# The Nativity of Our Lord - Christmas Day

December 25, 2024 - 10:00 a.m.

Holy Communion, Setting 2



**Welcome!** On this Christmas morning the people of God gather to celebrate the birth of the Word made flesh, Christ our Lord. Luke recounts the familiar story of shepherds and angels; John's Gospel tells of the Word that dwells among us, full of grace and truth. The meaning of Christmas is made clear: the Light shines in the darkness. It is in the liturgy that we encounter the Word made flesh—in the people of God gathered together as the body of Christ, and in the meal around the holy table. We go forth to be bearers of light as we proclaim this good news to all the ends of the earth.

Join your heart and voice in praising our Incarnate Lord in today's worship service. Hymn references are from *Lutheran Service Book* (LSB). If you would like more information about St. John's and our ministry, please speak with one of the greeters, ushers, or the pastor. A very blessed and holy Christmas to everyone!

+ + +

## **Prayer Before Worship**

Gracious God, on this blessed morning we join with all of creation in singing our thanks for the gift of all gifts: the birth of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Let his coming be at the center of our Christmas celebration, and help us to carry the good news of his birth out into the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Welcome

**Prelude-Service Music** 

"A Christmas Prelude" (Charles Callahan)

# **Ringing of the Bells**

#### **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

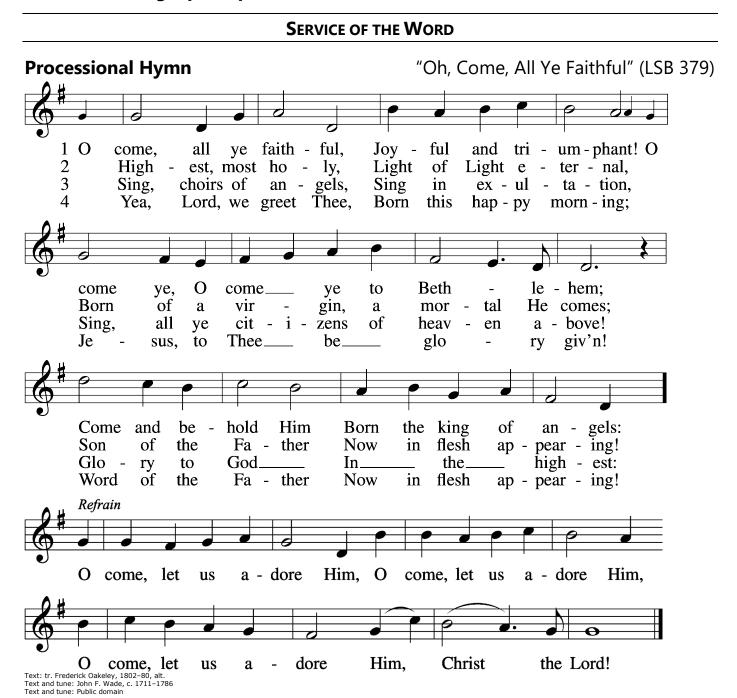
- P Let us confess our sins to God our Father
- Almighty and gracious Father ⅓, we have sinned against you and against each other. You have created us to live in peace, but we have rebelled against your will. You command us to love you with all of our heart, our mind, our soul, and our strength. We have not and we do not. You command us to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have not and we do not. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us and forgive us for all our sins.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Take heart, dear saints! Our God has heard your cry for mercy. He has sent his one and only Son in your flesh, and there Christ Jesus is pleased to dwell. He has reconciled you to God and made peace by the blood of his cross. Because of this, I can stand before you and announce today that all of your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father, 

the Son, and the Holy Spirit!

