

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

Saturday, May 31, and Sunday, June 1, 2025



Bethlehem

LUTHERAN CHURCH

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are so glad you're here! Bethlehem is a caring community of believers committed to being a birthplace of hope in southeast Fort Wayne. We are a congregation of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, where Christ's sacrificial love shapes who we are and how we serve.

Our worship centers on God's gifts to us in His Word and Sacraments. Here, Jesus meets us through His promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and we respond with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Whether this is your first time worshiping with us or your spiritual home, you are part of our family today.

Thank you for joining us as we rest in God's grace and grow in His love. May you be refreshed by the beauty of Christ's sacrifice and sent out to reflect His light in the world!

HOLY COMMUNION EXAMINATION

In the Bible the Apostle Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (I Corinthians 11:28) In order to examine yourself before attending the Lord's Supper, ask yourself the following questions:

Do I believe that I am a sinner, and am I sorry for my sins?
(Proverbs 28:13; Romans 3:23; I John 1:8-9)

Do I believe that Jesus Christ by His death offers me forgiveness for all my sins?
(Romans 5:8; Colossians 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; I John 1:7)

Do I believe that I receive the body and blood of Christ in and with the bread and wine (not merely symbolically present)?
(Matthew 26:26-28; I Cor. 10:16; I Cor. 11:24-25)

Do I desire to turn from my sinful ways and live a God-pleasing life?
(Isaiah 1:16; John 8:11; Romans 6:12)

If you are unable to answer "yes" to these questions or believe further instruction is needed, please talk to a pastor or an elder before communing as participating without a proper understanding of Holy Communion can be spiritually harmful (I Corinthians 11:27-29). If you can answer "yes" to these questions, then come with a repentant heart and join us in the reception of the Lord's Supper. If not, adults and children who have not yet taken part in communion instruction classes are invited to come forward for a blessing and are asked to keep their arms folded over their chest during the distribution.

***(Children's Activity bags are available in the Narthex.
Please remember to return them to the rack after the service.)***

+ PREPARATION +

PRESERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME / RINGING OF THE BELLS

OPENING HYMN

LSB #493

A HYMN OF GLORY LET US SING



1 A hymn of glo - ry let us sing! New
2 The ho - ly ap - os - tol - ic band Up -
3 To them the shin - ing an - gels cry, "Why
4 "You see Him now, as - cend - ing high Up



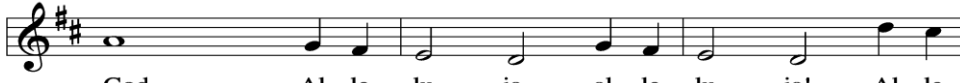
hymns through - out the world shall ring: Al - le - lu - ia,
on the Mount of Ol - ives stand. Al - le - lu - ia,
stand and gaze up - on the sky?" Al - le - lu - ia,
to the por - tals of the sky." Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Christ, by a road be - fore un -
al - le - lu - ia! And with His faith - ful fol - l'wers
al - le - lu - ia! "This is the Sav - ior," thus they
al - le - lu - ia! "Here - af - ter Je - sus you shall



trod, As - cends un - to the throne of
see Their Lord as - cend in maj - es -
say; "This is His glo - rious tri - umph
see Re - turn - ing in great maj - es -



God. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
ty. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
day!" Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
ty." Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -



lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Be now our joy on earth, O Lord, And be our future great reward.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Then, throned with You forever, we Shall praise Your name eternally.

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

6 (Please stand)

O risen Christ, ascended Lord, All praise to You let earth accord:

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are, while endless ages run, With Father and with Spirit one.

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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INVOCATION AND OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation Amen.

Pastor Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven?

Congregation Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

Pastor It is written, that the Christ should suffer

Congregation and on the third day rise from the dead,

Pastor and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in
His name to all nations.

**Congregation God gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His
body.**

(Stand)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor Let us confess our sins to our gracious God.

Congregation **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor God did not leave us devoid of power and love. Christ ascended to His throne above but is with us still. The Holy Spirit did not give us faith for a short time but is with us throughout our time on earth. Your sins were forgiven by the death of Christ on the cross and by His glorious resurrection. 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.

