



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, MENASHA, WI
FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2024



DIVINE SERVICE

Setting Four

PASTORAL GREETING

Stand

HYMN OF INVOCATION

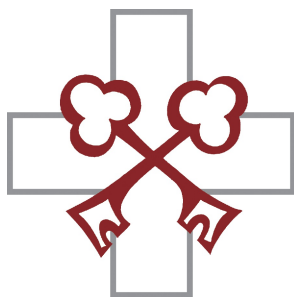
Children of the Heavenly Father

725

1 Chil - dren of the heav'n - ly Fa - ther Safe - ly
2 God His own doth tend and nour - ish; In His
3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er From the
4 Though He giv - eth or He tak - eth, God His

in His bos - om gath - er; Nest - ling bird nor star in
ho - ly courts they flour - ish. From all e - vil things He
Lord His chil - dren sev - er; Un - to them His grace He
chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth; His the lov - ing pur - pose

heav - en Such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
spares them; In His might - y arms He bears them.
show - eth, And their sor - rows all He know - eth.
sole - ly To pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.



CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

- A** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.** *Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]*
- A** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C **who made heaven and earth.** *Psalm 124:8*
- A** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.** *Psalm 130:3-4*
- A** Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying:
God, be merciful to me, a sinner. *[Luke 18:13]*
C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**
- A** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.** *[John 20:19-23]*

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT

Psalm 31:1, 3, 5; antiphon: Revelation 7:14b

- A** These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- C** **In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.**
- A** For you are my rock and my fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.
- C** **Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.**
- ALL** **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.**
- A** These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

KYRIE ~ *Lord, Have Mercy*

Mark 10:47



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.


Kyrie Eleison
LORD, HAVE MERCY

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS ~ *Glory to God in the Highest*

Luke 2:14; John 1:29



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole - be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shipped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n-ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat-ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

SALUTATION and COLLECT OF THE DAY

A The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C And also with you.

A Let us pray.

The COLLECT OF THE DAY is spoken.

A Almighty God, the martyred innocents of Bethlehem showed forth Your praise not by speaking but by dying. Put to death in us all that is in conflict with Your will that our lives may bear witness to the faith we profess with our lips; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT ~ *Jeremiah 31:15-17*

¹⁵Thus says the Lord: “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.”

¹⁶Thus says the Lord: “Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. ¹⁷There is hope for your future, declares the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

Psalm 71:4a, 5a, 6a, b, 8

A Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked.
For you, O Lord, are my hope.
Upon you have I leaned from before my birth;
you are he who took me from my mother’s womb.
My mouth is filled with your praise,
and with your glory all the day.

EPISTLE ~ *Revelation 14:1-5*

¹ Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, ³ and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴ It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, ⁵ and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

ALLELUIA and VERSE



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



C These things are writ-ten that you may be - lieve that



Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

HOLY GOSPEL ~ *Matthew 2:13-18*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

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

¹³When [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.

¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸“A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.



APOSTLES' CREED

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.**

Sit



1 Sweet flow - 'rets of the mar - tyr band, Plucked by the
 2 First vic - tims for the in - car - nate Lord, A ten - der
 3 Ah, what a - vailed King Her - od's wrath? He could not
 Δ 4 O Lord, the vir - gin - born, we sing E - ter - nal



ty - rant's ruth - less hand Up - on the thresh - old
 flock to feel the sword; Be - side the al - tar's
 stop the Sav - ior's path. A - lone, while oth - ers
 praise to You, our King, Whom with the Fa - ther



of the morn, Like rose - buds by a tem - pest torn;
 rud - dy ray, With palm and crown, you seemed to play.
 mur - dered lay, In safe - ty Christ is borne a - way.
 we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

SERMON ~ "The Children of Rachel"

Jeremiah 31:15-17

Stand

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:7*

C Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

Sit

OFFERING

Stand



SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

[Colossians 3:1]

C **We lift them up to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

[Psalm 136]

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, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. 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 ~ Holy, Holy, Holy

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho-san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Sabaoth (SAH-bay-oath) is Hebrew for “heavenly hosts.”
Hosanna is a Hebrew word of praise meaning “save us now.”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In the beginning You created all things by Your Word; and in the fullness of time Your Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

Let Your Word made flesh dwell richly among us, that faithfully eating His body and drinking His blood, we may receive the fullness of Your grace and truth in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

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

Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24
Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

- 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."

