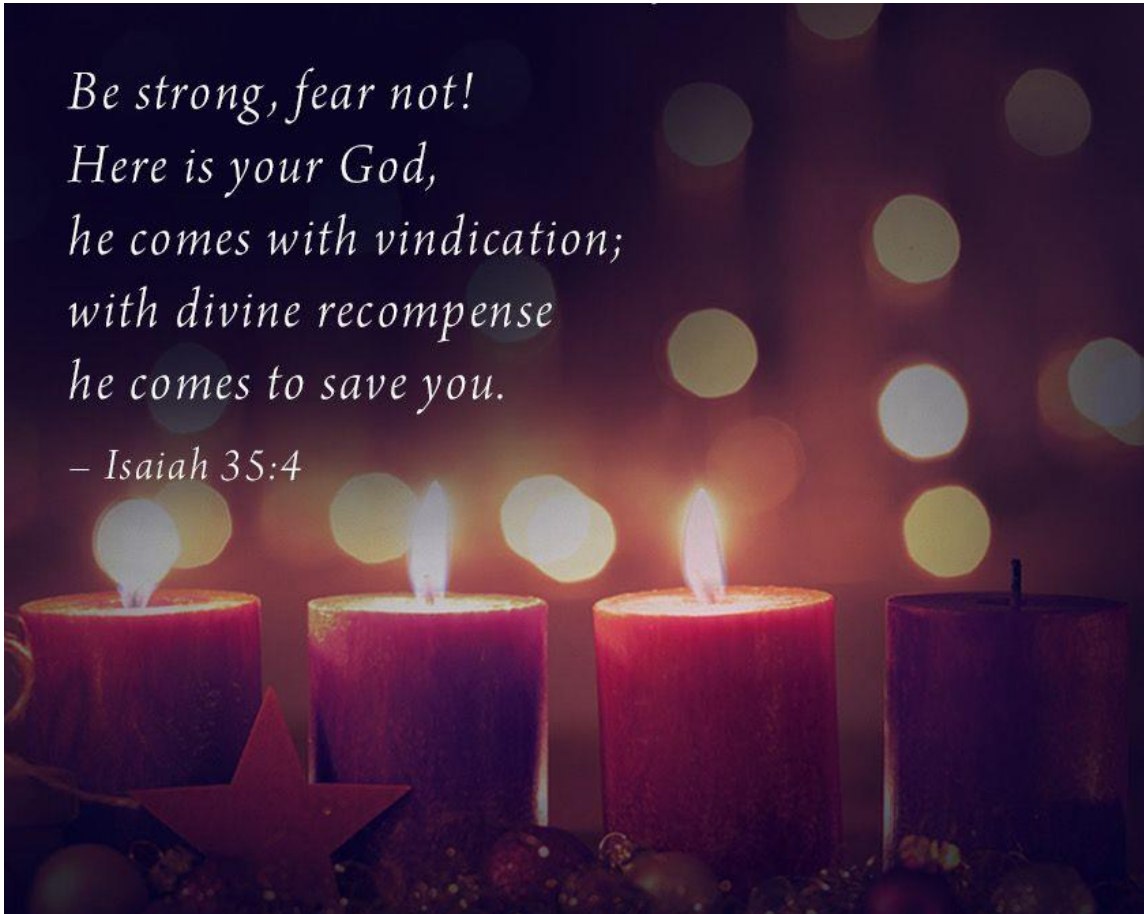


THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

+ December 14, 2025 +
10:00 am

*Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God,
he comes with vindication;
with divine recompense
he comes to save you.*

– Isaiah 35:4



Redeemer Lutheran Church

*300 O'Neal Road
Greer, South Carolina
Office (864) 877-5876*



Ministers
Pastor
Parish Administrator
Director of Music Ministries

The People of Redeemer
The Rev. Elise T. Stringer
Mrs. Jackie Pitts
Mrs. Donna Cotter

**Welcome to Redeemer Lutheran Church in the name of Christ our Lord.
We are thankful to Wade and Barbara Tate for creating our fresh, beautiful
Advent Wreath.**

WE WARMLY WELCOME ALL WHO WORSHIP WITH US on this Third Sunday of Advent. It is our hope and prayer that the God who destroyed death and made new life possible will touch and transform your life for all the days to come. If you are a visitor and/or have any questions, we invite you to speak with an Usher or Greeter, or reach out to Pastor Elise or Jackie Pitts at the Church Office, (864) 877-5876.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A CHURCH HOME, we invite you to consider making Redeemer that home. For more information about Redeemer Lutheran Church, becoming a member, and sharing your gifts in ministry, please speak with Pastor Elise or contact Jackie Pitts in the Church Office at (864) 877-5876.