# **A**men. His gospel is peace!



# Greeting

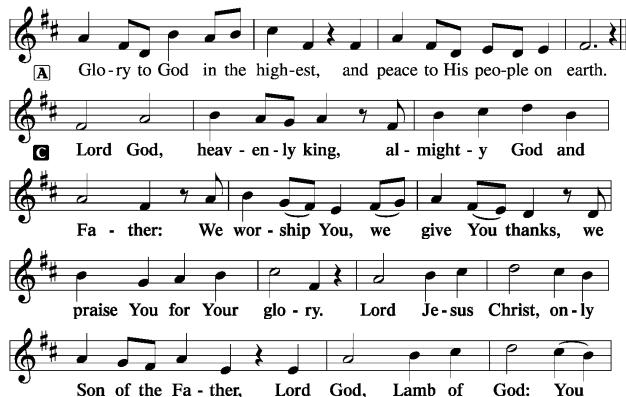
- P Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- **C** And also with you.

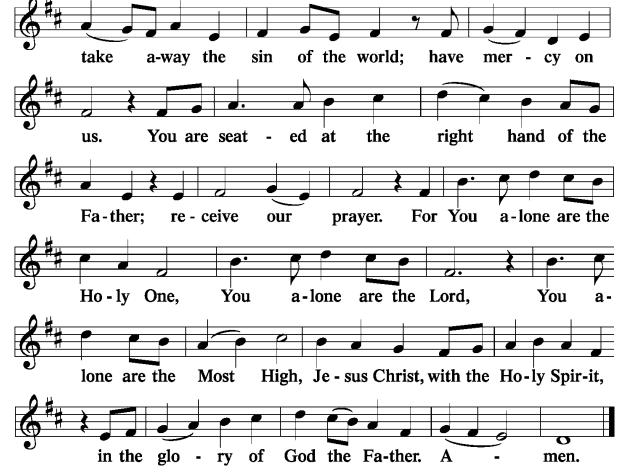
# **Opening Dialogue**

(Colossians 1:15-20)

- P He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- **☑** For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things were created through him and for him.
- P And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
- **And he is the head of the body, the church.**
- P He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
- G For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
- **P** and though him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
- **G** His gospel is peace!

#### Gloria in Excelsis





# **Salutation and Collect of the Day**

- P The Lord be with you
- And also with you
- P Let us pray:

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

## C Amen.

# **Old Testament Reading**

Isaiah 52:7-10

<sup>7</sup>How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

<sup>8</sup>The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see

the metions of the Lor

the return of the LORD to Zion.

<sup>9</sup>Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem.
<sup>10</sup>The 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.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Psalmody** Psalm 98

("Joy to the World" is Isaac Watts' paraphrase of this psalm)

All: (sung)Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King;

Let ev'ry heart prepare him room

And heav'n and nature sing...

L Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The Lord has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

All: (sung)Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!

Let men their songs employ

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy...

L Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music; make music to the Lord with harp, with the harp and the sound of singing, with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn, shout for joy before the Lord, the King.

All: (sung)No more let sin and sorrow grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found...

Let the sea resound and all that is in it, the world and all that live in it. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; let them sing before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in

righteousness and the people with equity.

All: (sung)He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love...

**Epistle** Hebrews 1:1-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but 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. <sup>3</sup>He 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, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

<sup>5</sup>For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again,

"I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?

<sup>6</sup>And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

"Let all God's angels worship him."

<sup>7</sup>Of the angels he says,

"He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire."

<sup>8</sup>But of the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,

and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom.

<sup>9</sup>You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;

therefore God, your God, has anointed you

with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

<sup>10</sup>And,

"In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

<sup>11</sup>they will perish, but you remain;

they will all wear out like clothing;

<sup>12</sup>like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed.

But you are the same, and your years will never end."

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

Holy Gospel John 1:1-14

Please join in reading aloud the **highlighted portion** of Scripture and consider committing this passage to memory in the week ahead.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.



<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

<sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Sermon

"His Gospel Is Peace: No Fear"



**Profession of Faith** Luther's Explanation of the Second Article of the Creed

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord. Who at great cost has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person. Purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. All this He has done that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

# **Prayer of the Church**

P Let us bring our prayers for the church, all creation, and the needs of the world before God.

