

**NEW YEAR'S EVE**  
Endings and Beginnings  
December 31, 2024

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**AS WE GATHER**

Tomorrow, we celebrate the beginning of the new year. For many, that will mean a family gathering, a meal, and stories about the past. On this New Year's Eve, many will make New Year's resolutions—something they intend to change in the upcoming year. There is a good chance you already know where you will spend that time, often with family, food, and storytelling. Have you ever considered there is a day coming that will be like no other before it? That day will be a day of judgment and salvation. It will be a day when wickedness is forever vanquished to the pits of hell and the righteous will celebrate with a feast and the story of our salvation told. It will be a day of change—one the world has never seen before and never will again. Thanks be to God for that day—let us look forward to it with great joy!

**Reception of Holy Communion:** If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

**PREPARATION**

**OPENING HYMN #816 "From All That Dwell Below the Skies"**

From all that dwell below the skies Let the Creator's praise arise; Alleluia, alleluia!  
Let the Redeemer's name be sung Through ev'ry land by ev'ry tongue.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Eternal are Thy mercies, Lord; Eternal truth attends Thy Word. Alleluia, alleluia!  
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore Till suns shall rise and set no more.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

(Rise)

All praise to God the Father be, All praise, eternal Son, to Thee. Alleluia, alleluia!  
Whom with the Spirit we adore Forever and forevermore: Alleluia, alleluia!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

**INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: Dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, we gather on this last day of the year to worship our God and to receive the Lord's Supper.

**People: We are also called by the apostle Paul: "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!"**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts, and joyfully give answer to the questions I shall now ask you. Do you believe that you are a sinner in need of God's forgiveness?

**People: Yes, I confess it; I am a sinner in need of God's forgiveness.**

Pastor: How do you know this?

**People: From the Ten Commandments. I have sinned against God and against my neighbor.**

Pastor: Are you sorry that you have sinned against God and your neighbor?

**People: Yes, it bothers my conscience that I have sinned against God and my neighbor.**

Pastor: Where will you look for comfort and forgiveness?

**People: Only to the mercy and grace of God, which He demonstrated by sending Jesus to the cross and then to rise from the tomb. There is no other place.**

Pastor: Do you repent of your sins?

**People: Yes, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, I will turn from my sins and live a holy life.**

Pastor: Indeed, you should turn from your sins, as did Simon Peter, Paul, and all who have believed. Upon this your confession, I, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Thanks be to God for His gifts of mercy, forgiveness, and newness of life. Amen.**

### **HYMN OF PRAISE #733 "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"**

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;  
We fly forgotten as a dream Dies at the op'ning day.

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while troubles last and our eternal home!

### **SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: The Lord be with you and bless you on the departure of an old year and the beginning of a new year.

**People: The Lord also be with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we know there will be a glorious day when you shall return and have everyone bow their knee to our Lord Jesus. As that day hastens toward us, fill us with your Holy Spirit, that we might meet it and Him rightly; this we ask in the name of Jesus, who with the Holy Spirit is one God and one Lord, forever and ever.

**People: Amen.**

### **PSALM**

Pastor: Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us;

**People: yes, establish the work of our hands!**

Pastor: Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

**People: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**

Pastor: You return man to dust and say, "Return, O children of man!"

**People: For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.**

Pastor: You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning:

**People: in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.**

Pastor: For we are brought to an end by your anger; by your wrath we are dismayed.

**People: You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.**

Pastor: For all our days pass away under your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

**People: The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty;**

Pastor: yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

**People: Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you?**

Pastor: So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us;

**People: yes, establish the work of our hands!**

(Be seated)

## WORD

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Isaiah 51:4–6* (There is a day coming when God will keep His promise and return.) “Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples. <sup>5</sup> My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait. <sup>6</sup> Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner; but my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never be dismayed.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *Romans 8:31b–39* (We are more than conquerors in Christ and in Christ alone!) If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## VERSE

Pastor: Alleluia. The steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him.

**People: Alleluia.**

(Rise)

**HOLY GOSPEL** *Luke 12:35–40* (We do not know when the Lord is coming back, but He tells us to be ready at any moment.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twelfth chapter.

**People: Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>35</sup> “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, <sup>36</sup> and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. <sup>37</sup> Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. <sup>38</sup> If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! <sup>39</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. <sup>40</sup> You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to you, O Christ.**

(Be seated)

## SERMON HYMN #809 “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.  
Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.

**Refrain: Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. **Refrain**

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! **Refrain**

## SERMON

(Rise)

## OFFERTORY

LSB p. 192

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit.  
Amen.

## APOSTLES' CREED

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.  
(Be seated)

**OFFERING** As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located  
at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone.  
After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and  
return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to  
greet after the service.

(Rise)

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole people of God and for all people according to  
their needs.

**People: Lord, we ask in your mercy to hear and answer our prayers.**

Pastor: Almighty God, you created this world from nothing, and by your will it  
exists to this day;

**People: yet there is coming a day when you will be revealed, the world will be  
judged, and we will be home forever.**

Pastor: We know that we are but strangers here;

**People: heaven is our home. Bring us home as you have planned before the  
creation of the world.**

Pastor: We look around our world, and we do not understand it;

**People: we see things we do not understand, such as violence against others,  
and our hearts are broken.**

Pastor: We long for the day Isaiah prophesied that will come;

**People: today, however, you have made us your hands, feet, and heart to  
other people as long as we are here.**

Pastor: Therefore, we lift up those who are suffering in this life. Lord, be with  
them, provide for their needs, and comfort them in their hour of  
affliction, reminding them of their great reward.

**People: Help us remember Paul's reminder that our sufferings are not worthy  
of being compared with the glory that awaits us.**

Pastor: You have commanded us to pray for rulers everywhere in your Word.

**People: We lift up our President, all members of Congress, and our state and  
local leaders, and ask that they would be led by your Spirit to make  
decisions pleasing to you and helpful for us, as well as all who rule this  
world.**

Pastor: For those whose needs are not known to us, we lift them up in silence,  
knowing you will hear and answer.

*A moment of silence is observed.*

Pastor: Lord Jesus, we look forward to the day when tomorrow is no more;

**People: hear our prayers and keep us in the true faith, so we need not worry  
about tomorrow or eternity;**

Pastor: for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, the  
same yesterday, today, and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## SACRAMENT

### PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

### PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, 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

LSB p. 208

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;

Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of your name.

Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;

Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

### THE 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

### PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

## AGNUS DEI

LSB p. 210

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;

Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

(Be seated)

### DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

#### HYMN #361

#### “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!

#### HYMN #718

#### “Jesus, Lead Thou On”

Jesus, lead Thou on Till our rest is won:  
And although the way be cheerless, We will follow calm and fearless.  
Guide us by Thy hand To our fatherland.

If the way be drear, If the foe be near,  
Let not faithless fears o'ertake us; Let not faith and hope forsake us;  
For through many a woe To our home we go.

10 continued

When we seek relief From a long-felt grief,  
When temptations come alluring, Make us patient and enduring.  
Show us that bright shore Where we weep no more.

Jesus, lead Thou on Till our rest is won.  
Heav'nly leader, still direct us, Still support, console, protect us,  
Till we safely stand In our fatherland.

### COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

### POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, you have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

### CLOSING HYMN #878

#### "Abide With Me"

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.  
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour;  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?  
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,  
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;  
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev'ry plea.  
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still if Thou abide with me!

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.  
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Preacher  
Liturgist  
Lector  
Organist

Pastor Josh Grotelueschen  
Pastor Harold Bender  
Debbie Nier  
Olivia Kukor

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