

WORSHIP SERVICE FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2025
DIVINE SERVICE 3 p. 184

Confession and Absolution

Children of the Heavenly Father

LSB 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.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832-1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870-1958 Tune: Lofsånger och andeliga visor, 1873, Sweden

Text: Public domain Tune: Public domain

Stand

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

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

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

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

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

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.

In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;*

in your righteousness deliver me.

For you are my rock and my fortress;*

and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.

Into your hand I commit my spirit;*

you have redeemed me, O LORD, my faithful God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,*

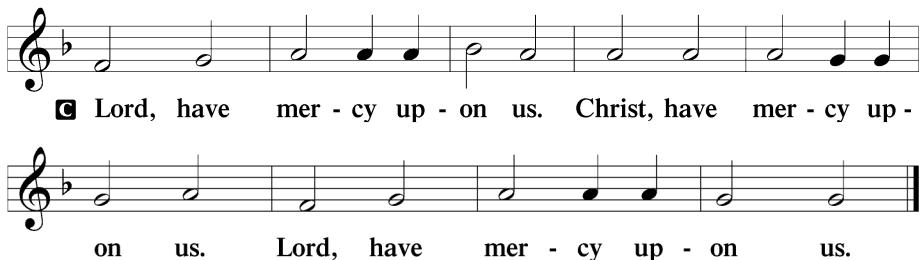
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

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

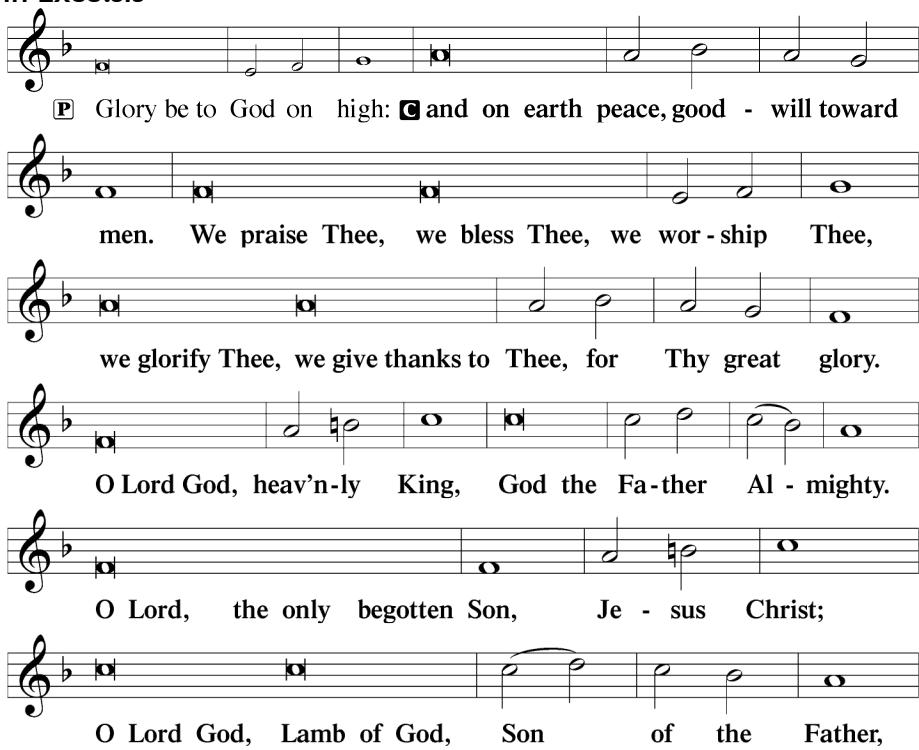
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C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Gloria in Excelsis

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P Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.
 Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.
 Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-on us.
 For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.
 Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost,
 art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.
 C And with thy spir-it.
 P Let us pray.

P 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 A-men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

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

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

Epistle

Revelation 14:1–5

¹Then 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. ²And 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, ³and 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. ⁴It 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, ⁵and 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

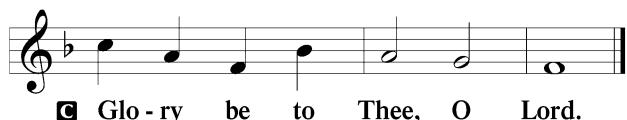
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Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:13–18

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



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 be to Thee, 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 T everlasting. Amen.

Sit

Sweet Flowerets of the Martyr Band (Tune: LSB 441)

- 1 Sweet flow'rets of the martyr band,
Plucked by the tyrant's ruthless hand
Upon the threshold of the morn,
Like rosebuds by a tempest torn;
- 2 First victims for the incarnate Lord,
A tender flock to feel the sword;
Beside the altar's ruddy ray,
With palm and crown, you seemed to play.
- 3 Ah, what availed King Herod's wrath?
He could not stop the Savior's path.
Alone, while others murdered lay,
In safety Christ is borne away.