Special petitions are announced, followed by a brief silence. Each petition closes with the words,

"Lord in Your mercy." Please respond by saying, "**Hear our prayer**."

The prayers conclude with:

P Rejoicing in your glory revealed to the world, we offer these and all our prayers to you, O God of our salvation, through Christ our light.

# C Amen.

Following the prayers, the people may greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying,

"Peace be with you," as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matt. 5:22–24; Eph. 4:1–3).

#### **Announcements**

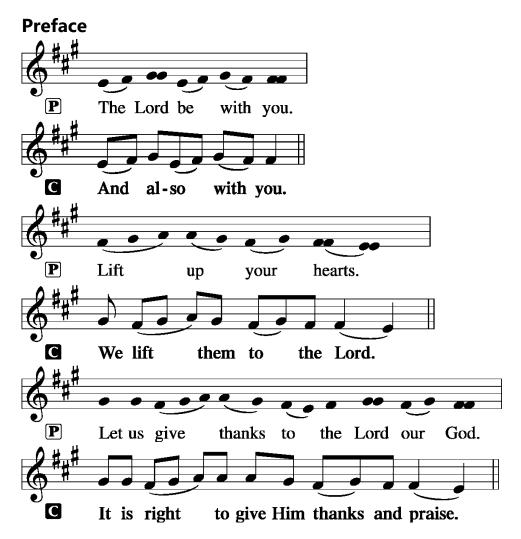
# **Offertory Prayer**

**L** Let us pray:

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be a blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

# C Amen.

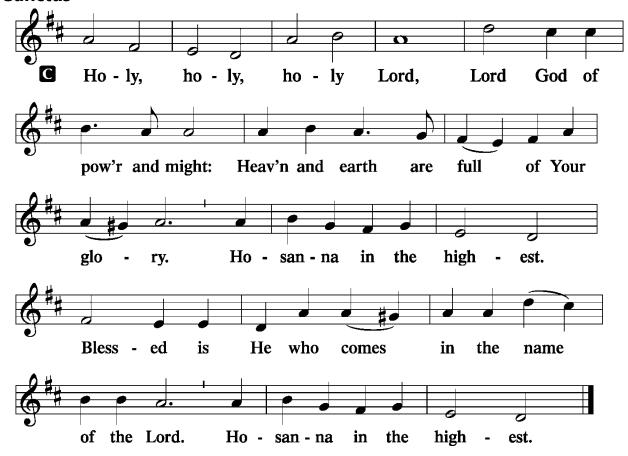
#### **SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT**



#### **Preface for Christmas**

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; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

#### **Sanctus**



# **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

# **Lord's Prayer**

- P 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.

#### The Words of Our Lord

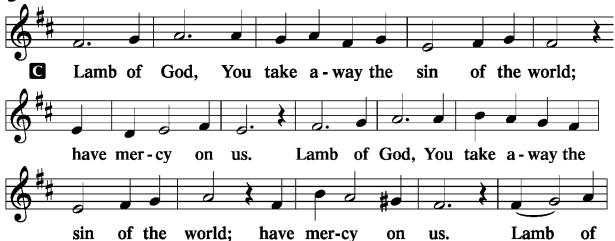
P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

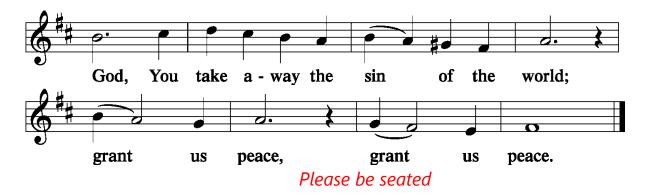
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

#### **Pax Domini**

- **P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C Amen.







#### **Distribution**

Lutheran Christians believe and teach that in the Sacrament of the Altar, Christ's body and blood are given to those who receive the bread and wine. With the bread and wine, the gifts of His body and blood are given to Christ's people for forgiveness of sins, strength for our journey of faith, and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. All who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, and who trust His words that these gifts are given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins, are invited to receive the Eucharist.