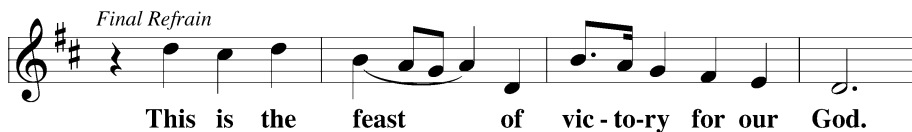
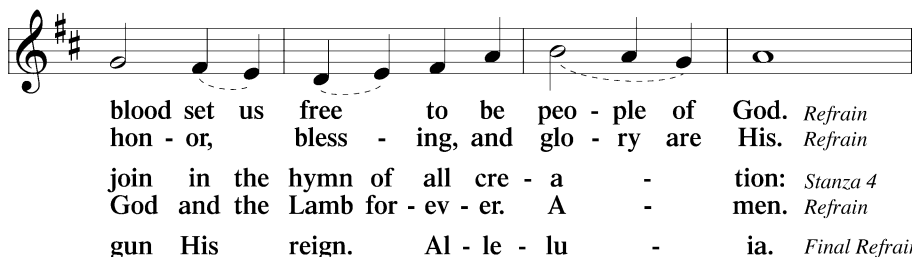
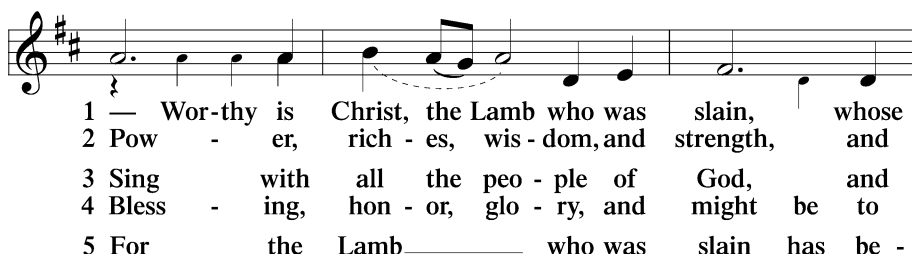
Congregation **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +

HYMN OF PRAISE

LSB pg. 155

THIS IS THE FEAST



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation And also with you.

Pastor Let us pray. Almighty God, as Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so may we also ascend in heart and mind and continually dwell there with Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation Amen.

(Sit)

FIRST READING

Acts 1:1–11

¹In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ²until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³To them he presented himself alive after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Leader This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Ephesians 1:15–23

¹⁵For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Leader This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation Thanks be to God.

(Stand)

ALLELUIA AND VERSE

LSB pg. 156

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

Luke 24:44–53

⁴⁴Then [Jesus] said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” ⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Pastor This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Congregation Praise to You, O Christ.

(Sit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

LSB #829

CHRIST THE ETERNAL LORD



- 1 Christ the e - ter - nal Lord, Whose prom - ise here we claim,
- 2 Christ the un - chang - ing Word To ev - 'ry pass - ing age,
- 3 Christ the re - deem - ing Son, Who shares our hu - man birth,
- 4 Christ the un - fad - ing Light Of ev - er - last - ing day,
- 5 Christ the as - cend - ed King Ex - alt - ed high a - bove,



Whose gifts of grace are free - ly poured On all who name Your name;
Whose time - less teach - ings still are heard Set forth on Scrip - ture's page;
And by His death sal - va - tion won For ev - 'ry child of earth;
Our Morn - ing Star in splen - dor bright, The Life, the Truth, the Way;
Whose praise un - end - ing a - ges sing, Whom yet un - seen we love;



With thank - ful - ness and praise We stand be - fore Your throne,
Trans - form our thought and mind, En - light - en all who read,
In - spire our hearts, we pray, To tell Your love a - broad,
That light of truth You give To ser - vants as to friends,
When mor - tal life is past Your voice from heav - en's throne



In - tent to serve You all our days And make Your glo - ry known.
With - in Your Word by faith to find The bread of life in - deed.
That all may hon - or Christ to - day And fol - low Him as Lord.
Your way to walk, Your life to live, Till earth's brief jour - ney ends.
Shall call Your chil - dren home at last To know as we are known.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926–2024

Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816–93

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Tune: Public domain

SERMON

“Preparing the Way”

(Stand)

NICENE CREED

**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.**

(Sit)

OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN

Choir

“Be Present Spirit, of the Lord”

(Music by Mary Kay Beall Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith)

Be present, Spirit of the lord.

What sounds of Earth be dumb, the Father's Love be shed abroad,
the dew of blessing on us poured, oh, silent spirit, come. Oh silence spirit, come.

In power unseen upon us rest, your gracious gifts and part.

A mind renewed, a spirit blessed, a life where Christ is manifest.

And understanding heart. And understanding heart.

Oh, Spirit come and with us stay; make every heart Your home.

So work in us that we who pray, may walk with Christ and wisdom's way.

Oh Holy Spirit, come, oh, Holy Spirit, come.

(Stand)

OFFERTORY

LSB pg 159.