D 4 O Lord, the virgin-born, we sing
 Eternal praise to You, our King,
 Whom with the Father we adore
 And Holy Spirit evermore.

*Text: Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, 348-c. 413; tr. Henry W. Baker, 1821-77, alt.
 Text: Public domain*

Sermon

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
 C **Amen.**

Stand

Offering

By All Your Saints in Warfare

LSB 517 sts. 1, 9, 3

*Text: Horatio Bolton Nelson, 1823-1913, alt. Tune: English; coll. and arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958 Text: Public domain
 Tune: Public domain*

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord, we are the people of Your promise, to whom You have revealed Your Son as Savior and Redeemer.
 Bless Your Church, that we may enjoy the gift of good and faithful ministers. Prosper Your Word and bring to fruition its proclamation in every place and time. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O God, You give us the gift of each other. Renew our fellowship as the Body of Christ. Grant all things beneficial for husbands and wives, the single, those who desire marriage, and the lonely who yearn to know the comfort of friends and family. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! Out of the mouths of babes and nursing infants You have perfected Your praise. Silence the enemy and the avenger. Turn the hearts of all who, like Herod, would despise children or destroy the unborn for selfish gain. Show Your forgiveness to those who are penitent. Give Your comfort to all women who mourn the loss of infants, and fix our eyes on Christ, who for a time was spared but has shed His blood for our salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Merciful God, You appoint leaders and give the responsibility of authority. Protect our nation and its leaders. Grant them wisdom in their pursuit of justice. Bring Your gift of peace in the world, and give relief to those who suffer oppression. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty Lord, You are the Great Physician. Grant healing in accordance with Your will for the sick and those who suffer *[especially _____]*. Give strength to those who give aid and care for the sick. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Gracious God, in Holy Communion You unite us in the body and blood of Your Son. Enable us to receive this Sacrament with faith and be strengthened by it. Bring soon, O Lord, unity of faith and doctrine so that all divisions may cease and we may be fully one at the altar. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Heavenly Father, all that we have comes from You. Give us grateful hearts, that we may receive Your gifts with joy and use them wisely for Your glory. May our worship this day be pleasing in Your sight. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, You are the bringer of true joy. Grant Your Holy Spirit to increase and sustain us in this joy and thanksgiving throughout the days of this Christmas season, until that day when at last Christ returns in His glory as Lord and judge of all. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Hear us, O Lord, for we are the people of Your promise and the children whom You have redeemed through the salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.



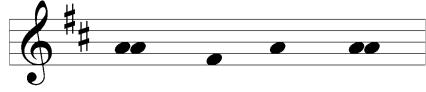
P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

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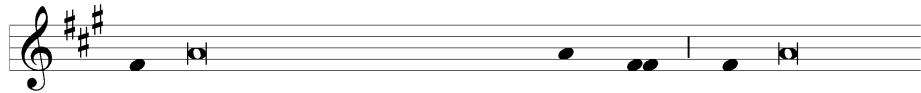
A Bless we the Lord.



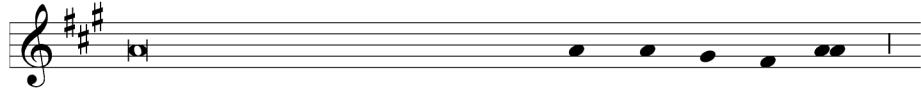
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

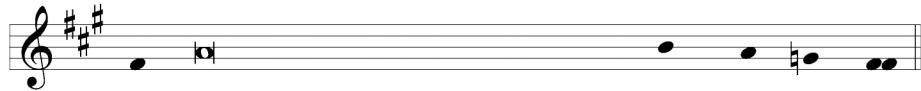
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P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

The Star Proclaims the King Is Here

LSB 399



1 The star pro - claims the King is here; But, Her - od,
2 The east - ern sa - ges saw from far And fol - lowed
3 With - in the Jor - dan's sa - cred flood The heav'n - ly
4 And oh, what mir - a - cle di - vine, When wa - ter
△ 5 For this Thy glad e - piph - a - ny All glo - ry,



why this sense - less fear? For He who of - fers heav'n - ly
on His guid - ing star; And, led by light, to light they
Lamb in meek - ness stood That He, of whom no sin was
red - dened in - to wine! He spoke the word, and forth it
Je - sus, be to Thee, Whom with the Fa - ther we a -



birth Seeks not the king - doms of this earth.
trod And by their gifts con - fessed their God.
known, Might cleanse His peo - ple from their own.
flowed In streams that na - ture ne'er be - stowed.
dore, And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

Text: Coelius Sedulius, 5th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-66, alt.

Tune: Geistliche Lieder aufs new gebessert, 1535, Wittenberg, ed. Joseph Klug

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

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