

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, January 7th, 2024 •

Baptism of Our Lord



WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Bright and Glorious Is the Sky*

Danish Melody

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, creator of darkness and light, word of truth,
wind sweeping over the waters.

C Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God, our rock and refuge,

**C we pour out our hearts before you. We have known you but have not always
loved you. We have wounded one another and sinned against you. We have not
always recognized the Holy Spirit dwelling in each of us. Remember your covenant.
Renew your creation. Restore us, that we might proclaim your good news to all.
Amen.**

P The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. God has spoken: The time of grace is now.
In Jesus, the reign of God has come near. By the authority of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins
are forgiven. You are God's beloved.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *As with Gladness Men of Old*

All Stand & Sing

1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing star be - hold;
2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
5 In the heav'n - ly coun - try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;

as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;

so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.
Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit 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.



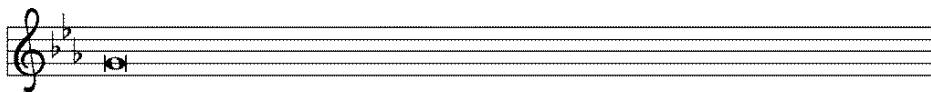
P

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,

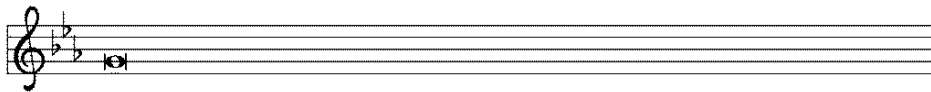


and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



C

Lord, have mer - cy.



P

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

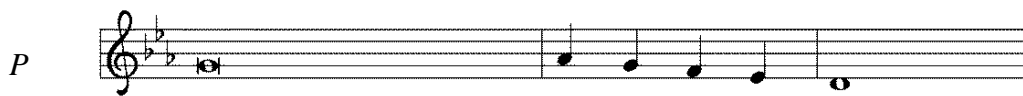


let us pray to the Lord.



C

Lord, have mer - cy.



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



C A - men, a - men.

GLORIA

All Sing



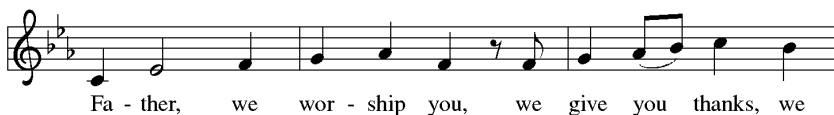
Glo - ry to God in the high -



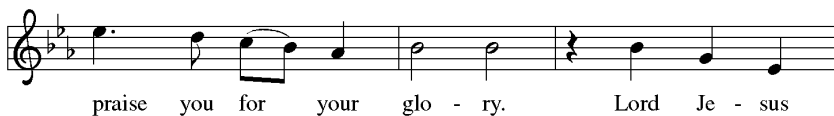
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and



Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we



praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus



Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the



right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a -

lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High,

Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of

God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Glo - ry to God in the high -

est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after 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

Genesis 1:1-5

A reading from Genesis, the first chapter.

Out of chaos, God brings order. Out of the formless void, God brings light. This familiar story was good news for the Israelites, who experienced much chaos in their history. It remains good news for us. God created and continues to create new life.

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Acts 19:1-7

A reading from Acts, the nineteenth chapter.

In Ephesus, Paul encounters people who had received John's baptism of repentance but had never heard of the Holy Spirit or of baptism in the name of Jesus. After Paul baptizes them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them and empowers them with gifts of the Spirit.

¹While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ²He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." ⁴Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—
⁷altogether there were about twelve of them.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

Mark 1:4-11

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

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

Mark's gospel reports the story of Jesus' baptism with some irony: the one on whom the Spirit descends is himself the one who will baptize others with the Holy Spirit.

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

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: *This is the Spirit's Entry Now*

All Stand & Sing

1 This is the Spir - it's en - try now: the wa - ter and the word,
2 This mir - a - cle of life re - born comes from the Lord of breath;
3 Let wa - ter be the sa - cred sign that we must die each day
4 Re - new - ing Spir - it, hear our praise for your bap - tis - mal pow'r

the cross of Je - sus on your brow, the seal both felt and heard.
the sin - less one from life was torn; our life comes through his death.
to rise a - gain by his de - sign as fol - l'wers of his way.
that wash - es us through all our days. Come, cleanse a - gain this hour.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system contains four lines of lyrics. The second system contains three lines of lyrics. The third system contains three lines of lyrics. The fourth system contains three lines of lyrics. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature.