A NOTE OF JOYFUL EXPECTATION MARKS TODAY'S WORSHIP. ISAIAH ANNOUNCES THAT THE DESERT SHALL REJOICE AND BLOSSOM, AND JESUS POINTS TO THE UNEXPECTED AND TRANSFORMING SIGNS OF GOD'S REIGN. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

WE ENTER THIS SANCTUARY WITH REVERENCE FOR GOD
AND RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO MAY BE IN PRAYER.
PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

Living In the Now and the Not Yet

In this season of Advent we stand in the discomfoting quiet of waiting for the salvation of the Lord while simultaneously seeing that very salvation breaking into the world around us. Like John the Baptist we ask Jesus “are you here, or should we still wait?” The answer to this question is “yes.” Yes, Jesus is here among us in his body and blood at the eucharist. But we wait for the day when he returns. Yes, Jesus is here among us bringing peace and reconciliation. But we wait for the day when he will make *all* things new. The new life promised by the coming of a savior is both realized and still to come. We who live in the Christian faith do so as people searching the world around us for signs of God’s kingdom. Gathering as Christ’s body on earth, we have a sort of dual-citizenship in the now and the not-yet as we both proclaim that Christ is among us and also fervently pray “even so, come Lord Jesus.” As believers, our hope does not rest in the efforts of our piety or in the comfort of the hereafter. Rather, our hope is in the promises of a gracious, faithful God; promises fulfilled before our eyes and those not yet seen. We long for the day in which, like Isaiah’s vision of what will be, the blind see and the lame leap like deer. Yet we tell what we see and hear around us: that the dead are raised and the poor receive good news. The day is here and yet still we wait. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The Prelude is a time for QUIET reflection and prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE DAY

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the People of God

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. 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.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.
 2 Wak-ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
 3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don down from heav'n.
 4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is wrapped in fear,
 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son

"Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"
 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
 Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all, to be for - giv'n;
 he will shield us with his mer - cy and with words of love draw near.
 with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878
 Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

GREETING

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

(VERSE 1, 2, AND 3)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Elise Stringer

WORD

God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10 (Not Read Today)

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 146:5-10 (Not Sung Today)

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob ¹ for their help,
whose hope is in the ¹ LORD their God;

⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;
who keeps promis- | es forever;**

⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who hunger.
The LORD sets the | captive free.

⁸ **The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who | are bowed
down;**

the LORD | loves the righteous.

⁹ The LORD cares | for the stranger;

the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of the wicked.

¹⁰ **The LORD shall | reign forever,**

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10 (Not Read Today)

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

P.151



Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 11th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."
⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'
¹¹"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

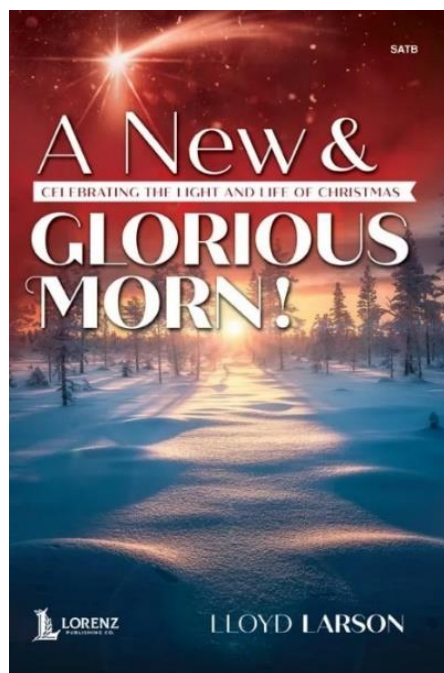
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Elise Stringer

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Redeemer Choir & Friends



A NEW AND GLORIOUS MORN

Contents

Come Adore the Newborn King!

Prepare for the Coming of the Lord

The Promised King of Heaven

Holy Child of Bethlehem

All Glory Be to God on High!

Rise Up, Shepherd, Go Tell It!

A Holy, Silent Night

Arise and Shine, Your Light Has Come!

Musicians

Singers

Flute	Jarrold Mabrey Karen Roughton
Clarinet	Patricia Taylor
Oboe	Gary Stroupe
Trumpet	Thomas Cotter, Henry Cotter
Horn	Bobby Cotter
Trombone	Chris Smith
Piano	Donna Cotter

Kim Colon
Isabella Colon
Alexa Cothran
Thomas Khoe
Sarah Owens
Jeffrey Stringer

Conductor Kaci Cotter

APOSTLES' CREED

The assisting minister may introduce the Creed.

Together with the whole church, let us confess our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the Good News from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. We pray especially for those on our prayer board and those we name before you now. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice and breaking cycles of poverty. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

We share a sign of peace with others. We sit.

ALL YOUTH PARTY 2025

From the youngest to the oldest, a great time was had by ALL!



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

MUSICAL OFFERING

Redeemer Choir

OFFERING HYMN

LET THE VINEYARDS BE FRUITFUL

ELW p. 182



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

Offered by the Assisting minister.

