

December 24, 2023

*Fourth Sunday
In Advent*



**GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

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.org
+

Worship:
Divine Service
8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am

Adult Bible Study &
Sunday School:
9:30 am
(Grace Hall)

+

Pastor:
Richard Willsea

Deaconess:
Karen Suter

Organist
Patty Barnes

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 24, 2023

✠ PREPARATION ✠

Today we will observe The Lord's Supper... *The Lord's Supper is celebrated at Grace Lutheran Church in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked you first to speak with the pastor, an elder or an usher. (For further study, see Matthew 5:23f; 10:32f; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:17-34). Wine is used in the individual and common cup. It may also be received by intinction. A gluten free wafer is available upon request.*

PRELUDE

"People Look East"

setting: J. Bertolozzi

"Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord"

setting: W. Pelz

WELCOME

Stand

HYMN

"Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord"

LSB 352



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has tru - ly
2 What the Fa - thers most de - sired, What the proph - ets'
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
4 As Your com - ing was in peace, Qui - et, full of



kept His word And at last to us did send
heart in - spired, What they longed for man - y a year,
Ja - cob's Lord— Him of two - fold race be - hold—
gen - tle - ness, Let the same mind dwell in me



Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
Stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
Tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
Which is Yours e - ter - nal - ly.

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith,
Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again
As the glorious king to reign,
I with joy will see Your face,
Freely ransomed by Your grace.

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

- A** Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him.
- C** Wait for the LORD and keep His way.
- A** The LORD waits to be gracious to you.
- C** He exalts Himself to show mercy to you.
- A** For the LORD is a God of justice;
- C** blessed are all those who wait for Him.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** So that we may experience the peace of sins forgiven, let us come before our Lord with humble hearts as we confess together:

C Gracious Father, we all have sinned and fallen short of Your glory. By what we have done and by what we have failed to do, we have broken Your commands and have not accomplished Your plans for our lives.

A Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, You alone give us the redemption and the restoration, the absolution and the ability to follow Your Word. Through the work of Jesus, the Word made flesh, do for us what is impossible apart from You.

C Forgive us, renew us, and lead us so that we may follow Your plan for our lives and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P In the mercy of our gracious Father, Jesus came into this world, journeying from the crib to the cross, from the tomb and to His throne of glory in order to secure our forgiveness according to God's plan of salvation. Receive His assurance of pardon this day as we celebrate Jesus' coming to save us. As a called and ordained 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.

C Amen.

† SERVICE OF THE WORD †

INTROIT

P Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;

C let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.

A The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

C In them He has set a tent for the sun,

P which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,

C and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

A Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them,

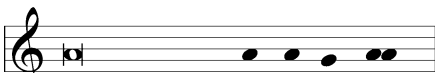
C and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

**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.**

- P** Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
C let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.

KYRIE

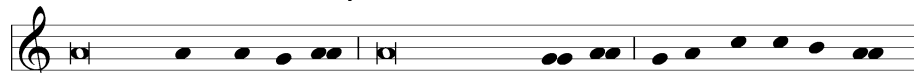
LSB 168



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



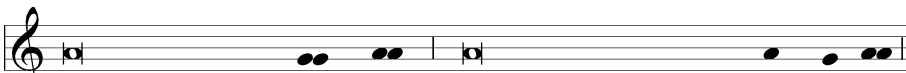
C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove and for our sal-va-tion let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



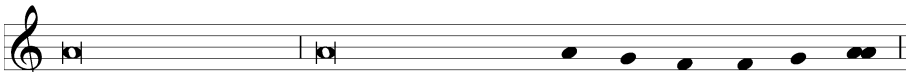
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the uni-ty of all let us pray to the Lord.



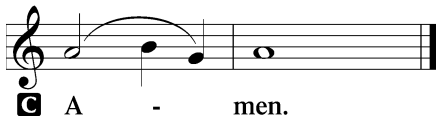
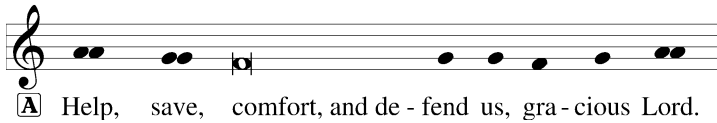
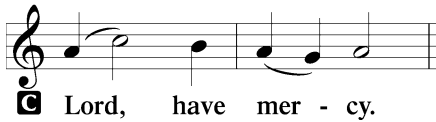
C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



SALUTATION AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

G **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might,

G **that we may experience the peace of knowing all things are possible with You;**

P for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G **Amen.**

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16

The word is read...

A This is the Word of the Lord.

G **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL

A Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

G **Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.**

A Behold, your king is coming to you;

G **righteous and having salvation.**

ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 knowl - edge show, And teach us in her ways to go.
 give the Law In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Refrain

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el

Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

SERMON

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS BY TRANSFER OR PROFESSION OF FAITH

Phillip, Wendy and Sarah Graham

- P** Beloved in the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ said to His apostles: "Whoever confesses Me before men, I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." Lift up your hearts, therefore, to the God of all grace and joyfully give answer to what I now ask you in the name of the Lord.
- P** Do you this day in the presence of God and of this congregation acknowledge the gifts that God gave you in your Baptism?
- R** *Yes, I do.*
- P** Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?
- R** *Yes, I renounce them.*
- P** Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, and in the Holy Spirit?
- R** *Yes, I believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

P Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God and the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from them and confessed in the Small Catechism, to be faithful and true?

