

# St. Matthew Lutheran Church North Tonawanda, NY

December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021



## AS WE GATHER

Throughout history, our gracious God has made outlandish promises. His spokesmen, the writers of biblical books, said that a descendant of David would come to sit on an eternal royal throne. More than that, His titles would include some reserved for God in heaven. He was and is a Wonderful Counselor, revealing God's love in His own life and death; the Mighty God, though hidden within fragile flesh and blood; the Everlasting Father, though trapped in time and space; and the Prince of Peace, ruling not by enforcement of divine law but by forgiving all who call to Him for grace and mercy. Today, we celebrate His birth among us in time, as promised long ago and in our hearts each day

## LSB 361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Brothers and sisters, although "God abides in us and His love is perfected in us," we sin every day and need the assurance of His forgiveness. Let us go to God, seeking His power to amend our sinful lives. Lord Jesus, the love of God made manifest among us,

**we have not loved You with our whole heart, nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. Without Your help we cannot change. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## LSB 357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**Introit**

I will tell of the decree:

The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you."

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein.

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

And who shall stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

He will receive blessing from the LORD  
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

***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.***

## **Kyrie**

***Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.***

## **Salutation and Collect of the Day**

The Lord be with you.

***And with thy spirit.***

Let us pray.

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Old Testament Reading** *Isaiah 7:10–14*

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup>“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” <sup>13</sup>And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Epistle** *1 John 4:7–16*

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, we also

ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup>So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Holy Gospel** *Matthew 1:18–25*

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

***Glory be to Thee, O Lord.***

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

***Praise be to Thee, O Christ.***

**Nicene Creed (Found in the rear cover of maroon Hymnal)**

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty...**

## **LSB 364 Away in a Manger**

**Sermon**

**Offertory**

## **LSB 366 It Came upon the Midnight Clear**

**Offering**

### **Prayer of the Church**

God entered human history in the person of Jesus, who experienced all our joys and sorrows. He has promised that our heavenly Father will hear whatever we ask in His name. Let us bring our requests to Him in confident faith. Wonderful Counselor, we pray that You will give empathy, wisdom, and compassion to all who seek to meet the needs of the people around them, providing food, clothing, and shelter, tending to the sick and injured, and responding to human crises and natural disasters. Remember, we pray, those with special needs and those known only to You. As You give us opportunity, grant that we may be part of Your answers to their petitions. Mighty God, whose Word created all things in heaven and on earth, when storms rage, fires spread, or the earth trembles, give courage and skill to those who would provide rescue, relief, and shelter. Bless those who till the soil and raise crops and all who manage and distribute the world's bounty, that the hungry be fed, the poor clothed, and the displaced given shelter.

Gracious God, receive our plea;

**hear the prayers to You we bring, Father, Spirit, newborn King.**

Everlasting Father, shower Your grace on all families, enabling parents and children to grow in faith and love. In neighborhoods, communities, and cities where there is discord, open doors of peace; where there is discrimination, provide justice; where there is loneliness, provide companionship. Bless individuals and organizations to use the talents and resources You provide to restore dignity, health, and peace to everyone in their care.

Gracious God, receive our plea;

**hear the prayers to You we bring, Father, Spirit, newborn King.**

Prince of Peace, use the earthly powers that be to put into positions of authority those who will work for justice within their nations and cooperation across their

borders. Give protection and courage to police and first responders in their communities and to armed forces deployed. Where wars threaten, move leaders to seek calm; where long-term animosity gives rise to fear and hatred, open avenues of communication and understanding. Grant that Your Church stand as a beacon in this troubled world to proclaim the Gospel and exhibit loving forgiveness in Your name. Grant that many find the peace they seek in You, our gracious Savior. Gracious God, receive our plea;

**hear the prayers to You we bring, Father, Spirit, newborn King.**

Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Him whose birth we celebrate this day, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Preface**

The Lord be with you.

***And with thy spirit.***

Lift up your hearts.

***We lift them up unto the Lord.***

Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.

***It is meet and right so to do.***

It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

## **Sanctus**

***Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.***

## **Lord's 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.***

## **The Words of Our Lord**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## **Pax Domini**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

***Amen.***

## **Agnus Dei**

***O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.***

## **Distribution**

**LSB 370 What Child Is This**

**LSB 368 Angels We Have Heard on High**

## **Thanksgiving**

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
***and His mercy endureth forever.***

Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

***Amen.***

## **Salutation and Benedicamus**

The Lord be with you.

***And with thy spirit.***

Bless we the Lord.

***Thanks be to God.***

## **Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

***Amen. Amen. Amen.***

**LSB 363 Silent Night, Holy Night**