

**Welcome to Lord of Life
Lutheran Church
December 28, 2025
The Holy Innocents**



Jesus escapes the sword in the gospel on this day—but not for long—not forever. He died for us. He died for the world, to put an end to the cycle of violence that continues to claim innocent victims. Rachel’s lament, recorded in Jeremiah and echoed in Matthew, is not the last word. “There is hope for your future,” says the Lord.

Welcome: Lord of Life Lutheran Church’s long-standing credo is “We share God’s Love”.

LoL provides a welcoming and safe place for worship, comfort, solace, and reflection. We are called by Jesus to love God and one another: to practice radical hospitality, and to serve all without reservation, stipulations or regard to your race, ethnic background, age, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, socioeconomic position, family status, or where you are in your faith journey. You are a unique and beloved child of God. We welcome you to join us in worship and communion and be part of our commitment to anti-racism, social and economic justice and environmental care.

Worship: *Communion:* All are welcome to share in Holy Communion.

Passing of the Peace: It is ok to greet those sitting near you. Please remember people have different levels of personal space which may vary from day to day and situation to situation. You can be respectful by asking, “May I hug you?” or “Would you like a handshake.”

Physical Distancing: It is still important to be aware of distancing. Pews along the sides of the church near the stained-glass windows are for people who want space; please space yourselves accordingly.

Children Welcome: Kids of all ages are welcome in service, and we celebrate their joyful wiggles and giggles! There are kids bags in the back of the sanctuary.

*Information, service & liturgy instructions are shown in italic or **bold italic** type on the following pages.*

Portions of the liturgy spoken by the leaders are shown in plain type.

*Portions of the liturgy spoken by the assembly are shown in **bold type**.*

PRELUDE

Gathering

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior,
Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Reconciling God,
**we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.**
**We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.**
**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.**
**We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.**
**Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.**
Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.

✝ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

What Child is This

ELW 296

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the innocent children of Bethlehem by order of King Herod. Receive into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims. By your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

All are seated

Word

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:15-17

Jeremiah is primarily concerned with Judah, yet these verses are a lament on the defeat and exile of the Northern Kingdom. The oldest tradition located the tomb of Rachel, mother of Joseph and Benjamin, in Ramah, north of Jerusalem. The later tradition followed by the author of Matthew placed it near Bethlehem.

¹⁵ Thus says the LORD:

A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more.

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD:

Keep your voice from weeping
and your eyes from tears,

for there is a reward for your work,

says the LORD:

they shall come back from the land of the enemy;

¹⁷ there is hope for your future,

says the LORD:

your children shall come back to their own country.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 124

¹ If the LORD had not been on our side,

let Israel now say;

² if the LORD had not been on our side,

when enemies rose up against us,

³ then would they have swallowed us up alive

in their fierce anger toward us;

⁴ then would the waters have overwhelmed us

and the torrent gone over us;

⁵ then would the raging waters

have gone right over us.

⁶ Blessed be the LORD

who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

⁷ We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler;

the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD,

the maker of heaven and earth.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-19

In this letter the writer is encouraging early Christians who were facing persecution for their beliefs. Though life is sometimes hard for the faithful, they are advised to rejoice as they share Christ's sufferings.

¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. ¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker. ¹⁶ Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name. ¹⁷ For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And

“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

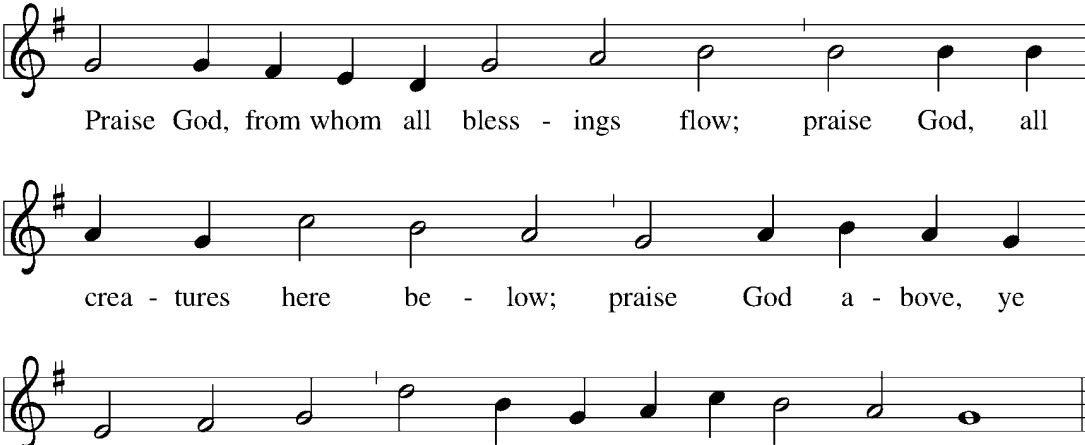
¹⁹ Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust their lives to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands as they are comfortable