R *I do.*

A Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

A Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

A Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

A Do you desire to become a member of this congregation?

R *I do.*

A Will you support the work our gracious Lord has given this congregation with your prayers and the gifts God has given you?

R *I will, with the help of God.*

P Upon this your confession of faith, I acknowledge publicly that you are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and of this congregation. Receive the Lord's Supper and participate with us in all the blessings of salvation that our Lord has given to His Church, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Stand

P Let us pray. Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank and praise You for Your great goodness in bringing these Your sons and daughters to the knowledge of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, and enabling them both with the heart to believe and with the mouth to confess His saving name. Grant that by Your Word and Spirit they may continue steadfast in the one true faith in the fellowship of this congregation as together we await the day when all who have fought the good

fight of faith shall receive the crown of righteousness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The pastor will extend the right hand of fellowship and will bestow name tags.. The rite concludes with the following blessing:

P The grace of our † Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

C Amen.

The new members return to their places.

Stand

CREED

**C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven**

and sits at the right hand of the Father.

And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord and giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,

who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,

and I look for the resurrection of the dead

and the life † of the world to come. Amen.

Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- P** In the peace of Christ, our coming King, let us bring our prayers before our gracious God.
Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C** **Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.**
- A** For God's amazing plan of salvation to reach into our hearts, that all those for whom Christ Jesus came into this world may know the hope, love, joy, and peace of sins forgiven; for perfect peace to reign in the hearts and minds of all who believe, that we may be the Lord's instruments of peace in a world filled with troubles; in peace, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
- C** **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**
- A** For the outpouring of the Spirit of peace upon the Church of Christ Jesus, that all who wait for His appearing would be strengthened in their faith and renewed in their boldness to confess His saving name before all the world; for all those who

doubt God's plan for their lives, that like the virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit would make His Word come alive in them, transforming them from the inside out; in peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.

C Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

A For the comfort and peace of Jesus to touch the lives of all who experience suffering, for Christ's peace to dwell among us as we celebrate His coming to save us, looking forward to the ultimate Day in which He will come again in all power and glory; in peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P With hearts of gratitude and praise, we join with the hosts of heaven and say:

C "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

P Into Your hands, O gracious God, we entrust our prayers, through Jesus Christ, our King and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

PAX DOMINI

P Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

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

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Sit

OFFERING

VOLUNTARY

"Lo, How a Rose"

arr. E. Lewis



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing From ten - der stem hath
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, The rose I have in
 3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der With sweet - ness fills the
 4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, Who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing As proph - ets long have
 mind; With Mar - y we be - hold it, The vir - gin moth - er
 air, Dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor The dark - ness ev - 'ry -
 woe; O Sav - ior, King of glo - ry, Who dost our weak - ness



sung, It came, a flow - 'ret bright, A - mid the
 kind, To show God's love a - right, She bore to
 where. True man, yet ver - y God, From sin and
 know: Bring us at length we pray To the bright



cold of win - ter, When half - spent was the night.
 us a Sav - ior, When half - spent was the night.
 death He saves us And light - ens ev - 'ry load.
 courts of heav - en, And to the end - less day.

✠ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** **We lift them to the Lord.**
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

- P** 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, the very Word made flesh who came to dwell among us, fulfilling Your Word and bringing to earth the peace of heaven. 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 178

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of
 pow'r and might: Heav'n and earth are full of Your
 glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is He who comes in the name
 of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- P** In Your great mercy, O Father, You sent the angel Gabriel to bring Your Word to the virgin Mary, calming her fears and filling her with Your peace.
- C** **With grateful hearts, we receive Your Word again this day. Favor us with Your grace that we would trust our Prince of Peace and receive Him who comes to us in His body and blood.**
- P** Hear us as we pray in His name and in the words He has taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

C 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

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
- P** In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