Text: Thomas E. Herbranson, b. 1933
Music: North American traditional; arr. hymnal version
Text © Thomas E. Herbranson, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

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

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Inspire wisdom and a spirit of proclamation in your church, God of forgiveness. Uplift leaders to share the truth of your word in community. Encourage us to live into the promises of baptism, working for justice and peace in all the world. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Renew your creation, God of thunder and mighty waters. Restore the rivers in which your children are baptized. May fields flourish and grow. Summon the stewards and caretakers of the land to cherish your good works. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Give strength to your leaders, God who is present in every country and community. Raise up leaders committed to equity and healing. Grant them discernment and compassion as they lead in love. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Protect and cherish the most vulnerable among us, God of strength. Accompany those separated from family or hurting from broken relationships. Shelter our unhoused neighbors and any experiencing poverty. Protect those incarcerated in prisons and detention centers. Care for the sick and suffering. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Encourage this congregation, God who calls and sends disciples. Guide us in accompanying, learning from, and serving our neighbors on the margins, following the example of Jesus. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Trusting the assurance of the Holy Spirit, we remember all who have died and rest in God's care. Give hope to those who grieve even as we rest in your eternal promise of resurrection. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

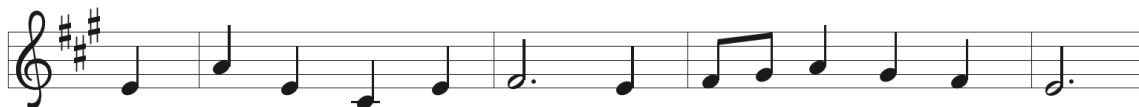
C And also with you.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *We Three Kings*

Chamber Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Arise, Your Light Has Come!*

All Stand & Sing



- 1 A - rise, your light has come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
2 A - rise, your light has come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
3 A - rise, your light has come! All you in sor - row born,
4 A - rise, your light has come! The moun - tains burst in song!



show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
pro - claim the cap - tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.
bind up the bro - ken - heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
Rise up like ea - gles on the wing, God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825-1893
Text © 1992 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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OFFERING PRAYER

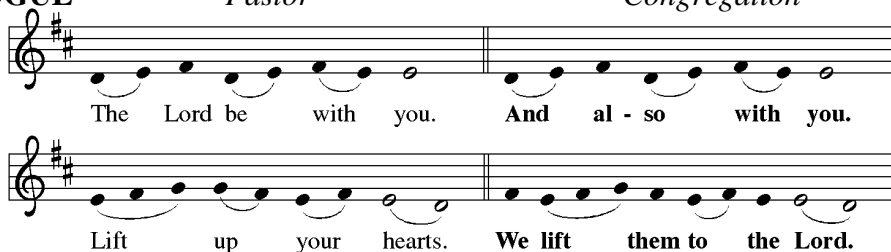
A Let us pray.

C Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you. In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

DIALOGUE

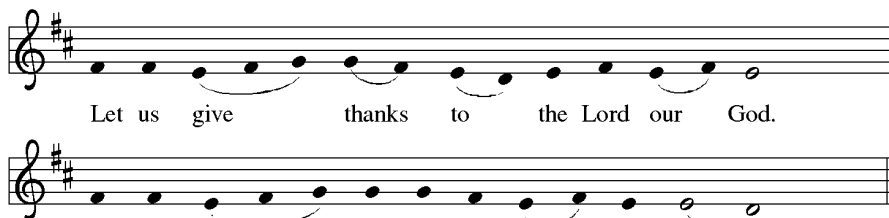
Pastor

Congregation



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Cong.

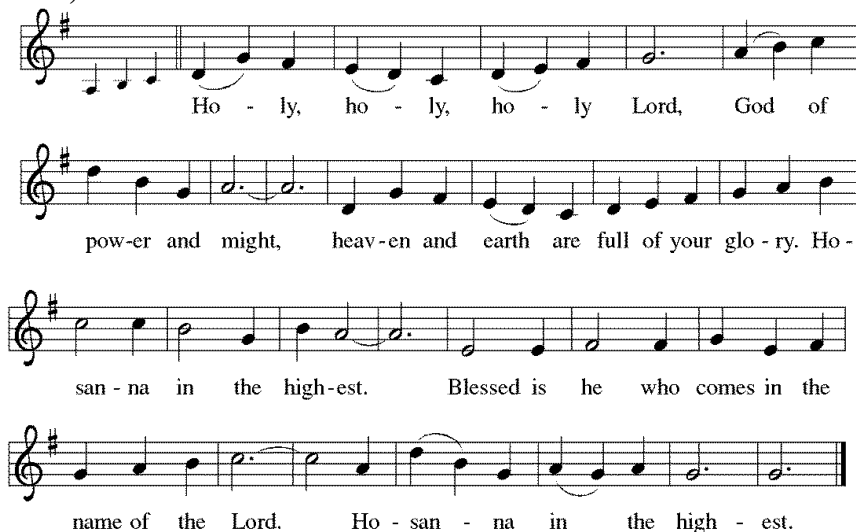
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

All Sing



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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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 At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see.