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Alleluia. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, **for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Alleluia.** (*Matt. 5:10*)

THE GOSPEL READING: Matthew 2:13-18

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the second chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, 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.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

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

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

All are seated

SERMON

Pastor Adam Dowd

HYMN OF THE DAY

Praying

Kesha

Response to the Word

The assembly stands as they are comfortable.

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

With the whole Church, let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's 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 power of 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**

All are seated.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

United with the great cloud of witnesses throughout the ages, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

God of encouragement, give strength to your church amid trial and change. Let those who suffer for the sake of the gospel entrust themselves to you because you are faithful. Bless ministries of support and comfort in this and every worshiping community. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of heaven and earth, hear the groaning of creation. Where greed and neglect have destroyed ecosystems, habitats, and natural resources, reveal paths to equity and healing. Teach us anew how to care for our world with faithfulness and hope. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the journey, aid and protect refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, and all who leave their homelands to seek safety and opportunity. Raise up leaders who model love and compassion for all people regardless of race, religion, or country of origin. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of weeping, listen to your people as they cry to you in lamentation. Show your mercy to those who suffer with chronic illness, those who wait for cures, and those who are dying. Heal the bodies and spirits of those who suffer especially Art, Aimee, Donna, Marla, Ken, Vernetta, Roberta, Judy, Linda, Paul, Toni, Kerry, Jim, Caryl, and Gale. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of peace, comfort families in times of loss. Accompany grieving parents whose children have died. Dwell with parents who have experienced miscarriage or pregnancy loss. Embrace all who have given a child to foster care or adoption. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give you thanks, O God, for the promise of resurrection for all your beloved children, especially the Holy Innocents we remember today. Bring your peace to all who await new life with you and reunion with all your saints. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the company of your saints we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your eternal mercy and love; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

*The assembly greets one another in the name of the Lord with phrases like “**Peace be with you.**” If you have your phone available, text a word of peace to someone who is worshipping alone.*

OFFERING AND PRAYER

The offering plate is brought forward as a sign of the good gifts, ourselves included, God has given us.



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 dreams of



all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble



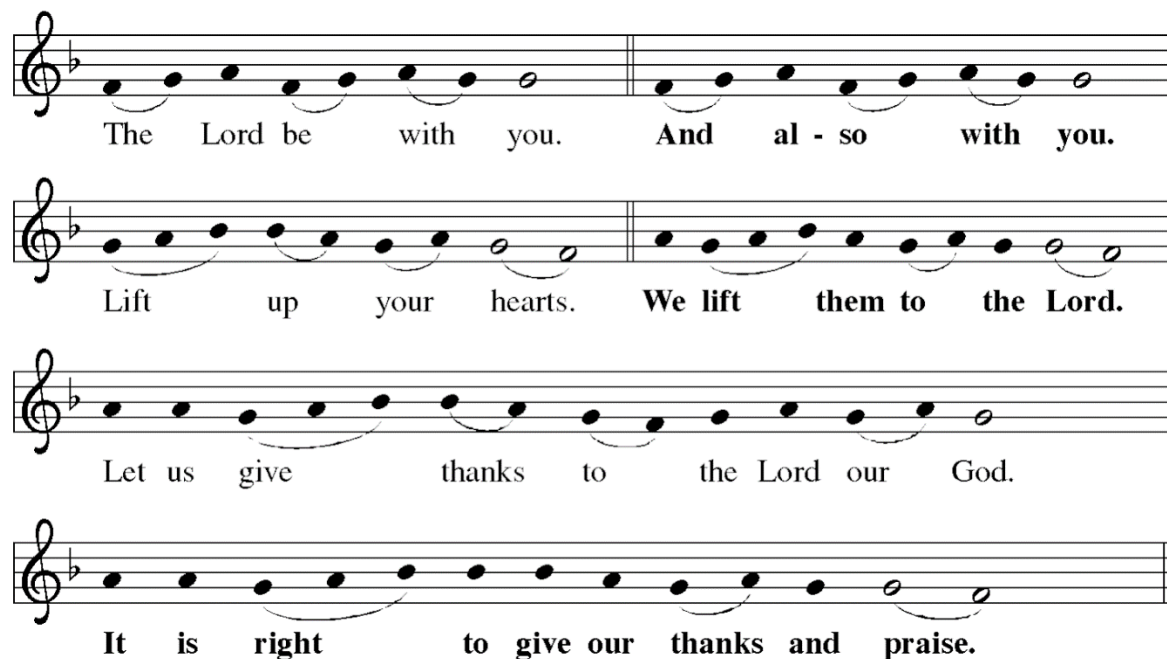
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

