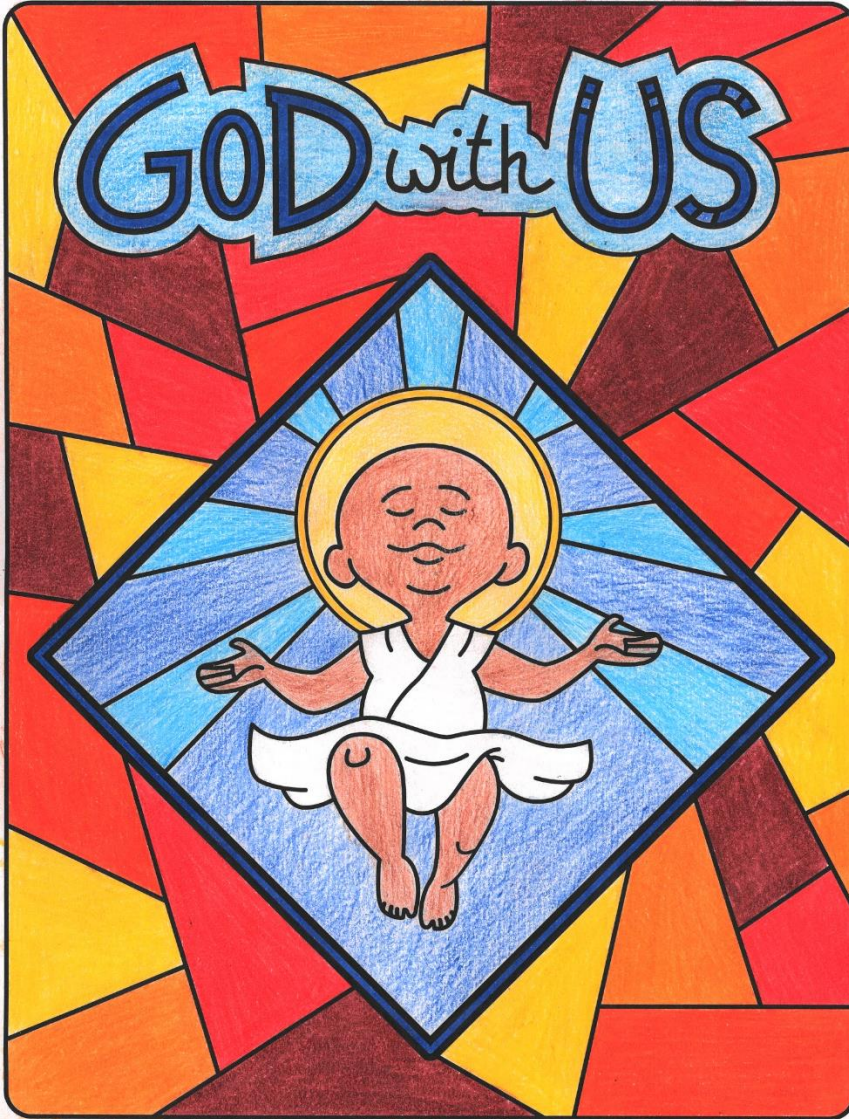


Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, December 25, 2022 •

Nativity of our Lord



COLORED BY LEAH KOEHLER

WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *The Bells of Christmas*

Traditional Carol

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

P Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor,
at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world,
and throughout the ages, you proclaim newness of life.

C For your wondrous Word, we thank you, O God.

P In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh,
to shine in our world's darkness,
to speak peace to all people,
and to welcome us as members of your family.

C For your loving Word, we adore you, O God.

P Grant us now the gift of your Spirit,
that held, nourished, and protected by your Word,
we may live as your children,
bearing your goodness throughout the world.

C For your powerful Word, we praise you, O God.

P All glory to you, holy God,
now and forever.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

All Stand & Sing

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,

once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

Refrain

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

The musical score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It features a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The lyrics are arranged in four stanzas, with the first three stanzas corresponding to the four voice parts. The fourth stanza is a refrain that all voices sing together. The piano accompaniment provides a harmonic foundation for the voices.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4
Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, the love of God the Father Almighty, and the communion of the Holy Spirit living among us be with you all.

C And also with you.

KYRIE

All Sing

P



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C



Lord, have mer - cy.

P



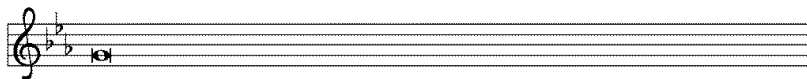
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C



Lord, have mer - cy.

P



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.

C



Lord, have mer - cy.



P



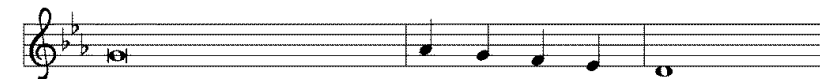
let us pray to the Lord.

C



Lord, have mer - cy.