AGNUS DEI

LSB 180

C 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

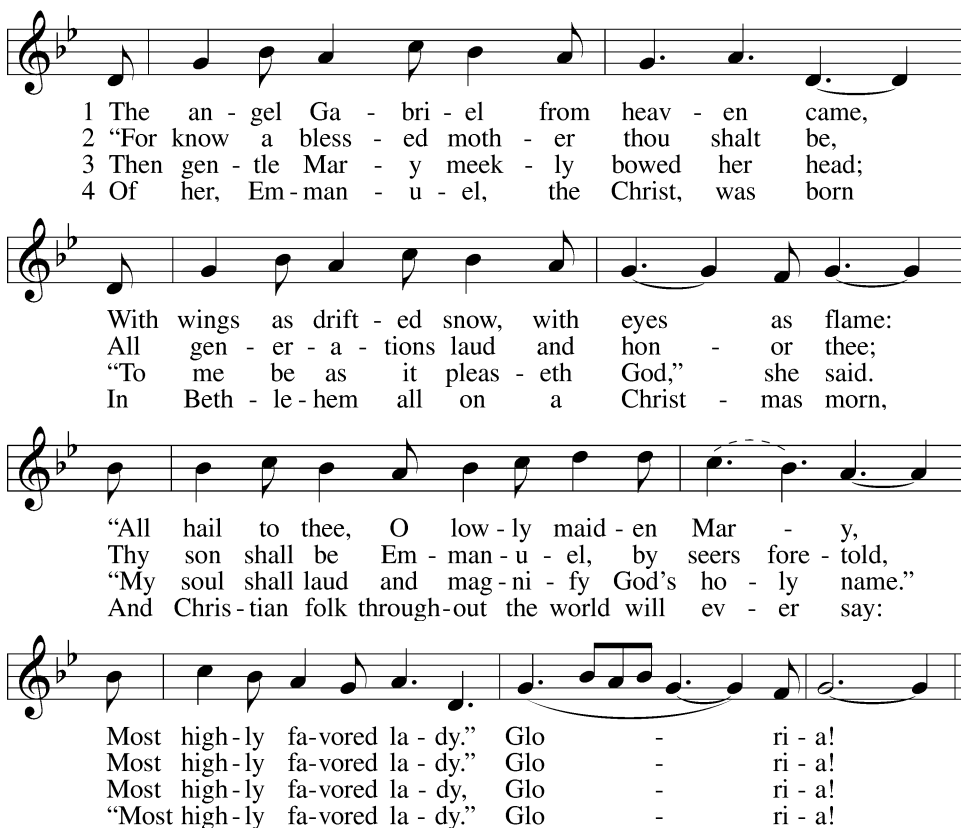


sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of
 God, You take a - way the sin of the world;
 grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMN "The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"

LSB 356



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
 3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

With wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
 All gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.
 In Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
 Thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 And Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:

Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!

VOLUNTARY

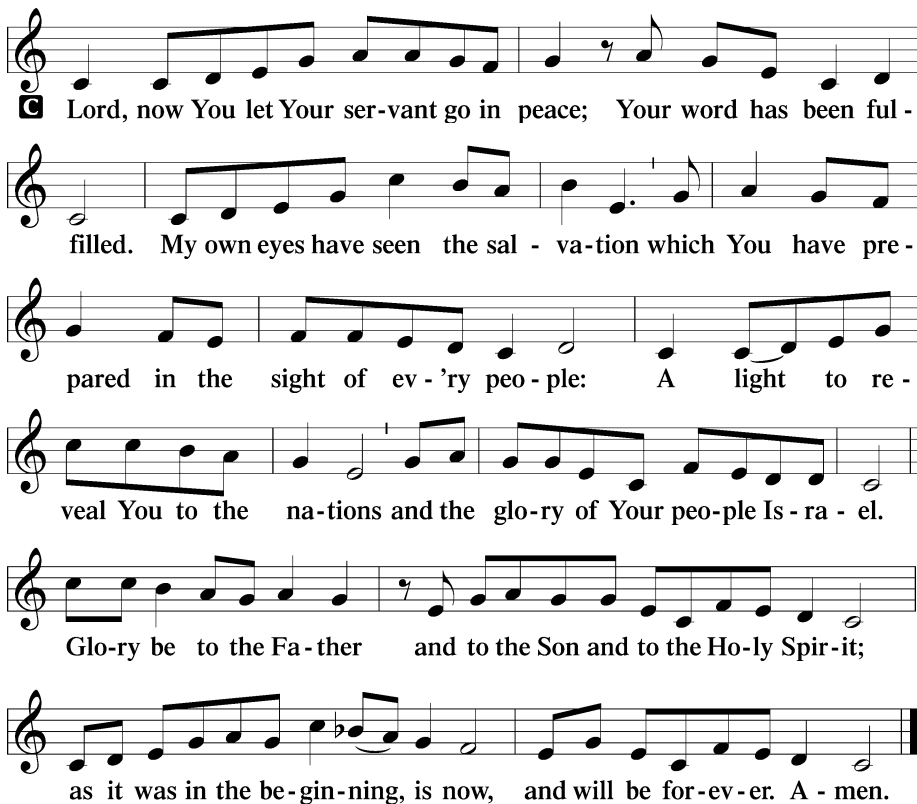
"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"
"Break forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light"

Setting: A. Organ
arr. R. Thygeron

Stand

NUNC DIMITTIS

LSB 182



Lord, now You let Your ser-vant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which You have prepared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to reveal You to the na - tions and the glo-ry of Your peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo-ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it; as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.

POST COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

BENEDICTION

- P** May our gracious God strengthen your hearts, for His plan of salvation has been revealed to us in the coming of His Son, our Savior and King.
- C** **“To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.”**
- P** 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.
- C** **Amen.**

HYMN

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

LSB 338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv-er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for-ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

Sit

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace as you serve the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“For Unto Us a Child Is Born”

arr. R. Anderson

Acknowledgements

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 1.

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