PAX DOMINI ~ *The Peace of the Lord*

John 20:19

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



1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 You take the sin of the world a - way;
 You take the sin of the world a - way;
 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,
 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
 And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION

- P** Take and eat, this is the true body of our Lord Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.
- C** Amen.
- P** Take and drink, this is the true blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, poured out for you for the forgiveness of your sins.
- C** Amen.

Giving to the church is an act of worship and a privilege of membership.

Those who wish to give online may do so at <http://tiny.cc/TrinityDonate> or simply use the QR code:





1 Oh, what their joy and their glo - ry must be,
 2 In new Je - ru - sa - lem joy shall be found,
 3 We, where no trou - ble dis - trac - tion can bring,
 △ 4 Now let us wor - ship our Lord and our King,



Those end - less Sab - baths the bless - ed ones see!
 Bless - ings of peace shall for - ev - er a - bound;
 Safe - ly the an - thems of Zi - on shall sing;
 Joy - ful - ly rais - ing our voic - es to sing:



Crowns for the val - iant, to wea - ry ones rest;
 Wish and ful - fill - ment are not sev - ered there,
 While for Your grace, Lord, their voic - es of praise
 Praise to the Fa - ther, and praise to the Son,

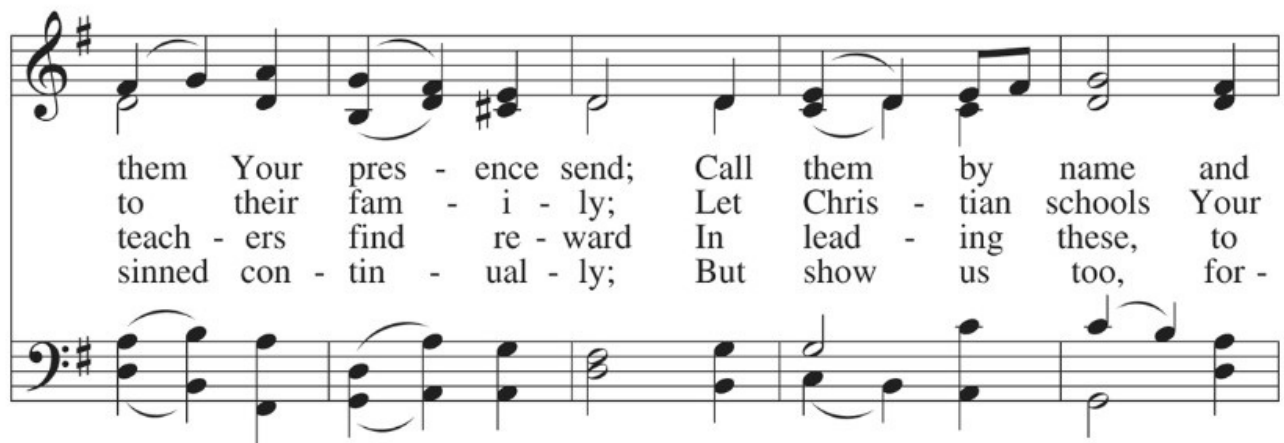


God shall be all, and in all ev - er blest.
 Nor the things prayed for come short of the prayer.
 Your bless - ed peo - ple shall ev - er - more raise.
 Praise to the Spir - it, to God, Three in One.





1 Lord Je - sus Christ, the chil - dren's friend, To each of
 2 In Chris - tian homes, Lord, let them be Your bless - ing
 3 That car - ing par - ents, gra - cious Lord, And faith - ful
 4 For by Your Word we clear - ly see That we have



them Your pres - ence send; Call them by name and
 to their fam - i - ly; Let Chris - tian schools Your
 teach - ers find re - ward In lead - ing these, to
 sinned con - tin - ual - ly; But show us too, for -



keep them true In lov - ing faith, dear Lord, to You.
 work ex - tend In liv - ing truth as You in - tend.
 whom You call, To find in Christ their all in all.
 giv - ing Lord, Your sav - ing Gos - pel's great re - ward.

5 That all of us, Your children dear,
 By Christ redeemed, may Christ revere;
 Lead us in joy that all we do
 Will witness to our love for You.

6 Then guard and keep us to the end,
 Secure in You, our gracious friend,
 That in Your heav'nly family
 We sing Your praise eternally.