What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

(Sit)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

+ *SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT* +

PREFACE

LSB pg. 160

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation And also with you.

Pastor Lift up your hearts.

Congregation We lift them to the Lord.

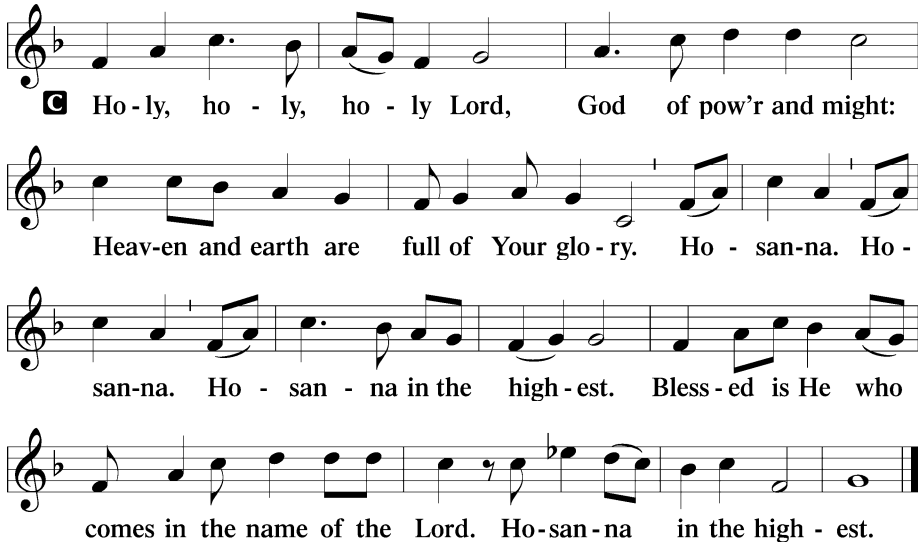
Pastor Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

SANCTUS

LSB pg. 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

LORD'S PRAYER

LSB pg. 162

**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

PAX DOMINI

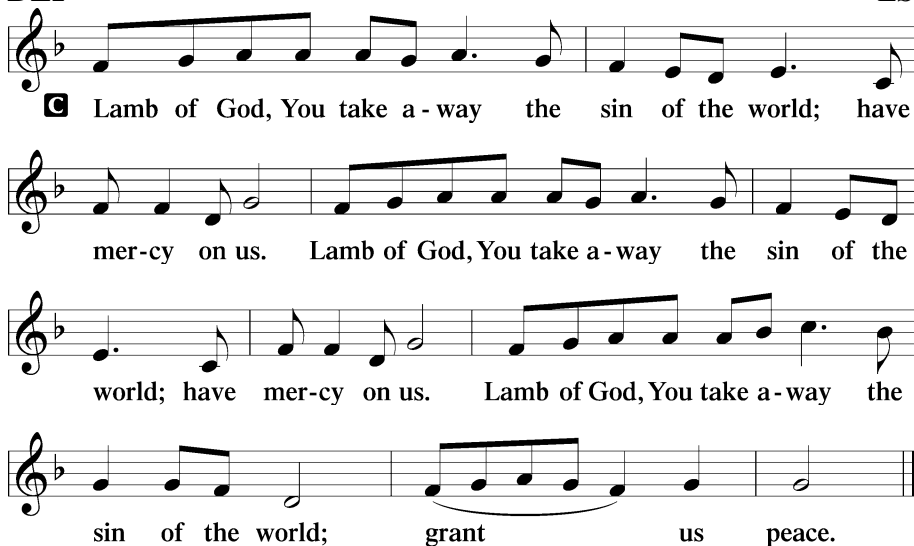
LSB pg. 163

Pastor The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Congregation Amen.

AGNUS DEI

LSB pg. 163



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.

(Sit)

DISTRIBUTION

Prayerful Meditation

(Stand)

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

LSB pg. 164

THANK THE LORD



C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re-calls His prom-is - es and leads His peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

BENEDICTION

LSB pg. 166

Pastor

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.

Congregation

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Choir

"God Be In My Head" (Music by Andrew Carter)

God be in my head and in my understanding,

God be in mine eyes and in my looking,

God be in my mouth and in my speaking,

God be in my heart and in my thinking,

God be at mine end and at my departing.

MINISTRY TEAM

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COUNSELING NEEDS

Please talk to Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer for a referral for counseling to Cross Connections.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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www.bethlehemlcms.org

Church Office, (260) 744-3228 Fax Number, (260) 744-3229

Office Hours: 10:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Friday)

Our Worship Schedule:

Saturday Afternoon Worship Service at 4:00pm

Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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