

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 24, 2023

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 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 The Rev. Peter F. Gregory
Liturgist Dave Farabaugh
Organist Anne Bennet
Acolytes Simeon Gregory, Liam McGuire

Moving from Advent to Christmas

While we continue with Advent this morning, we look ahead to the afternoon and evening services which will begin our celebration of Christmas, the Nativity of our Lord. All of it culminates in the Christmas Day Divine Service tomorrow at 11:00 am.

Prayers for Worship

O Jesus, You have come in human flesh for my benefit. You have come into the world for my sake. Come to me and dwell in my heart! Sanctify my heart wholly and prepare it for Yourself so that it may become Your dwelling place. Strengthen my faith, and fill me with Your love, that I may choose You above the world and its pleasures. Amen.

Before communion: Father, as Your Son comes to us in the body and blood that He took up in the womb of the Virgin Mary, renew us in our life in Him. Let this gift of Your love, that He makes present on the altar and places in our mouths and our hearts, strengthen our faith and deepen our love. Amen.

After communion: Lord, now let your servant depart in peace according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation. Amen.

From the Litany: By the mystery of Your holy incarnation and by Your holy nativity: Help us, good Lord. Amen.

Cover Illustration

The Cestello Annunciation by Sandro Botticelli (1489), housed at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy.

THE OPENING HYMN – TUNE: TLH 68 – TEXT: RMH

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 O Adam’s children, sing!
 Arise, O fallen earth!
 The Second Adam comes, the King
 By low yet royal birth.</p> <p>2 Isaiah gave the sign
 For faithful souls to read:
 “A virgin born of David’s line
 Shall bear the promised Seed.”</p> <p>3 You ask how this could be?
 Oh, worship and adore
 Like her whom God’s own majesty
 Came down to shadow o’er.</p> | <p>4 She meekly bowed her head
 To hear the gracious word,
 Blest Mary, the believing maid
 And favored of the Lord.</p> <p>5 And blest shall be her name
 In all the Church on earth
 Through whom the wondrous mercy came
 Of God our Savior’s birth.</p> <p>6 O Christ, the virgin’s Son,
 With her we magnify
 The grace that sees the lowly one
 And lifts the humble high.</p> |
|---|--|

Liturgy for the confession of sin is spoken.

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 45:8a, b; Psalm 19:1, 4c, 5–6

Show, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

In them He has set a tent for the sun,

which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

Sung liturgy

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 Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; 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: 2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM

Psalm 89:1–5, 19–29; antiphon v. 8

O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as You are, O LORD,
with Your faithfulness all around You?

I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;

with my mouth I will make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up forever;

in the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness."

You have said, "I have made a covenant with My chosen one;

I have sworn to David My servant:

*'I will establish your offspring forever,
and build your throne for all generations.'*

*Let the heavens praise Your wonders, O LORD,
Your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!*

*Of old You spoke in a vision to Your godly one, and said: "I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.*

*I have found David, My servant;
with My holy oil I have anointed him,
so that My hand shall be established with him;
My arm also shall strengthen him.*

*The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.*

*I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.*

*My faithfulness and My steadfast love shall be with him,
and in My name shall his horn be exalted.*

*I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.*

*He shall cry to Me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'*

*And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.*

*My steadfast love I will keep for him forever,
and My covenant will stand firm for him.*

*I will establish his offspring forever
and his throne as the days of the heavens.*

**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.**

*O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as You are, O LORD,
with Your faithfulness all around You?*

from the Letters: Romans 16:25–27

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HALLELUJAH AND VERSE

Matthew 1:23a

*Hallelujah! Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel. Hallelujah!*

The Holy Gospel: Luke 1:26–38

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 62 – TEXT: LSB 357, STANZAS 1–5

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear**

Refrain **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**2 O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rst all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go. *Refrain***

**3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the Law
In cloud and majesty and awe. *Refrain***

**4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
*Refrain***

**5 O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. *Refrain***

Text: Public domain

The Sermon

Luke 1:26–38

THE OFFERTORY HYMN – TUNE: TLH 62 – TEXT: LSB 357, STANZAS 6–7

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>6 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> | <p>7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> |
|--|--|

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.**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin’s Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav’n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.</p> <p>2 Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh—
Woman’s offspring, pure and fresh.</p> | <p>3 Here a maid was found with child,
Yet remained a virgin mild.
In her womb this truth was shown:
God was there upon His throne.</p> <p>4 From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides.</p> |
|--|---|

