

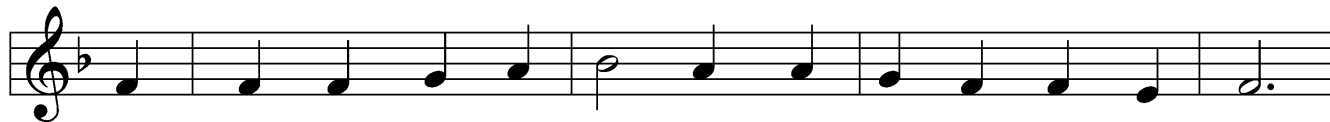
We Are Waiting and Giving Witness

As We Gather

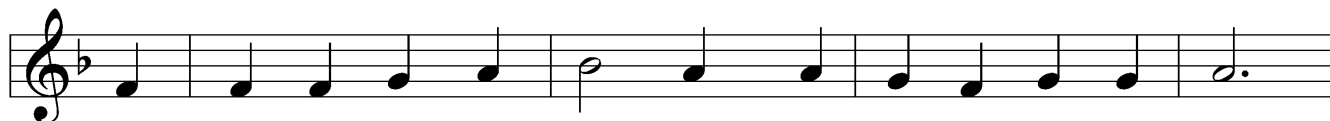
Advent is the season of waiting! As we wait, we have a special job to do. We joyfully get ready for Jesus' arrival by remembering the ministry of John the Baptist, who came as a witness to Christ, the light of the world. John himself was not the light, nor was he the centerpiece of God's plan to save the world; no, John's life was dedicated to preparing the way before the Lord and to get people ready for Jesus coming to the rescue of His people. In many ways, we are invited to be like John. Through our personal witness to Christ in our interpersonal relationships with others, God is working through us so that others will come to know His Son. Our goal is not only to trust in Jesus for ourselves but also to let the world know that He is coming to save them too. And His soon-to-come arrival will be well worth the wait!

Opening Hymn "Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

LSB 398



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, Great Da - vid's great - er Son!
2 He comes with res - cue speed - y To those who suf - fer wrong,
3 He shall come down like show - ers Up - on the fruit - ful earth;
4 Kings shall fall down be - fore Him And gold and in - cense bring;
5 O'er ev - 'ry foe vic - to - rious, He on His throne shall rest,



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, His reign on earth be - gun!
To help the poor and need - y And bid the weak be strong;
Love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, Spring in His path to birth.
All na - tions shall a - dore Him, His praise all peo - ple sing.
From age to age more glo - rious, All bless - ing and all - blest.



He comes to break op - pres - sion, To set the cap - tive free,
To give them songs for sigh - ing, Their dark - ness turn to light,
Be - fore Him on the moun - tains Shall peace, the her - ald, go;
To Him shall prayer un - ceas - ing And dai - ly vows as - cend;
The tide of time shall nev - er His cov - e - nant re - move;



To take a - way trans-gres-sion And rule in eq - ui - ty.
Whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, Were pre-cious in His sight.
And righ-teous - ness in foun-tains From hill to val - ley flow.
His king-dom still in - creas-ing, A king-dom with - out end.
His name shall stand for - ev - er— That name to us is Love.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.

Tune: Leonhart Schröter, c. 1532–c. 1601

Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

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

Opening Sentences

Psalm 40:1–3

- P** I waited patiently for the LORD;
C He inclined to me and heard my cry.
- P** He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,
C and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.
- P** He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
C Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

Confession and Absolution

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

- P** That we may rejoice in the great things our forgiving God does for us, let us together confess our sins before Him.
- C** Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we do and by what we fail to do. Instead of looking to Jesus and following Him in faith, we have gone astray by disobeying Your Word. Instead of giving bold witness to You, we have kept silent and withheld Your grace from others. For the sake of our Savior and King, have mercy on us. Forgive us and restore us. Guide us and renew us. Help us to walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.
- P** “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.” Our faithful God hears our prayers and answers them, removing our sins from us and declaring us blameless in His sight through faith in Jesus Christ. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I

therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Introit

Psalm 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: v. 7

P Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,

C and grant us Your salvation.

P Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

C for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

P Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

C that glory may dwell in our land.

P Yes, the LORD will give what is good,

C and our land will yield its increase.

P Righteousness will go before Him

C and make His footsteps a way.

**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 Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,

C and grant us Your salvation.

Kyrie

LSB 186

C Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers.

C Enable our hearts to believe and our mouths to confess Your saving name;

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

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

¹The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations. . . .

⁸For I the LORD love justice;
I hate robbery and wrong;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹Their offspring shall be known among the nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge them,
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,

so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to sprout up before all the nations.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.

²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Verse

Matthew 11:10b

P Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,

C **who will prepare Your way before You. Alleluia.**

Holy Gospel

John 1:6–8, 19–28

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

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

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

¹⁹This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²²So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Creed

Nicene 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.

Hymn of the Day "Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding!"

LSB 345



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is
 2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
 3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with
 4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
 Δ 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the



near," we hear it say. "Cast a - way the
 earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
 par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
 world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
 Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -



works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!"
 sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
 tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n;
 with His mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
 liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Text: Latin, c. 5th–10th cent.; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–78, alt.

Tune: William H. Monk, 1823–89

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

1 Thessalonians 5:16–17; Psalm 105:1–4

P Because it is our Father’s will for His children to pray, let us “rejoice always, pray without ceasing,” giving thanks in all circumstances.