Let us pray. Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The presiding minister greets the congregation and invites all present to give thanks.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW p. 153



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**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.**

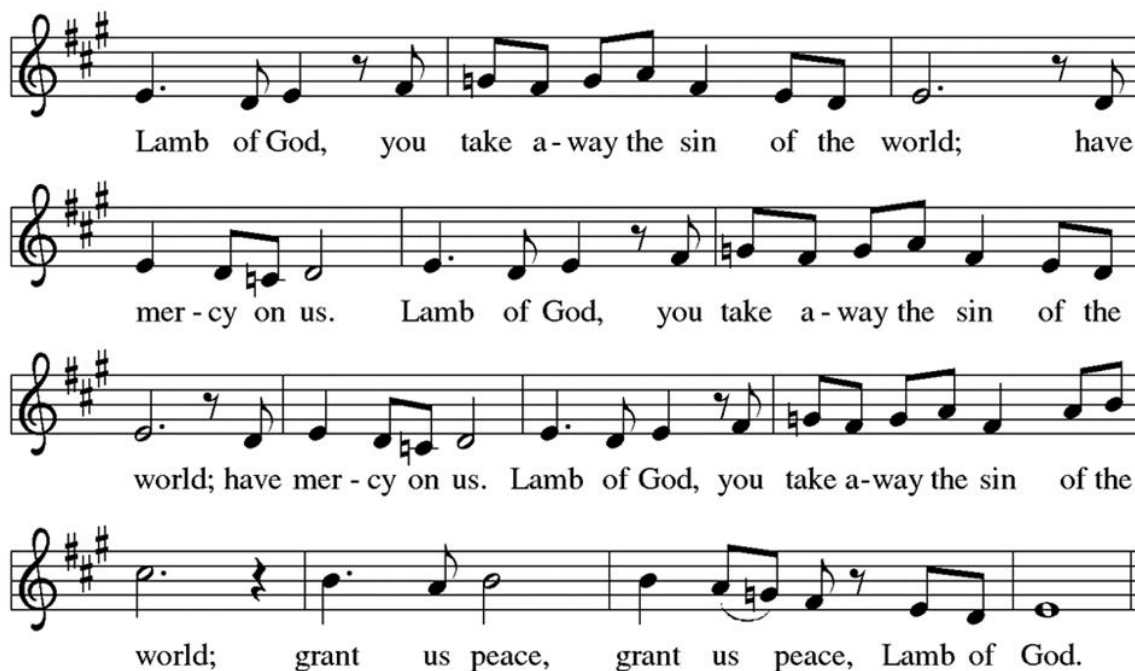
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised. **Amen.**

COMMUNION

LAMB OF GOD

ELW p.154



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

COMMUNION HYMNS

COME, WE THAT LOVE THE LORD

ELW #625

IN THEE IS GLADNESS

ELW #867

PRAISE THE ONE WHO BREAKS THE DARKNESS

ELW #843

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

Please stand.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Offered by Assisting minister.

Let us pray: God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

May God who comes among us, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

MISSION

REDEEMER'S MISSION IS: A Lifelong Family Ministry of God's Love!

SENDING HYMN

HARK, THE GLAD SOUND!
(Printed on the next page)

ELW #239

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Donna Cotter, Organist

Hark, the Glad Sound!

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751
 Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

SERVING TODAY

Ushers:	Mark Karrmann and Brad Van Putten
Greeters:	Phil and Debbie Rhoads
Assisting Minister:	Catharine Kirby
Lector 1:	Cindy Martin
Lector 2:	Joyce Frid
Acolyte:	Owen Smith
Crucifer:	Clara Cotter
Cantor:	Nancy Stires
Counters:	Cyndi Celinskis and Jennifer Tierce
Altar Guild:	Tom and Joyce Frid
Flowers:	Given by Bob and Donna Cotter in memory of Jeff Norman
Sheepdog:	Sonny Lybrand, Tom Lewis, and Barbara Tate
Nursery:	Kim Zumstein and Ava Johnson

SERVING NEXT WEEK - December 21, 2025

Ushers:	Wade Tate and Tom Lewis
Greeters:	Sonny Lybrand and Chuck Pegram
Assisting Minister:	Gordon Johnson
Lector 1:	Pat Kirchman
Lector 2:	Kathy Mieczkowski
Acolyte:	Logan Childers <i>(Needs a sub)</i>
Crucifer:	Lily Childers <i>(Needs a sub)</i>
Cantor:	Kyle Henderson
Counters:	Cyndi Celinskis and Jennifer Tierce
Altar Guild:	Paula Ludwigson
Flowers:	Poinsettias
Sheepdog:	Renee Phillips, JJ Johnson, and Brian Ginsberg
Nursery:	<i>Need an adult</i> and Hannah Hester

NOTES