

**Welcome!** We are happy to share God's peace with everyone. Visitors are invited to sign our guest book in the entryway. If you have any questions, the ushers are ready to help. Feel free to visit after the service.

- Aids to assist with hearing (Williams Sound System) are available from the ushers.
- Printed copies of the sermon are available on the tract desk.
- Large Print Service binders can be found on the tract desk.
- For a personal preparation for Holy Communion, please see pages 295-296 in your hymnal.

**Please note: today's service is being recorded and streamed on**

**YouTube.**[www.youtube.com/@stlukesvassar](http://www.youtube.com/@stlukesvassar)

Our Lord teaches in his Word that in Communion we receive Jesus' true body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine, and that participation is also a declaration that we believe what our fellow communicants believe. In obedience to God's Word, then, we ask that only those who agree on all points of teaching—those who belong to a WELS or ELS church—and are confirmed partake in the Lord's Supper today. If you are not a member of a WELS or ELS church but

would like to pursue that unity of faith, or if you have questions, please speak with Pastor.

### Setting 3, p. 188

#### 362 Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

CW 362

- 1     Come, your hearts and voices raising,  
      Christ the Lord with gladness praising;  
      loudly sing his love amazing,  
          worthy folk of Christendom.
- 2     Christ, from heav'n to us descending  
      and in love our race befriending,  
      in our need his help extending,  
          saved us from the wily foe.
- 3     Jacob's Star in all its splendor  
      beams with comfort sweet and tender,  
      forcing Satan to surrender,  
          breaking all the pow'rs of hell.
- 4     From the bondage that oppressed us,  
      from sin's fetters that possessed us,  
      from the grief that sore distressed us,  
          we, the captives, now are free.

5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing  
when by faith we grasp this blessing,  
when, O Christ, we come addressing  
thanks to you and highest praise!

*Please stand for the final stanza*

6 Gracious Child, in mercy hear us,  
from your lowly manger cheer us,  
gently lead us and be near us  
till we join th' angelic choir.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, abr.

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**(Stand)**

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

**Amen.**

**Confession**

CW 188

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and  
the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just  
and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts,  
words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and  
forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins**

**with his innocent suffering and death.**

**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a  
sinner.**

*(Silence for meditation and reflection)*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us.

He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as  
the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Lord, Have Mercy**

CW 190

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

***Refrain:* Glory to God in the highest, glory to God, and peace to his people on earth, and peace to his people on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen. *Refrain*

## **THE WORD**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*(Be seated)*

## First Reading

*Exodus 33:18–23; 34:5–7*

<sup>18</sup>Then Moses said, “Please show me your glory.”

<sup>19</sup>The LORD said, “I will make all my goodness pass in front of you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD in your presence. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.” <sup>20</sup>He said, “You cannot see my face, for no human may see me and live.”

<sup>21</sup>The LORD also said, “Look, there is a place next to me, where you shall stand on the rock. <sup>22</sup>It will happen

that, while my glory passes by, I will put you in a crevice in the rock. I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup>Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back. But my face will not be seen.”

<sup>5</sup>The LORD came down in the cloud. He took his stand there with Moses and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed: “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and overflowing with mercy and truth, <sup>7</sup>maintaining mercy for thousands, forgiving guilt and rebellion and sin. He will by no means clear the guilty. He calls their children and their children's children to account for the guilt of the fathers, even to the third and the fourth generation.”

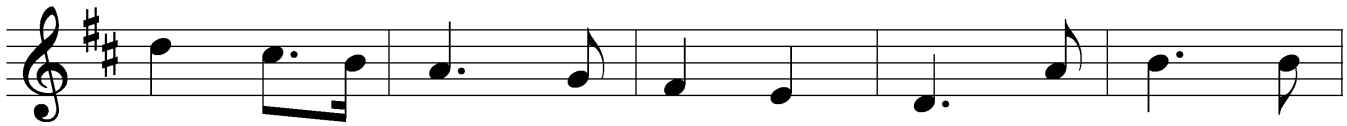
The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



# 98 Joy to the World

## Psalm 98



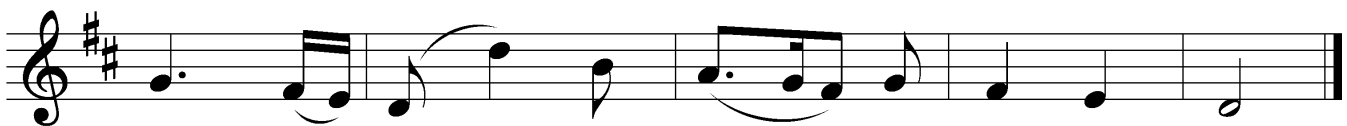
1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their  
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her King; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, alt.

Tune: George F. Handel, adapt.

