

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 14, AD 2025

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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 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. Pre-Kindergarten through upper elementary students meet in the basement, junior high and high school students at the parsonage, and adults in the sanctuary.

Serving in Worship Today

Preacher & Celebrant	Pastor Peter Gregory
Liturgist	Tim Terhune
Organist	Anne Bennet
Acolytes	Laz Gregory, Liam McGuire

Advent Note

During Advent, the Divine Service changes. We use a different confession of sin. 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.

Preparation for Confession

The Third Commandment: Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. *What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

Questions for self-examination

- What is my attitude toward worship?
- Do I strive to make the day of rest holy?

Cover Illustration

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

THE 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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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 Absolution

[John 20:19–23]

Amen.

THE INTROIT

Philippians 4:4; Psalm 71:14–18

Gaudete! Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice!

I will hope continually
and will praise You yet more and more.

My mouth will tell of Your righteous acts, of Your deeds of salvation all the day,
for their number is past my knowledge.

With the mighty deeds of the LORD God I will come;
I will remind them of Your righteousness, Yours alone.

O God, from my youth You have taught me,
and I still proclaim Your wondrous deeds.

So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me,
until I proclaim Your might to another generation, Your power to all those to come.

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 Gloria in Excelsis, the Song of the Angels, is omitted until Christmas.

THE SALUTATION

2 Timothy 4:22

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Let us pray.

> *Silence for personal prayers.* <

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: Isaiah 35:1–10

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM

Psalm 146; antiphon v. 5

Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God.

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

When his breath departs he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.

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 LORD watches over the sojourners; He upholds the widow and the fatherless,

but the way of the wicked He brings to ruin.

The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

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 is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God.

from the Letters: James 5:7–11

After the reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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

the Holy Gospel: Matthew 11:2–15

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>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>2 Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.</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

James 5:7–11

**Jesus comes in joy and sorrow,
Shares alike our hopes and fears;
Jesus comes, whate'er befalls us,
Cheers our hearts and dries our tears;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Comforts us in failing years.**

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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

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

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 62 & TEXT: LSB 357, STANZAS 1 & 6

**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!**

**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!**

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 on 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 126 (antiphon: v. 5)

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

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| <p>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.</p> <p>2 Hasten as a bride to meet Him,
And with loving rev'ence 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.</p> | <p>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.</p> <p>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!</p> |
|--|---|

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.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 398

1 Hail to the Lord's anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression
And rule in equity.

2 He comes with rescue speedy
To those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy
And bid the weak be strong;
To give them songs for sighing,
Their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying,
Were precious in His sight.

3 He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth;
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers,
Spring in His path to birth.
Before Him on the mountains
Shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness in fountains
From hill to valley flow.

4 Kings shall fall down before Him
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him,
His praise all people sing.
To Him shall prayer unceasing
And daily vows ascend;
His kingdom still increasing,
A kingdom without end.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN – TUNE: TLH 91 & TEXT: LSB 352

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.

2 What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets' heart inspired,
What they longed for many'a year,
Stands fulfilled in glory here.

3 Abram's promised great reward,
Zion's helper, Jacob's Lord—
Him of twofold race behold—
Truly came, as long foretold.

4 As Your coming was in peace,
Quiet, full of gentleness,
Let the same mind dwell in me
Which is Yours eternally.

**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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THE POST-COMMUNION HYMN – TUNE: TLH 58 & TEXT: LSB 334, STANZAS 1, 6

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

**1 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.**

**2 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
Cannot His love erase;
Your guilt the Lord will pardon
And cover by His grace.
He comes, for you procuring
The peace of sin forgiv'n,
His children thus securing
Eternal life in heav'n.**

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 upon you and be gracious unto you.
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

- 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 belovèd name.

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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 30:15–26	Revelation 2:1–29
M	Isaiah 30:27–31:9	Revelation 3:1–22
Tu	Isaiah 32:1–20	Revelation 4:1–11
W	Isaiah 33:1–24	Revelation 5:1–14
Th	Isa. 34:1–2; 34:8–35:10	Revelation 6:1–17
F	Isaiah 40:1–17	Revelation 7:1–17
Sa	Isaiah 40:18–41:10	Revelation 8:1–13

Additional Reading: the Book of the Prophet Micah

The Sacrament of the Altar

As the head of the family should teach it 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.

Verse for Meditation

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

Philippians 4:4

Hymn

The hymn stanza may be sung or spoken.

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!"

Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies. *LSB 345:1–2*

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 Sun. in Advent, Dec. 21

Isaiah 7:10–17; Psalms 24 (v. 7) & 80:1–7 (v. 7);
Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–25