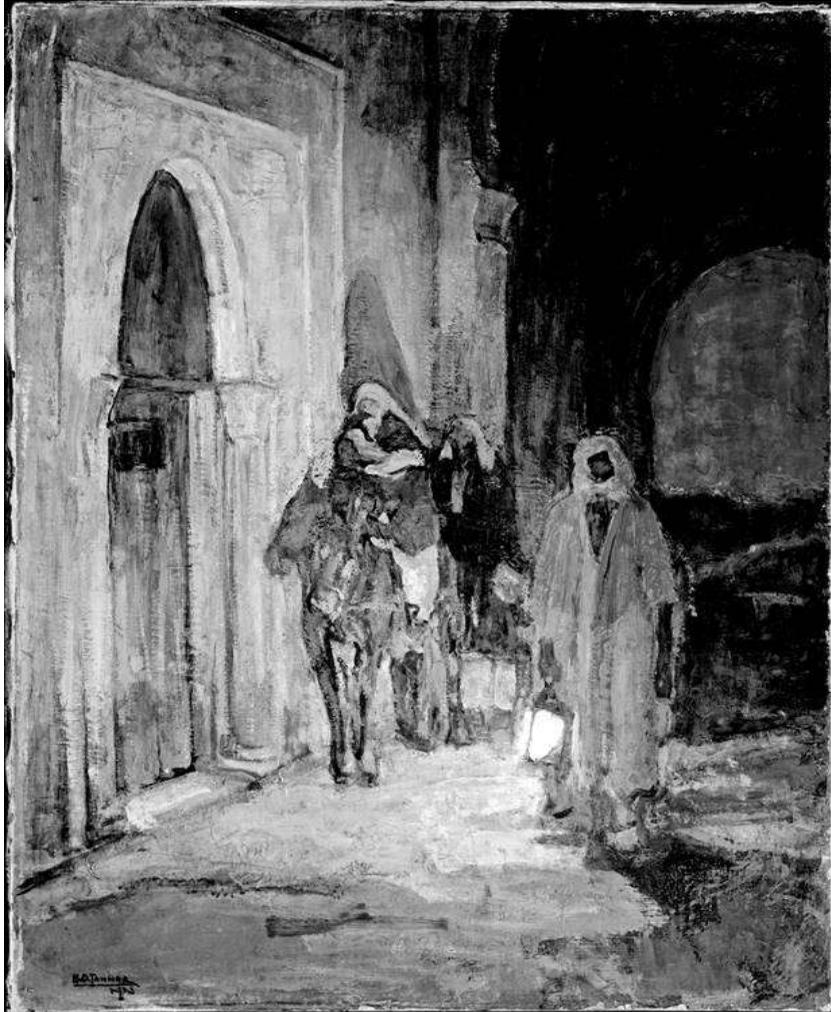


SOLA SCRIPTURA ✘ SOLA GRATIA ✘ SOLA FIDE

# Service of the Word



*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 28, AD 2025

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. 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	Seminarian Matthew Schneider
Liturgist	Tom Connell
Organist	Mary Gregory
Organist in Training (Prelude)	Kaitlin Gull
Crucifer	Landon Vega
Acolytes	William Jackson, Liam McGuire

## Prayers for Worship

*Before service:* Almighty and everlasting God, You govern all things in heaven and on earth. Mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Life as a baptized child of God:* Merciful Father, through Holy Baptism You called us to be Your own possession. Grant that our lives may show forth the working of Your Holy Spirit in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control after the image of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. 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?
- Am I lazy and bored with the Word of God?
- Have I any fear of God over this neglect?

## Cover Illustration

*The Flight into Egypt*  
by Henry Ossawa Tanner (1923).