Text (sts. 1–2): Public domain. Text (sts. 3, 7): © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110002389

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.* <

Psalms 45:7–17 (v. 6)

DISTRIBUTION HYMN – TUNE: TLH 85 – TEXT: RMH

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 What hast Thou done, Eternal God,
Descending to this tainted sod
To make Thy palace in a maid,
When Thine own hand the maiden made?</p> | <p>2 Though highest heav’ns be all too small,
She holdeth Thee who holdeth all,
To carry Thee in weakness furled,
That Thou may’st carry all the world.</p> |
| <p>3 Thou tender, unborn flesh and blood,
Thou ancient and almighty God!
What hath Thy love for sinners done?
O Love, Thy love our love hath won.</p> | |

DISTRIBUTION HYMN—TEXT & TUNE: LSB 336



1 Lo! He comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
 2 Ev - 'ry eye shall now be - hold Him
 3 Those dear to - kens of His pas - sion
 4 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore Thee,



Once for ev - 'ry sin - ner slain;
 Robed in glo - rious maj - es - ty;
 Still His daz - zling bod - y bears,
 High on Thine e - ter - nal throne;



Thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
 Those who set at naught and sold Him,
 Cause of end - less ex - ul - ta - tion
 Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,



Swell the tri - umph of His train:
 Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
 To His ran - somed wor - ship - ers.
 Claim the king - dom as Thine own.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly
 With what rap - ture, with what rap - ture, with what
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -



lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
 wail - ing, Shall their true Mes - si - ah see.
 rap - ture Gaze we on those glo - rious scars!
 lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and Thou a - lone!

- 1 A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the Infant
With virgin honor pure!
Repeat the hymn again:
“To God on high be glory
And peace on earth to men!”
- 2 The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.
Repeat the hymn again:
“To God on high be glory
And peace on earth to men!”
- 3 While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains,
Ye oceans, clap your hands. .
Repeat the hymn again:
“To God on high be glory
And peace on earth to men!”
- 4 Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The Infant born in Bethl’em,
The Savior and the Lord. .
Repeat the hymn again:
“To God on high be glory
And peace on earth to men!”
- 5 All idols forms shall perish and error shall decay
And Christ shall wield His scepter, our Lord and God for aye.
Repeat the hymn again:
“To God on high be glory and peace on earth to men!”

Text: Public domain

THE POST-COMMUNION HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 375

This hymn paraphrases the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–56), the Song of Mary.

Because it remains under copyright, we will sing it from The Lutheran Hymnal #275 in the red pew hymnals.

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
Bless we the Lord.

[Psalm 103:1]

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: LSB 364

- 1** Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2** The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
- 3** Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

Text: Public domain

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	Isa. 44:21–45:13, 20–25	Revelation 12:1–17
M	Isaiah 49:1–18	Matthew 1:1–17
Tu	Isa. 49:22–26; 50:4–51:8, 12–16	Matthew 1:18–25
W	Isaiah 51:17–52:12	Matthew 2:1–12
Th	Isaiah 52:13–54:10	Matthew 2:13–23
F	Isaiah 55:1–13	Luke 1:1–25
Sa	Isaiah 58:1–59:3, 14–21	Luke 1:26–38

On the Incarnation

Incarnate means “in the flesh.”

This word confesses that our Lord Jesus Christ took on human flesh for us and for our salvation.

We believe, teach, and confess that now, since the incarnation, each nature in Christ does not exist by itself. . . . These two natures [divine and human] are so united that they make up one single person, in which the divine and the received human nature are and exist at the same time. So now, since the incarnation, there belongs to the entire person of Christ personally not only His divine nature, but also His received human nature. So without His divinity, and also without His humanity, the person of Christ or the incarnate Son of God is not complete. We meant the Son of God who has received flesh and become man. Therefore, Christ is not two distinct persons, but one single person, even though two distinct natures are found in Him, unconfused in their natural essence and properties.

The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord
Article VIII. The Person of Christ, paragraph 11.

Hymn

The hymn stanza may be sung or spoken.

O Jesus Christ, Your manger is
My paradise of peace beyond all knowing
For there, O Lord, there lies the Word
Made flesh for us, with love and mercy glowing.

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 Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Readings for the Nativity of Our Lord, Dec. 25

Isaiah 52:7–10; Psalm 2; Hebrews 1:1–6; John 1:1–18

Readings for the First Sun. after Christmas, Dec. 31

Isaiah 61:10–62:3; Psalm 111;
Galatians 4:4–7; Luke 2:22–40