C Thanks be to God.



COMMUNION

*All people are welcome at the Lord's Table to receive Christ's real presence and grace.
You are invited forward to take a cup and then kneel around the altar as you're able.
You'll receive the bread and eat, then hold your cup to be filled with wine and drink.
You'll then return to your seat the way you came forward.*

LAMB OF GOD All Sing


A musical score for the hymn 'Lamb of God' in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: '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, 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.


MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *Wade in the Water*

All Sing

Refrain
All




Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,

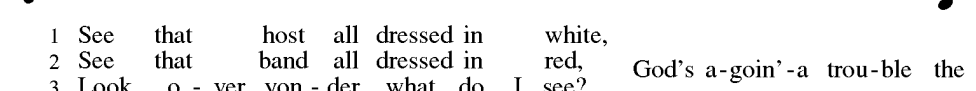


wade in the wa - ter, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

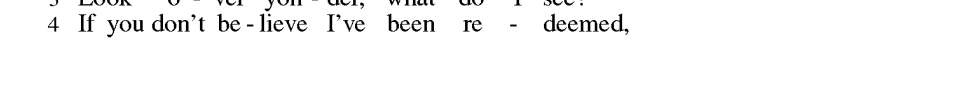
Leader All




1 See that host all dressed in white,



2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the




3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?

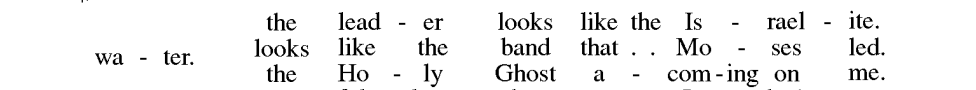


4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,

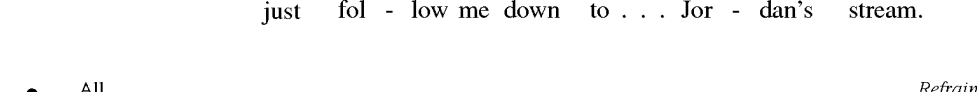
Leader



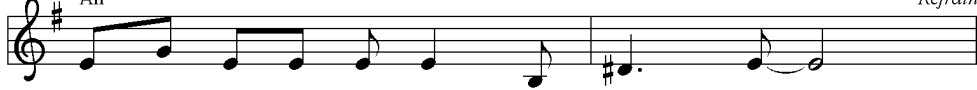
wa - ter. the lead - er looks like the Is - rael - ite.



looks like the band that . . Mo - ses led.




the Ho - ly Ghost a - com - ing on me.



just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream.

All *Refrain*



God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: WADE IN THE WATER, African American spiritual

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Gracious God,

C Giver of every gift, Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever.

Amen.

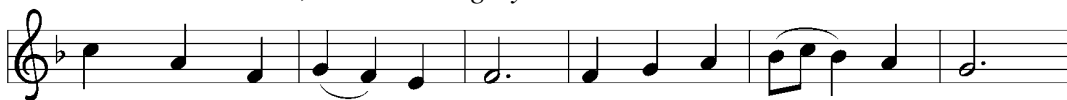
BLESSING

P God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,
✠ bless you and remain with you always.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *God, Whose Almighty Word*

All Stand & Sing



1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard
2 Christ, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,
3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,
4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,



and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the
heal - ing and sight; health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -
speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the
Wis - dom, Love, Might: bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in



gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.
lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man-kind let there be light.
lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.
full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.

Text: John Marriott, 1780–1825, alt.
Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716–1796

SENDING

P Go in peace. You are God's beloved.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Festal Fanfare from Fourth Concerto*

J.S. Bach

*Thank you to our lector, Julia Gunter and Soloist Greg Byrum.

This Weeks Schedule:

Sunday, January 7th

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:10 am – Church Choir

10:30 am – Worship Service

4:00 pm – Dwelling Interest Meeting

5:00 pm – Adult Handbells

5:00 pm – HCY

6:00 pm – Church Choir

Tuesday, January 9th

7:00 pm – Nar-Anon Meeting

7:00 pm – Small Group 2

7:00 pm – Youth Gathering Meeting

Wednesday, January 10th

7:00 pm – Chamber Choir

Thursday, January 11th

10:30 am – Prime Timers



"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

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holycomforter@gmail.com

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 1:30 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

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