PRELUDE

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

> *If able, please stand and face the processional crucifix.* <

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 384

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> Of the Father's love begotten<br/>Ere the worlds began to be,<br/>He is Alpha and Omega,<br/>He the source, the ending He,<br/>Of the things that are, that have been,<br/>And that future years shall see<br/>Evermore and evermore.</p> <p><b>2</b> Oh, that birth forever blessed,<br/>When the virgin, full of grace,<br/>By the Holy Ghost conceiving,<br/>Bore the Savior of our race,<br/>And the babe, the world's Redeemer,<br/>First revealed His sacred face<br/>Evermore and evermore.</p> | <p><b>3</b> This is He whom seers in old time<br/>Chanted of with one accord,<br/>Whom the voices of the prophets<br/>Promised in their faithful word.<br/>Now He shines, the long-expected;<br/>Let creation praise its Lord<br/>Evermore and evermore.</p> <p><b>4</b> O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him;<br/>Angel hosts, His praises sing.<br/>Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him<br/>And extol our God and King.<br/>Let no tongue on earth be silent,<br/>Ev'ry voice in concert ring<br/>Evermore and evermore.</p> |
|--|---|
- △ **5** Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to Thee  
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unending praises be,  
Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory  
Evermore and evermore. Amen.

Text: Public domain

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

*By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven.*

**Amen.**

THE INTROIT

*Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 31:1, 3, 5*

*These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.*

**They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

*In You, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;*

**in Your righteousness deliver me.**

*For You are my rock and my fortress;*

**and for Your name's sake You lead me and guide me.**

*Into Your hand I commit my spirit;*

**You have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.**

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

*Luke 2:14; John 1:29*

*Glory to God on high:*

**and on earth peace, good will toward men.**

**We praise You, we bless You, we worship You,**

**We glorify You, we give thanks to You for Your great glory.**

**O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.**

**O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;**

**O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,**

**You take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**You take away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.**

**You sit at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy on us.  
For You only are holy; You only are the Lord.  
You only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, are most high  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Let us pray.*

*> Silence for personal prayers. <*

*Almighty God, the martyred innocents of Bethlehem showed forth Your praise not by speaking but by dying. Put to death in us all that is in conflict with Your will that our lives may bear witness to the faith we profess with our lips; through 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: Jeremiah 31:15–17*

*After the reading:*

*This is the word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALM

*Psalm 54; antiphon v. 4*

*Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.*

*O God, save me, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your might.*

**O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth.**

*For strangers have risen against me ruthless men seek my life;  
they do not set God before themselves.*

**Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.**

*He will return the evil to my enemies; in Your faithfulness put an end to them.*

**With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you;**

**I will give thanks to Your name, O LORD, for it is good.**

*For He has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.*

**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.**

*Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.*

*from the Letters: Revelation 14:1–5*

*After the reading:*

*This is the word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

HYMN OF ACCLAMATION – TUNE: LSB 648 & TEXT: RMH

> *Stand and face the crucifix as it enters the nave. The reading of the Gospel in the midst of the congregation is a visual reminder that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). <*

- 1 Hear the sound of holy voices chanting at the crystal sea,  
“Hallelujah! Hallelujah to the Holy Trinity!”  
Abram’s children— who can number?—like the stars in glory stand,  
Clothed in robes of splendor, holding palms of vict’ry in their hand.**
- 2 They have come from tribulation; they are washed in Jesus’ blood,  
By the name of Christ ascending through the darkness, fire, and flood.  
With the Son of God they suffered; with the Lamb of God they died,  
And with Him to life immortal they were lifted open-eyed.**
- △ 3 God of God, the One-begotten, Light of Light, Immanuel,  
Star of Jacob, Son of Mary, Shepherd-King of Israel,  
Shine upon us through the darkness that we all may evermore  
God the Father and the Spirit in the heights with You adore.**

*the Holy Gospel: Matthew 2:13–18*

**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.**

- 1 Sweet flow'rets of the martyr band,  
Plucked by the tyrant's ruthless hand  
Upon the threshold of the morn,  
Like rosebuds by a tempest torn;
- 2 First victims for th'incarnate Lord,  
A tender flock to feel the sword;  
Beside the altar's ruddy ray,  
With palm and crown, you seemed to play.
- 3 Ah, what availed King Herod's wrath?  
He could not stop the Savior's path.  
Alone, while others murdered lay,  
In safety Christ is borne away.
- △ 4 O Lord, the virgin-born, we sing  
Eternal praise to You, our King,  
Whom with the Father we adore  
And Holy Spirit evermore.

## The Sermon

*Matthew 2:13–18*

HYMN OF THE DAY – TUNE & TEXT: TLH 81, ALT.