God of glory,
great are your wonders among us
and many are the blessings you bestow.
Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,
that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,
through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Meal

The assembly stands as they are comfortable.



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

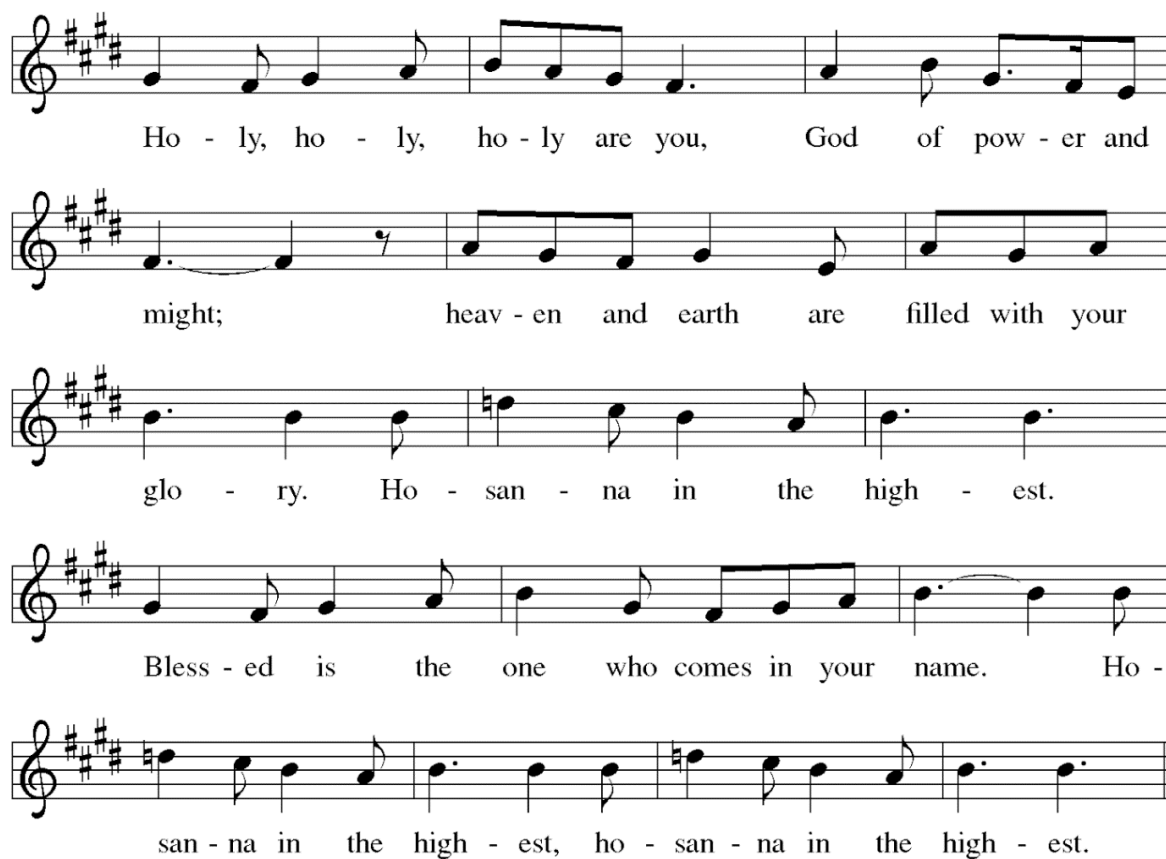
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE AND EUCHARISTIC PRAYER...

join their unending hymn



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and

might; heav - en and earth are filled with your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -

san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The minister continues the eucharistic prayer.
....We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:*

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us “*SING*” the pray that Jesus taught us:

**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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing.
Come to the feast of joy!

