm 50:1–15 (v. 15)

DISTRIBUTION HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 936

This hymn is a versification of 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
2 God spoke by the proph - ets long a - go, His prom - ise on
3 You, child, will go on be - fore the Lord As proph - et, 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,
oath re - call - ing— To A - bra - ham made in for - mer years:
way pre - par - ing; To speak on be - half of God Most High,
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
Of van - quish - ing foes ap - pall - ing, That those He de -
His coun - sel of truth de - clar - ing: Rich mer - cy and
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!
liv - ered from their fears Might glad - ly and tru - ly serve Him.
grace for all where - by In - iq - ui - ty is for - giv - en.
foot - steps on the path Of peace, in Your pres - ence dawn - ing!

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| <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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Text: Public domain

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| <p>1 By all Your saints in warfare,
For all Your saints at rest,
Your holy name, O Jesus,
Forevermore be blest!
For You have won the battle
That they might wear the crown;
And now they shine in glory
Reflected from Your throne.</p> <p>2 We praise You for the Baptist,
Forerunner of the Word,
Our true Elijah, making
A highway for the Lord.
The last and greatest prophet,
He saw the dawning ray
Of light that grows in splendor
Until the perfect day.</p> | <p>3 Our thanks for John the Baptist
Who, till his dying day,
Made straight paths for the Savior
And heralded His way!
In witnessing to Jesus
Through times of threat or shame
May we with faith and courage
The Lamb of God proclaim.</p> <p>△ 4 Then let us praise the Father
And worship God the Son
And sing to God the Spirit,
Eternal Three in One,
Till all the ransomed number
Fall down before the throne,
Ascribing pow'r and glory
And praise to God alone.</p> |
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THE POST-COMMUNION HYMN— TUNE: TLH 62 – TEXT: LSB 357, STANZAS 1 & 6

Following the common dismissal for Holy Communion, we respond with the hymn.

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| <p>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!</p> | <p>2 O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> |
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Text: Public domain

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. We thank You, all-powerful God, for refreshing us with this healing gift, and we pray: Father of mercy, by this holy food make us strong in faith toward You, and in deep love for each other, that through us other beloved sinners may kneel to You and receive with us grace and life in Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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 on you and be gracious to you.
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

HYMN TO DEPART – TUNE & TEXT: TLH 70, STANZAS 1 & 4

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| <p>1 Hosanna to the living Lord!
Hosanna to th'Incarnate Word!
To Christ, Creator, Savior, King,
Let earth, let heav'n, hosanna sing.</p> | <p>2 So, in the last and dreadful Day,
When earth and heav'n shall melt away,
Thy flock, redeemed from sinful stain,
Shall swell the sound of praise again.</p> |
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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 10:12–34	2 Peter 1:1–21
M	Isaiah 11:1–12:6	2 Peter 2:1–22
Tu	Isaiah 14:1–23	2 Peter 3:1–18
W	Isaiah 24:1–13	1 John 1:1–2:14
Th	Isaiah 24:14–25:12	1 John 2:15–29
F	Isaiah 26:1–19	1 John 3:1–24
Sa	Isaiah 26:20–27:13	1 John 4:1–21

The Apostles' Creed

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

What is the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed? 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.

From the Large Catechism: Further we believe that in this Christian church we have the forgiveness of sins, which is granted through the holy sacraments and absolution as well as through all the comforting words of the entire Gospel. . . . Therefore everything in the Christian church is so ordered that we may daily obtain full forgiveness of sins through the Word and through signs [that is, the sacraments] appointed to comfort and revive our consciences as long as we live. . . . But outside the Christian church, (that is, where the Gospel is not) there is no forgiveness, and hence no holiness.

Luther's Small Catechism © 1986 Concordia Publishing House, cph.org;
LC II.54, 55, 56

Hymn

The hymn stanza may be sung or spoken.

“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.” *LSB 347:1*

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. Amen.

Readings for the Third Sunday in Advent, Gaudete, December 11

Isaiah 35:1–10; Psalms 146 (v. 5) & 85 (v. 9);
James 5:7–11; Matthew 11:2–15