- 1 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.
- 2 He whom the sea and wind obey  
Comes here to serve us sinners in such  
meekness!  
You, God's own Son, with us are one.  
You join us and our children in our weakness.
- 3 Your light and grace our guilt erase,  
Your heav'nly riches all we lost retrieving.  
Immanuel, Your birth will quell  
The pow'r of Hell and Satan's gross  
deceiving.
- 4 O Christian true, no matter who,  
Come, rest in gladness; let no sorrow move you.  
For God's own Child in mercy mild  
Joins you to Him. How greatly God must  
love you!
- 5 What, then, is pain, since Him I gain?  
The world can keep its comfort, praise, and pleasure.  
Not pow'r or gold, but Christ I hold,  
My first, my last, my everlasting Treasure.

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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*

*after each petition:*

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

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.

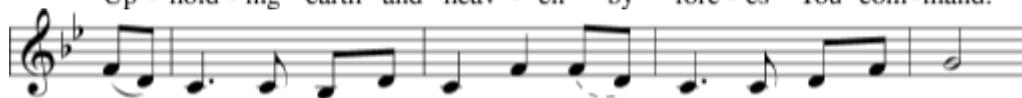
## HYMN OF PRAISE - TUNE &amp; TEXT: LSB 941



1 We praise You and ac-knowl-edge You, O God, to be the Lord,  
 2 The band of the a-pos-tles in glo-ry sing Your praise;  
 3 You, Christ, are King of glo-ry, the ev-er-last-ing Son,  
 4 You sit in splen-did glo-ry, en-throned at God's right hand,



The Fa-ther ev-er-last-ing, by all the earth a-dored.  
 The fel-low-ship of proph-ets their death-less voic-es raise.  
 Yet You, with bound-less love, sought to res-cue ev-'ry-one:  
 Up-hold-ing earth and heav-en by forc-es You com-mand.



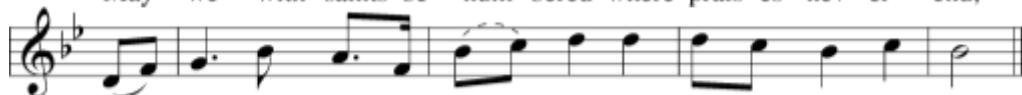
To You all an-gel pow-ers cry a-loud, the heav-ens sing,  
 The mar-tyrs of Your king-dom, a great and no-ble throng,  
 You laid a-side Your glo-ry, were born of vir-gin's womb,  
 We know that You will come as our Judge that fi-nal day,



The cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim their prais-es to You bring;  
 Sing with the ho-ly Church through-out all the world this song:  
 Were cru-ci-fied for us and were placed in-to a tomb;  
 So help Your ser-vants You have re-deemed by blood, we pray;



"O ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord God of Sab-a-oth;  
 "O all-ma-jes-tic Fa-ther, Your true and on-ly Son,  
 Then by Your res-ur-rec-tion You won for us re-prieve—  
 May we with saints be num-bered where prais-es nev-er end,



Your maj-es-ty and glo-ry fill the heav-ens and the earth!"  
 And Ho-ly Spir-it, Com-fort-er— for-ev-er Three in One!"  
 You o-pen-ed heav-en's king-dom to all who would be-lieve.  
 In glo-ry ev-er-last-ing. A-men, O Lord, a-men!

THE COLLECT FOR THE WORD

*Let us pray. Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

THE BENEDICTION

2 Corinthians 13:14

*The grace of our Lord † Jesus Christ and the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.*

**Amen. Amen. Amen.**

THE RECESSIONAL HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 370

- 1 What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap, is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard while angels sing;  
Haste! Haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**
- 2 Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you.  
Hail! Hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**
- 3 Then bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
The Virgin sings her lullaby:  
Joy! Joy, for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

Text: Public Domain



*Note from Pastor: We have some "bonus pages" in this week's bulletin, so I offer you the following excerpt on the Feast of the Holy Innocents from the book Celebrating the Saints by the Rev. William Weedon. May this reflection be a blessing to you!*

## *Celebrating the Saints: 28 December*

By the Rev. William Weedon

*Today, the Holy Church celebrates the Festival of **the Holy Innocents, Martyrs.***

*All praise for infant martyrs, whom Your mysterious love  
Called early from their warfare to share Your home above.*

*O Rachel, cease your weeping; they rest from earthly cares!*

*Lord, grant us crowns as brilliant and faith as sure as theirs. (LSB 517:9)*

**Contemplating the three** festivals after Christmas, the Church has long noted a curious fact: St. Stephen [*December 26*] was a martyr for Christ in both will and deed. St. John [*December 27*] was His martyr in will, but not in deed. The Holy Innocents were His martyrs not in will, but in deed.