COMMUNION

All are seated. Please take time to prepare yourselves and your communion elements.

We prioritize people with mobility issues. We invite you to come forward in your own time and take a position at the altar that is most accessible for you.

SONG DURING COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.
May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts
the mystery of your presence.
Move us to discover the wonders of your love
in the everyday moments of our lives,
through Christ born in us.
Amen.

Sending

BLESSING

The triune God,
glorious Mystery,
holy Incarnate One,
abiding Comforter,
bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy,
The Lord look upon you with favor and (+) give you peace.
Amen

SENDING HYMN Good Christian Friends, Rejoice ELW 288

- 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

- 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

- 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!
And peace to God's people on earth!
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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Litanies of Welcome and Farewell-Interim Ministry Network, Baltimore, Maryland

Presiding Minister

Assisting Minister

Lector

Organist

Guitarist

Greeters

Ushers

Acolyte

Video

Pastor Adam Dowd

Judy Padera

Ray Silhan III

Rosita Yao

Christopher Vincent and Pastor Adam Dowd

David Solorzano

Evie Fagan & Marlene Carlson

Alice Tangorra

Roberta Sejnost and Sherry Sejnost

Announcements 12-28-2025

Wine and Candles this month are provided by **Kevin Glover** in memory of his father, **Brian Glover**.

Thank You We give heartfelt thanks to **Rosita** as she **retires** after **15 years** of faithful service as a musician in our church. Her music has lifted our worship and blessed our community in countless ways. We are deeply grateful for her dedication and the joy she has shared with us.

2026 Offering Envelopes are ready for you to pick up. They are on the table in the Sanctuary. Please do not use them prior to January 1, 2026.

Celebrate Together! The Church Council invites everyone to stop by the Treat Table after service **today**. It's their way of saying thank you for being part of this community – help yourself and enjoy!

Final Donations for 2025 All **cash** and **check donations** for 2025 need to be in the Church office by 10:00 AM on **Wednesday, December 31st** to be included in the final count for 2025. Thank you!

Un – Decorate Come and join us to un-decorate the church on **January 4th at 11:15 am**. Please sign up to bring treats. There is a sign up in the Sanctuary. It will be a jolly good time!

Lunch Bunch We will meet at Chicken Basket, 645 Joliet Road, Willowbrook, on **Tuesday, January 13th at 11:30 AM**. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Marilynn Sells at 630-927-9996. Please plan to pay with cash, as cash is preferred by the restaurant.

Annual Meeting Reports All committee reports for the Annual Meeting are due on **January 9, 2026**. The **Annual Meeting** will be held on **January 25, 2026** after service.

Please pray for members:

Art Sejnost	Aimee Jimenez	Donna Motes
Marla Suda	Ken Gulliford	Vern Sima
Kerry Spitznagle	Roberta Sejnost	Judy Padera
Linda Matta	Paul Ristau	Toni Blesy
Jim Eckwall	Caryl Schaer	Gale Dyskie

A full list of relatives, friends, and military personnel for whom we pray is emailed weekly on Friday.

Last Week's Giving – \$9395.00

Electronic Donation for the month of November- \$844.16

THIS WEEK AT LORD OF LIFE

Sunday	12/28	10:00 AM	Worship
		11:00 AM	Treat Table
		12:00 PM	Loving Word
Tuesday	12/30	5:00 PM	Overeaters Anonymous
Wednesday	12/31	7:00 PM	One Day at a Time
Thursday	1/1	Happy New Year	
Friday	1/2	9:30 AM	Cards
Saturday	1/3	9:00 AM	SDA
Sunday	1/4	10:00 AM	Worship
		11:00 AM	Un-Decorate the Church
		12:00 PM	Loving Word