P



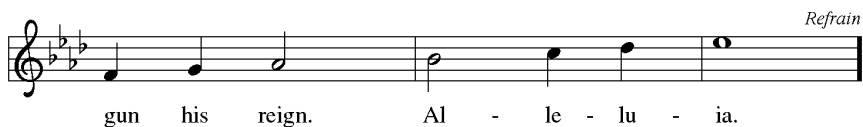
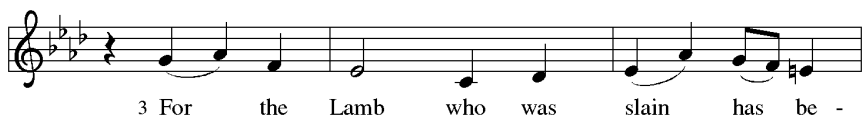
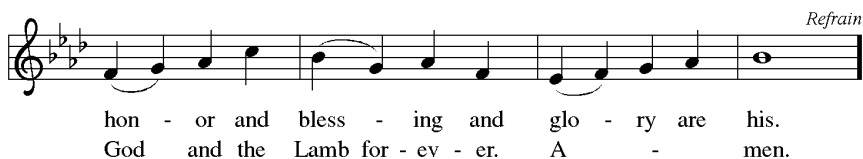
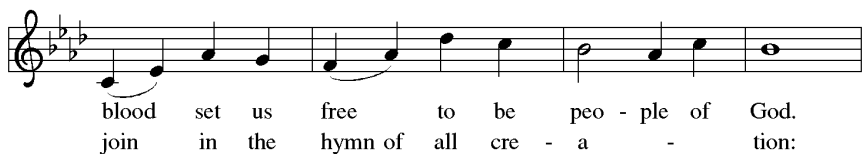
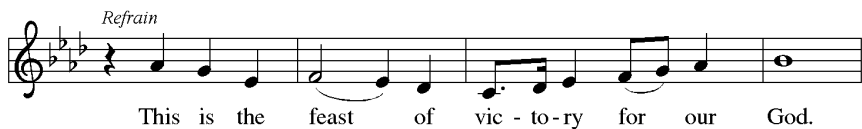
Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

C



A - men, a - men.

THIS IS THE FEAST



SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

We invite children to come forward for a children's message before moving to children's church.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the fifty-second chapter of Isaiah.

Isaiah proclaims news of great joy: "Your God reigns!" Just as God saved the people from oppression in Egypt, God delivers Israel from exile. All the earth will witness the saving acts of God.

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the Lord to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The Lord has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 1:1-4

A reading from the first chapter of Hebrews.

This letter opens with a lofty declaration of Jesus' preeminent status as the Son through whom God created the world and through whom our sins are cleansed. God speaks to us now through the Son, who is exalted even above the angels.

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL VERSE

All Stand & Sing

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

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

Repeat alleluia

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL

John 1:1-14

P The holy gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

The prologue to the Gospel of John describes Jesus as the Word of God made flesh, the one who reveals God to be “full of grace and truth.”

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Pastor Micah

Silence is kept for reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Once in Royal David's City*

All Stand & Sing



- 1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
- 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
- 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
- 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed;
and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;
we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895
Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

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

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A brief silence.

The church in every land makes a joyful noise to herald your coming, O God. We give thanks for poets, musicians, and hymn writers who give voice to our praise, and for all who lead the church's worship. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

This day dawns with new hope for all living things, and from ocean depths to mountain peaks the earth rejoices. Inspire in us an urgent zeal to protect the planet and renew its resources. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Bring heavenly peace to this world and an end to armed conflict. Raise up leaders in every nation who will honor human rights and establish equal justice for all people. Give courage to all who speak out against oppression and advocate for the powerless. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Guard the lives of any in danger, especially those who work to protect others. Lead any who are in desperate circumstances to sanctuary, help, and safety. Grant rest to the weary and soothe those who are troubled (*especially*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Bless all who gather to worship on this holy day. Be present at our tables and celebrations, and watch over those who travel. Sustain charities, outreach ministries, and food pantries that give generously to people in need. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

In Christ we have beheld your glory, full of grace and truth. We give thanks for those in every generation who reflect the light of Christ. May their witness shine forth in our time. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

ORGAN OFFERTORY: *The Hills Are Bare in Bethlehem*

Miller

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *What Child is This*

All Stand & Sing

3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.

The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.

Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;

joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray.

C God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

DIALOGUE

Presider

Congregation

The musical notation is written on four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are represented by black dots on the staff lines, with curved lines indicating the melody. The lyrics are written below the notes.