Matthew relates how after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Magi arrived from the East in the capital city of the Jews, Jerusalem. They were searching for the newborn King of the Jews. A star had announced the birth of this King to them, and now they had come to worship Him.

Herod the Great, vicious and jealous, suffered no rivals. He had already murdered members of his own family whom he believed to be conspiring against him. He sought the counsel of the scribes, the Jewish experts in the sacred writings, to discover exactly where the promised Christ was to be born. He then sent the Magi to find him, asking only that when they did, they bring him back word so that he could offer his homage as well.

Not suspecting the king's malicious intent, the Magi began the trip to Bethlehem. The star that had appeared in the East reappeared and shone over the place where the child was. Entering that house, the Magi beheld the child in the arms of Mary, His mother. They fell down and worshiped Him, offering Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. After being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they left for their own country by a different route.

Then, Joseph was warned in a dream to leave quickly because Herod was seeking to kill the child. The holy family fled to the relative safety of Egypt. Upon realizing the Magi had deceived him, Herod took a shotgun approach. He ordered his soldiers to go into Bethlehem and kill every male child they found there, two years old and under. So much, he thought, for this so-called newborn King.

The soldiers ruthlessly carried out their orders. The evangelist in Matthew proclaimed in the infant blood spilled in Bethlehem a fulfillment of the words of Jeremiah 31. The prophet had foretold that Rachel (whose tomb was near Bethlehem) would weep for her children, refusing consolation, because they were no more. In the face of such sad slaughter, and the rivers of blood mad men have spilled ever since, the Church finds comfort in the words of the newborn King grown to manhood: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they might have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

*For reflections on every feast, festival, and Saint's Day from Pastor Weedon:*

<https://www.cph.org/celebrating-the-saints>.

# 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 52:13–54:10	Matthew 2:13–23
M	Isaiah 55:1–13	Luke 1:1–25
Tu	Isaiah 58:1–59:3, 14–21	Luke 1:26–38
W	Isaiah 60:1–22	Luke 1:39–56
Th	Isaiah 61:1–11	Luke 1:57–80
F	Isaiah 62:1–12	Luke 2:1–20
Sa	Isaiah 63:1–14	Luke 2:21–40

### Daily Prayers

*How the head of the family should teach his household  
to pray morning and evening.*

#### Evening Prayer

*In the evening when you go to bed, make the sign of the  
holy cross and say: In the name of the Father and of  
the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the  
Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may also say this little  
prayer: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through  
Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have  
graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You  
would forgive me all my sins where I have done  
wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into  
Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul,  
and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that  
the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.*

*Then go to sleep at once and in good cheer.*

### Verse for Meditation

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,  
and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son  
from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

### Hymn

*The hymn stanza may be sung or spoken. TLH 81:1 alt.*

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 the joy of the resurrection among us
- M For one's calling and daily work, coworkers,  
and the unemployed
- Tu For deliverance against temptation and evil;  
for all who suffer and are afflicted
- W For immediate, extended, and church family;  
for our schools, communities, and  
neighborhoods
- Th For the Church and her pastors, all who serve  
in the congregation, and missionaries
- F For the preaching of the holy cross of our  
Lord Jesus Christ; for the sick and dying
- Sa For faithfulness to the end; for receptive  
hearts and minds to God's Word

#### The Lord's Prayer

#### Collect of the Week

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully  
created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet  
more wondrously restored our human nature.  
Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made  
Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our  
Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy  
Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

#### Readings for Sunday, January 4

1 Kings 3:4–15; Pss. 119:97–104 (v. 99) & 111 (v. 9a, b);  
Ephesians 1:3–14; Luke 2:40–52