Shepherd of Tender Youth

864

1 Shep - herd of ten - der youth, Guid - ing in
 2 You are the ho - ly Lord, O all - sub -
 3 You are the great High Priest; You have pre -
 4 O ev - er be our guide, Our shep - herd,

love and truth Through de - vious ways; Christ, our tri -
 du - ing Word, Heal - er of strife. Your - self You
 pared the feast Of ho - ly love; And in our
 and our pride, Our staff and song. Je - sus, O

um - phant king, We come Your name to sing
 did a - base That from sin's deep dis - grace
 mor - tal pain None calls on You in vain;
 Christ of God, By Your en - dur - ing Word

And here our chil - dren bring To join Your praise.
 You so might save our race And give us life.
 Our plea do not dis - dain; Help from a - bove.
 Lead us where You have trod; Make our faith strong.

5 So now, and till we die, Sound we Your praises high And joyful sing:
 Infants and all the throng, Who to the Church belong, Unite to swell the song
 To Christ, our king!

Stand

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

P The true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you steadfast in the one true Faith unto life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

C Amen.

NUNC DIMITTIS ~ *Song of Simeon*

Luke 2:29-32

C 1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
 2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All
 part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
 glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the
 glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
 Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;
 A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
 For as in the be - gin - ning, Is
 to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
 now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
 peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
 sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

A Let us pray.

A 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.

BENEDICAMUS and BENEDICTION

A Let us bless the Lord.

[Psalm 103:1]

C Thanks be to God.

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.

Numbers 6:24-26

C Amen.

Sit

✠ *Soli Deo Gloria* ✠

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Four and hymns, from Lutheran Service Book

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CLOSING HYMN ~ O Little Flock, Fear Not the Foe

666



1 O lit - tle flock, fear not the foe Who mad - ly
 2 Be of good cheer; your cause be - longs To Him who
 3 As true as God's own Word is true, Not earth nor
 4 A - men, Lord Je - sus, grant our prayer; Great Cap - tain,



seeks your o - ver - throw; Dread not his rage and pow'r.
 can a - venge your wrongs; Leave it to Him, our Lord.
 hell's sa - tan - ic crew A - gainst us shall pre - vail.
 now Thine arm make bare, Fight for us once a - gain!



And though your cour - age some-times faints, His seem - ing
 Though hid - den yet from mor - tal eyes, His God - eon
 Their might? A joke, a mere fa - cade! God is with
 So shall Thy saints and mar - tyrs raise A might - y



tri - umph o'er God's saints Lasts but a lit - tle hour.
 shall for you a - rise, Up - hold you and His Word.
 us and we with God— Our vic - t'ry can - not fail.
 cho - rus to Thy praise For - ev - er - more. A - men.



THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

(28 December 2024)

Jeremiah 31:15-17

Revelation 14:1-5

Matthew 2:13-18

The slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem following the birth of Jesus

Holy Innocents is the often-overlooked feast day of the church calendar on December 28th that commemorates the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem following the birth of Jesus. It hardly seems like the thing to celebrate right after the fanfare of Christmas, but then again, the church is known for doing things differently. This day is generally familiar only to a few. Increased secularization of Christmas and commercialism are often blamed for this, but perhaps it stems more from our desire to keep Jesus as the sweet little baby in the manger instead of the sword-bearing Son of Man (Matthew 10:34).

Whatever the reason, Matthew's gospel and the church calendar put us face-to-face with the bloody reality of Satan's murderous agenda to destroy the Christ just three days after the peaceful manger scene unfolds on Christmas Day. Herod the Great summons the wise men after hearing that the prophecy which foretells of the coming Messiah has been fulfilled. According to Luther, Herod feared that when the Christ child was grown, the Jews would espouse his cause, put Him on the throne. Here Luther exposes the paranoia motivating Herod.

By their deaths, Jesus is secured safely in Egypt and the prophecy is fulfilled, *"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more"* (Matthew 2:18). The scandal of suffering for the sake of Christ is perhaps the most perplexing concept to the human intellect, yet as the poet John Keble wrote, their deaths ensured "That Thou [Christ] might'st live for them a sadder death to see." Only in Christ does death equal victory and weakness equal strength. Long before Christ would say to His disciples, *"Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it"* (Matthew 10:39), these children were already resting safely in the arms of their Savior.

While the wisdom of God cannot be comprehended in this slaying of the Holy Innocents, what remains is the Child who lived, died, and rose for all in order that the promise of the Resurrection would belong to these Holy Martyrs and all who have been baptized into His name.