



December 28, 2025

The First Sunday of Christmas

Rev. Ken Bersche

Maggie Kent, Secretary

Prelude

Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

“Joy to the World”

- ♪ Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- ♪ Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- ♪ No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
- ♪ He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 387-Text: Isaac Watts 1674-1748; Tune: George Frideric Handel 1685-1759;
Setting: Lowell Mason 1792-1872; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

Invocation

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

Matthew 28:19b

Amen.

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,

In the company of the upright, in the congregation.

Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.

Full of splendor and majesty is His work, and His righteousness endures forever.

He has caused His wondrous works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful.

He provides food for those who fear Him; He remembers His covenant forever.

He has shown His people the power of His works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.

Psalms 111:1-6

Confession and Absolution

O Lord God, we confess that although we usually prepare for, as Paul put it, “the fullness of time,” that is not true in our personal lives.

Forgive our impatience for taking matters into our own hands, forgive our not trusting that You are in control of all things, and forgive our failing to acknowledge You above all else.

We confess, O Lord, that unlike obedient Joseph, we have not always listened to Your commands and instructions.

Forgive our desire to be in control, forgive our avoiding difficult decisions, and forgive our thinking that we are able to arrange all things for our own benefit.

We confess, O Lord, that we have kept our faith to ourselves.

Forgive us for not giving Your leading us “a glorious name,” forgive our failure to ask You for guidance each day, and forgive our seeking to be like everyone else, rather than trusting You. *A Time of Silence*

Forgiveness has been won for you! The babe born in Bethlehem is the only-begotten Son of God and your elder Brother. The Spirit urges you to cry, “Abba! Father!” As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

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.

Hymn of Praise *Please Be Seated*

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

♪ Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

~Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo. Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo.

♪ Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song? ~Glo-ria...

♪ Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. ~Glo-ria....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 368-Text: French, tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, London 1862
Tune: French, setting: Edward S. Barnes 1887-1958; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

Psalmody

Psalm 111:1–6

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,

In the company of the upright, in the congregation.

Great are the works of the Lord,

Studied by all who delight in them.

Full of splendor and majesty is His work,

And His righteousness endures forever.

He has caused His wondrous works to be remembered;

The Lord is gracious and merciful.

He provides food for those who fear Him;

He remembers His covenant forever.

He has shown His people the power of His works,

In giving them the inheritance of the nations.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 63:7–14

⁷I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord,
according to all that the Lord has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel
that he has granted them according to his compassion,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

⁸For he said, “Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely.”
And he became their Savior.

⁹In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

¹⁰But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit;
therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

¹¹Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people.
Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock?
Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit,

¹²who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses,
who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name,
¹³who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble.

¹⁴Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest.
So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name.
This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Epistle

Galatians 4:4–7

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

“Angels from the Realms of Glory”

♪ Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story, Now proclaim Messiah’s birth.
~Come and worship, come and worship; Worship Christ, the newborn King.

♪ Shepherds in the field abiding, Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing, Yonder shines the Infant Light. ~Come...

♪ Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations, Ye have seen His natal star. ~Come...

♪ Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, In His temple shall appear. ~Come...

Please Stand

♪ All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising To the eternal Three in One. ~Come....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 367—Text (sts. 1, ref. 2–4): James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.; (st. 5):
Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, Salisbury, alt.; Text: Public domain

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

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹³Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸“A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.” ²¹And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

The Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

♪ Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’ angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
~Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

♪ Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th’ incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! ~Hark!...

♪ Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. ~Hark!....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 380 -Text: Charles Wesley 1707-88; Tune: Felix Mendelssohn 1809-47;
Setting: William H. Cummings 1831-1915; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

Proclamation of the Word

“More Than a Term of Endearment!”

Galatians 4:4–7

Offering and Musical Offering

Installation of 2026 Officers

Prayer of the Church *Please Stand Each petition is concluded with the following:*

Lord, in Your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look on You with favor and + give You peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

Amen.

Recessional Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

♪ O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

♪ For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love. O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!

♪ How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav'n. No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

♪ O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 361—Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–93; Text: Public domain

Postlude