Gracious Father, when the time had fully come, You sent Your Son into our world to bear our sin and be our Savior. By His suffering and death, by His resurrection and ascension, by His reign at Your right hand and promise to come again, we are given joyful hearts and confidently bring our prayers before Your throne of grace. Your kingdom is the eternal kingdom, O God, and we are blessed to witness to all peoples the saving work You have accomplished in Christ, our Lord and King.

Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name;

C make known His deeds among the peoples!

P Mighty God, stretch forth Your hand and defend Your people from all effects of sin and death, giving victory over the enemy of darkness by shining into our world the light of Your truth. Work in our midst as the mighty fortress of our lives, providing protection to those who labor for the benefit of others and to those who wear the uniform of our land. Grant wisdom to those who make, administer, and judge our laws, and reach into every troubled corner of the world to bestow upon us Your mercy and peace.

Sing to Him, sing praises to Him;

C **tell of all His wondrous works!**

P Savior of the nations, by our Baptism into Your death and resurrection, You clothe us with Your righteousness and fill us with Your Spirit. You have enabled our hearts to believe and our mouths to confess Your saving name. Lord Jesus, take away from us any fear or doubt, any hesitancy or reluctance to share with others the hope that is within us. Open doors of opportunity for us to be like John the Baptist, giving faithful testimony to You and preparing the way for Your coming kingdom.

Glory in His holy name;

C **let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!**

P Great Physician of body and soul, take great care of all those who are suffering in physical pain, mental illness, emotional stress, and broken relationships. Comfort Your people who are sad and lonely. Warm all troubled hearts with the assurance of Your never-failing presence. Grant wholeness and healing to those in need, [*especially . . .*]. We give You thanks, Lord God, in all circumstances, including our struggles, for we know that You are working all things together for the good of those who love You and have been called according to Your purpose.

Seek the LORD and His strength;

C **seek His presence continually!**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, waiting in joyful expectation for Your coming kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

Offering - We Thank the Lord with the Offering

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.

Proper Preface

- 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, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away our sin, giving witness to the light of the world, whose coming scatters the darkness of death. 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 161



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
san-na. 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** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and have given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
- C** **In Your boundless mercy You sent Your witness, John the Baptist, to point us toward Christ and His coming kingdom.**
- P** With thankful hearts we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus,” confident that in His body and blood, given us to eat and drink, we receive the forgiveness of sins and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory. Hear us as we pray in His name and as 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.”

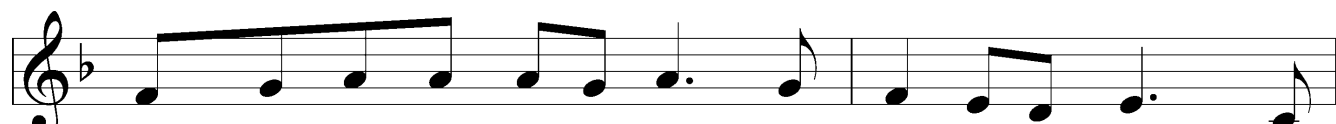
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

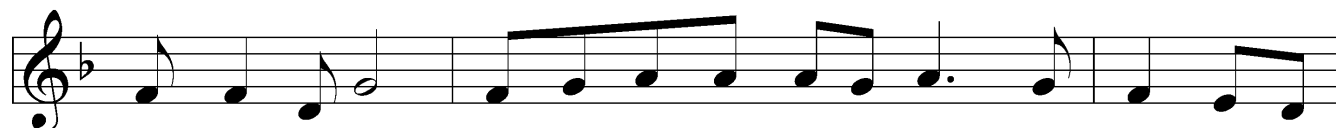
- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** Amen.

Agnus Dei


LSB 163




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



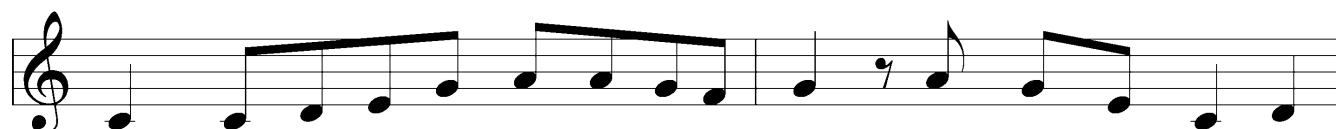
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the




sin of the world; grant us peace.

Nunc Dimittis

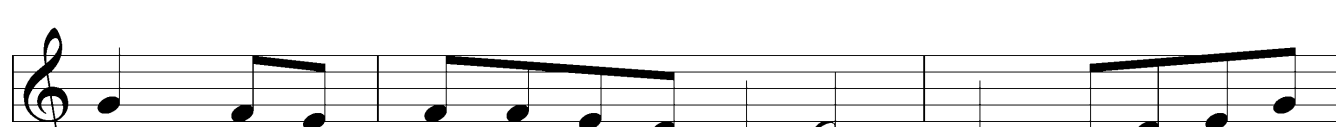
LSB 165




C Lord, now You let Your ser-vant go in peace; Your word has been ful -



filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va-tion which You have pre -



pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re -



veal 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.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

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.

338 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.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt.

Tune: Southern Harmony, 1835, New Haven

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments—Do Not Remove

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

Copyright © 2023 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Acknowledgments

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV[®] Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version[®]), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2023 Concordia Publishing House.