Text and tune: Public domain

## Second Reading

Romans 8:31–32

<sup>31</sup>What then will we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup>Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*(Stand)*

## Gospel Acclamation

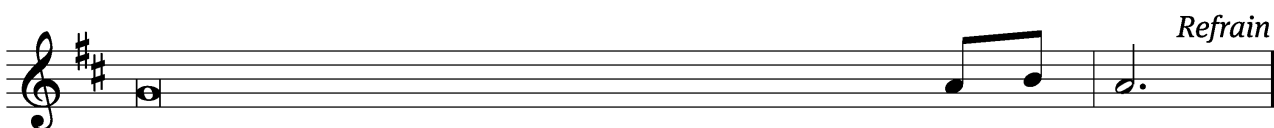
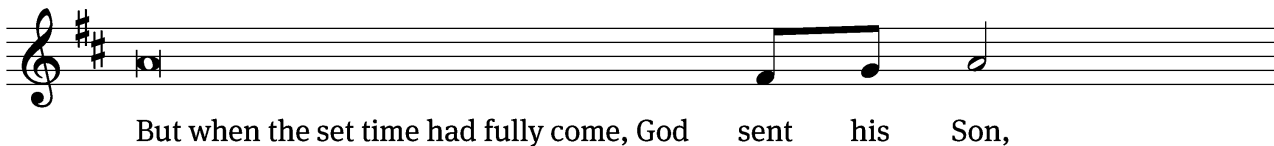
Galatians 4:4,5



*Refrain*



*Tone*



born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those un - der the law.

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

<sup>9</sup>The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup>They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>15</sup>John testified about him. He cried out, “This was the one I spoke about when I said, “The one coming after me outranks me because he existed before me.” <sup>16</sup>For out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. The only-begotten Son, who is close to the Father's side, has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*(Be seated)*

**366 O Rejoice, All Christians Loudly**

CW 366

1 O rejoice, all Christians, loudly,  
for our joy has now begun;  
wondrous things our God has done.  
Tell abroad his goodness proudly,  
who our race has honored thus,  
that he has befriended us. (Refrain)

**Ref Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness!  
Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining,  
for the Sun of grace is shining!**

2 See, my soul, your Savior chooses  
poverty and weakness, too;  
in such love he comes to you.  
Neither crib nor cross refuses,  
all he suffers for your good  
to redeem you by his blood. (Refrain)

3 Lord, how shall I thank you rightly?  
I am saved eternally  
by your life and death for me.  
Let me not forget it lightly,  
but with all my heart believe  
that from you I shall receive. (Refrain)

4 Jesus, guard and guide your members,  
fill them with your boundless grace,

hear their prayers in ev'ry place.  
Fan to life faith's glowing embers;  
grant all Christians far and near  
holy peace, a glad new year. (Refrain)

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Christian Keimann, 1607–1662

Text: Public domain

## **Sermon**

Romans 8:31-32

Christmas Confidence

I. God is for us (31)

II. God gives the best gifts (32)

*(Stand)*

## **Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son  
of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from  
true God,  
begotten, not made,**

of one being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation, he came down from  
heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin  
Mary,  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius  
Pilate.  
He suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with  
the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living  
and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic  
Church.

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Prayer of the Church**

**Offering**

**THE SACRAMENT**

*(Stand)*

**Preface**

CW 199

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whose wonderful and mysterious birth you



have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

## **Holy, Holy, Holy**

CW 200

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,  
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

### **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.**

### **Words of Institution**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

**Lamb of God**

CW 202

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us, grant us peace.

*(Be seated)*

**Distribution**

*(As he distributes the elements, the minister says to the communicants:)*

Take and eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

Take and drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, poured out for the forgiveness of your sins.

*(As he dismisses the communicants, the minister says:)*

The true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you to life everlasting. Go † in peace.

**Amen.**

**331 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come**

CW 331

1 “From heav’n above to earth I come  
to bear good news to ev’ry home;  
glad tidings of great joy I bring,  
whereof I now will say and sing:

2 “To you this night is born a child  
of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
this little child of lowly birth  
shall be the joy of all the earth.

3 “This is the Christ, our God most high,  
who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
he will himself your Savior be  
from all your sins to set you free.

4 “He will on you the gifts bestow  
prepared by God for all below,

that in his kingdom, bright and fair,  
you may with us his glory share.

5 “These are the signs which you shall mark:  
the swaddling clothes and manger dark.  
There you will find the infant laid  
by whom the heav’ns and earth were made.”

6 How glad we’ll be to find it so!  
Then with the shepherds let us go  
to see what God for us has done  
in sending us his own dear Son.

7 Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,  
and see what in the manger lies.  
Who is this child, so young and fair?  
It is the Christ Child lying there.

8 Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,  
through whom the sinful world is blest!  
You came to share my misery,  
that you might share your joy with me.

9 Ah, Lord, though you created all,  
how weak you are, so poor and small,

that you should choose to lay your head  
where lowly cattle lately fed!

- 10 Were earth a thousand times as fair  
and set with gold and jewels rare,  
it would be far too poor and small  
a cradle for the Lord of all.
- 11 Instead of soft and silken stuff  
you have but hay and straw so rough  
on which as king, so rich and great,  
to be enthroned in royal state.
- 12 And so it pleases you to see  
this simple truth revealed to me:  
that worldly honor, wealth, and might  
are weak and worthless in your sight.

*(Stand)*

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **Blessing**

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.

**Amen.**

## **331 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come**

CW 331

13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,  
prepare a bed, soft, undefiled

within my heart, made clean and new,  
a quiet chamber kept for you.

- 14 My heart for very joy must leap;  
my lips no more can silence keep.  
I too must sing with joyful tongue  
that sweetest ancient cradle song:
- 15 Glory to God in highest heav'n,  
who unto us his Son has giv'n,  
while angels sing with pious mirth  
a glad new year to all the earth!

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Martin Luther, 1483–1546

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#### Acknowledgments

Setting Three from Christian Worship

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