Please follow the direction of the ushers to come to the Lord's Table. The bread will be distributed first. **Gluten-free wafers** are available for those who may need these. Please indicate this to the pastor at the distribution. The wine is then received by individual glasses only. Non-alcoholic grape juice is available for those who for medical or recovery purposes must abstain from alcohol.

Children who do not receive the Sacrament are invited to come forward and receive a blessing. Please cross arms over chest so the pastor and lay assistant are able to distinguish children who do commune from those who do not yet receive the Sacrament.

For additional self-preparation to receive the Sacrament, please see "Christian Questions with Their

Answers" beginning on page 1351 in the pew Bible.

# **Distribution Hymns**

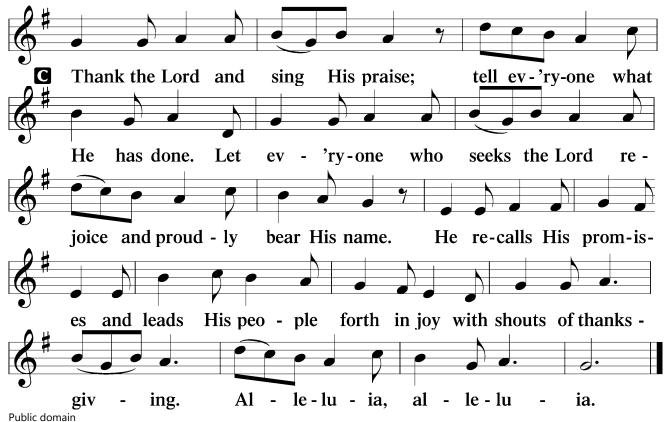
"A Great and Mighty Wonder" (LSB 383) great and might - y won - der, Α full and ho - ly cure: 2 The Word be-comes in - car - nate And re-mains on high, yet 3 While thus they sing your Mon - arch, Those bright an - gel - ic bands, 4 Since all He comes to ran - som, By all be He a - dored, i - dols then shall per - ish And Sa - tan's ly - ing cease, With vir - gin hon - or in - fant The vir - gin bears the pure! And cher - u - bim sing an - thems To shep-herds from the Re - joice, O vales and moun - tains, And o - ceans, clap your hands. in - fant born in Beth - l'em, The Sav - ior and the Lord. And Christ shall raise His scep - ter, De - cree - ing end - less peace. Refrain the Sav - ior's birth: "To God Pro - claim high on be all the earth!" And peace to glo ry Text: Germanus, c. 634–c. 734; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt. Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1599, Köln Text and tune: Public domain



#### **Dismissal**

- **P** The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
- C Amen.

### **Post-Communion Canticle**



## **Post-Communion Collect**

**L** Let us pray:

Great and saving God, you have gathered your scattered people around gifts of bread and wine, the body and blood of our Savior Christ. As we, like the shepherds, return on our way, may we proclaim all we have heard and seen, praising you in word and loving deed for the gift of Jesus, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

#### **Benediction**

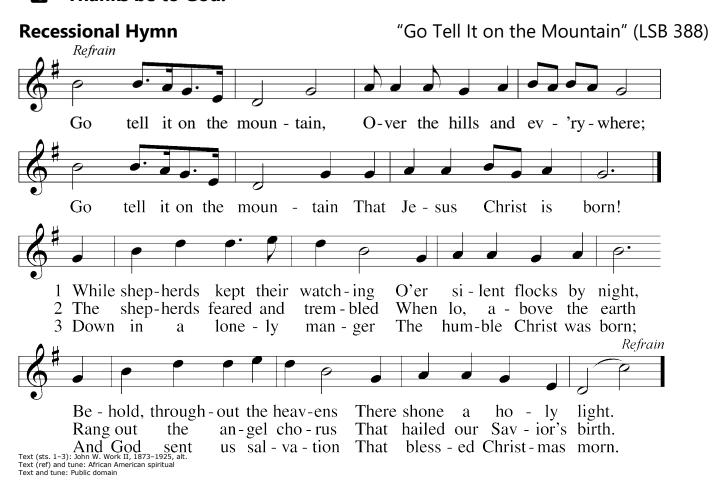
P The peace of Christ, born to us this day, rule in your hearts and fill your lives with joy. As you go from this place, live as forgiven members of his body called to peace and unity and overflowing with thanksgiving. The love of the Savior who came to dwell among us guide your steps, calm your fears, and strengthen your faith. The blessing of God Almighty-the Father, the Son, 