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

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

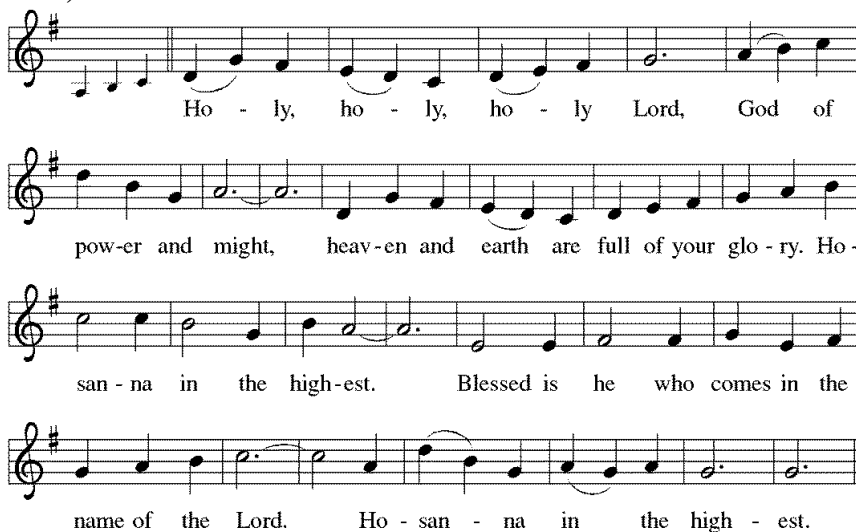
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

All Sing



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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.
C Thanks be to God.



LAMB OF GOD

All Sing

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.

COMMUNION

For communion, you will come up the aisle, take a cup at the front pew, and then follow the line around the altar rail. You'll kneel if able, then receive the bread and eat. The wine will be poured into your cup as you hold it, and you may drink it then. Everyone will be dismissed together and you'll walk back to your pew the way came.

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

C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

C God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *Good Christian Friends*

All Stand & Sing

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man-ger now.
He has o - pened heav-en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866
Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.; arr. Robert L. Pearsall, 1795–1856

SENDING

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: *Let All Together Praise our God*

Manz

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** The altar flowers were given by Julia Gunter in celebration of the birth of our Savior and in honor of our Choirmaster and all church musicians for their time, talent and dedication to our music ministry.

This Week's Schedule:

Sunday, December 25th

No Sunday School

10:30 am - Worship in the Sanctuary

Monday, December 26th

Office Closed



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS 2022



TO THE GLORY OF GOD:

Greg Byrum

IN HONOR OF:

Greg Byrum in honor of Mary (Libby) Byrum

Greg Bryrum in honor of Julia Gunter

Jill Cassel in honor of Greg Cline, Deacon Beka Forst, Pastor Micah Kearney

Shirley Causby in honor of Greg Cline

Greg Cline in honor of Shirley Causby

Greg Cline in honor of Faye and Warren Heller

John & Leslie Crist in honor of our grandchildren: Wyatt & Brooklyn Suttentfield, Max & Olive McCotter, Patrick & Jacob Crist

Jimmy & Ellie Holloway in honor of Jennifer Hass Kearney

Jack Howard in honor of his cousins: Elizabeth, Emalee, Lily, Charlie & Mackenzie

Carole Jolley in honor of Pastor Micah, Jenn and boys

The Kearney Family in honor of the saints of Holy Comforter, past and present

Leigh & Shari Leverenz in honor of Emmaleigh and Jackson Bears

Mark & Anne Reese in honor of Barbara Reese

Harold & Jo Singleton in honor of Angela Bunney and Alan Daniel's Christmas Eve wedding

Mark & Rebecca Yount in honor of Luke and Alec Via

IN MEMORY OF:

Donna Bean in memory of Faye H. Bean

Jim & Jan Buell in memory of Carmen Buell

Jim & Jan Buell in memory of Carol Terry and Bob Haubenreich

Shirley Causby in memory of Tommy Causby

John & Leslie Crist in memory of Ray and Rita Broome, Bill and Rosa Crist

Raul & JoAnne de la Vega in memory of Dr. & Mrs. Raul E. de la Vega

Raul & JoAnne de la Vega in memory of Dr. & Mrs. William Kannapel

Jeff & Abby Featherstone in memory of Ned, Becke, and Ann Featherstone

Jimmy & Ellie Holloway in memory of Robert Hass, John Hass, Albert and Jean Hass

Jimmy & Ellie Holloway in memory of Sam and Martha Ann Holloway, and Tom Holloway

Carole Jolley in memory of Sybil Jolley

Diana Kooser in memory of family members

Debbie Mendez in memory of Alice and Mark Lyerly

Mark & Ann Reese in memory of Jim and Shirley Robertson

Mark & Ann Reese in memory of Jim Reese

Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of Heather Mauney Yount

Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of Paul and Judy Outlaw

Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of John and Myra Yount

This is the list that the church office received. We apologize if there were any names omitted.



"Journeying through faith in a joyful, safe community, welcoming and serving Belmont and beyond."

Our core values are: **Embrace, Grow, Connect, and Give**

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street Belmont, NC 28012 704-825-2483
holycomforter@gmail.com

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 2:00 pm

Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: mkearney@holyc.org

Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: rforst@holyc.org

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

Chelsea Spicer, Office Manager