→ and the Holy Spiritbe with you now and always.

#### C Amen.

# Sending

- **L** Go in peace. Share the good news that Christ is born.
- Thanks be to God.



#### **Postlude**

"A Christmas Postlude" (Charles Callahan)

+ + +

# **Our Ministry of Worship**

Officiant/Preacher Pastor Meehan

Lay Assistant Angie Stiens

Communion Lay Assistant Travis Stiens

Organist/Pian David Leahey, Director of Music

Acolyte Samuel Rempe Crucifer Grace Rempe

Ushers St. John's Usher Team

Altar Care Cathy Long

AV Operator St. John's AV Team

Welcome Host Joe Godwin

+ + +

# We're glad you chose to worship with us at this special service. Please join us as we continue to celebrate the birth of Jesus

:

Sunday, December 29 (First Sunday after Christmas)

Lessons and Carols of Christmas - No Holy Communion at 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, December 31 (New Year's Eve)

Worship with Holy Communion at 5:00 p.m.

To **Give** to St. John's Lutheran Church scan this QR Code



This weekend's **altar flowers** are given by donation to the flower fund.



## **Poinsettias**



Patricia Zissios Memory of Charles Zissios

Pastor and June Meehan In honor of the Christ Child

Jeannette Bottomley In honor of my daughter, Susan Ethel Sullivan In honor of all of our loved ones

Mark and Jean Gilbertson Christ Our Savior

Robert and Flannery Macynski In honor of our children: Sarah, Lindsay,

David, and Georgiana

Steve and Linda Tracy In Memory of Loved Ones

Cathy Long Cathy, Emily, & Andrew, In memory of John Long

Eric and Andrea Klanderman Commemorating family at the season

Denise Canter Audrey and Alden Wallace
Brian and Christy Hoins In memory of Valerie Shaw

+ + +

# **Acknowledgments**

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

LSB Hymn License 200-2399. LS Builder Support NH 200-299.

Reprinted/Podcast/Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-701520. All rights reserved.

A Christmas Prelude, Charles Callahan (2012 Birnamwood Publications) All rights reserved.

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light – Schop/arr. J. S. Bach (Public Domain) All rights reserved.

A Christmas Postlude, Charles Callahan (2012 Birnamwood Publications) All rights reserved.



# St. John's Lutheran Church 5952 Franconia Road Alexandria, VA 22310



A member congregation of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

## St. John's Lutheran Church Staff

Pastor Rev. John Meehan

Director of Discipleship Jennifer Hills, DCE

Director of Music David Leahey
Office Administrator Michelle May

Finance Administrator Jennifer Smith

Communication Specialist Jacqueline Fuller

# **Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) Staff**

Director of ECEC Amanda Parks

ECEC Administrator Kari Wells

# **Contact Us**

Office: 703-971-2210 ECEC: 703-971-3581 Website: www.sjlc.com

# **Emails**

Pastor: pastor.meehan@sjlc.com Director of Discipleship: jennifer.hills@sjlc.com Director of Music: david.leahey@sjlc.com

> Office: office@sjlc.com Finance: finance@sjlc.com

Communication Specialist: jacqueline.fuller@sjlc.com

ECEC Director: ecec@sjlc.com

ECEC Administrator: ecec.admin@sjlc.com