

Many Lights Are Brighter—Together!

As We Gather

As Christmas approaches, you may feel like you are doing everything alone, that the stress and struggle of the season will overwhelm your flickering, fading energy and endurance. Or you may be dreading the potential conflict that will come when you gather with family and friends for Christmas celebrations in only a few short days. The apostle Paul writes that our God is the God of endurance and encouragement. You may be tired. You may be discouraged. But Christ has visited His people, and He gathers us all so that we may shine more brightly together in this world of darkness and discouragement. As you continue to prepare for Christmas, may you be encouraged by your brothers and sisters in Christ who shine alongside you.

PREPARATION

649 Blest Be the Tie That Binds

LSB 649 sts. 1–3



1 Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Chris - tian love;
2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne We pour our ar - dent prayers;
3 We share our mu - tual woes, Our mu - tual bur - dens bear,



The fel - low - ship of kin - dred minds Is like to that a - bove.
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, Our com - forts and our cares.
And of - ten for each oth - er flows The sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.

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Invocation

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

Opening Sentences

- P** Christ is coming soon. Alleluia!
- C** We await His return and look for His coming.

- P** The God of endurance and encouragement is our hope.
- C** We look to the Scriptures for His instruction.

P God calls us to live in harmony with one another

C and glorify God with one voice.

P As Christ has welcomed you,

C so we will welcome one another.

P Christ is coming soon. Alleluia!

C We await His return and look for His coming.

Phos Hilaron

LSB 244



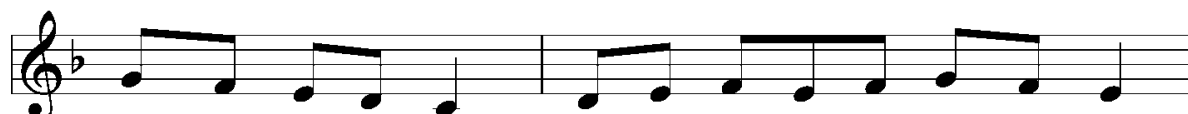
L Joy - ous light of glo - ry:



C of the im - mor - tal Fa - ther; heav - en - ly, ho - ly,



bless - ed Je - sus Christ. We have come to the



set - ting of the sun, and we look to the eve - ning light.



We sing to God, the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it:



You are wor - thy of be - ing praised with pure voic - es for -



ev - er. O Son of God, O Giv - er of life:



the u - ni - verse pro - claims Your glo - ry.



I O Lord, I call to You; come to me quick - ly; hear my voice



when I cry to You. **C** Let my prayer rise be - fore You as in-cense,



the lift-ing up of my hands as the eve-ning sac-ri-fice.



II Set a watch be-fore my mouth, O Lord, and guard the door of my lips.



I Let not my heart in - cline to an - y e - vil thing;



let me not be oc - cu - pied in wick - ed - ness with e - vil - do - ers.



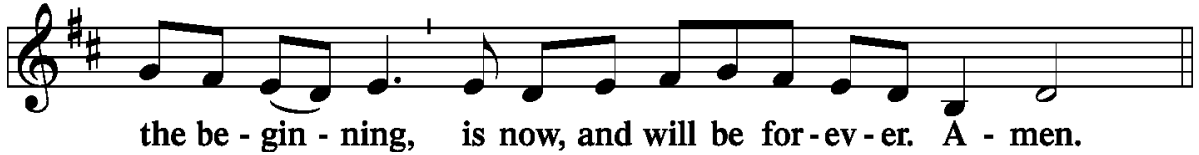
II But my eyes are turned to You, O God; in You I take ref - uge.



Strip me not of my life. **C** 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.



Let my prayer rise be - fore You as in - cense,



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

Lord God, Creator of the universe, You have given us the Holy Scriptures for our encouragement. Unite and reconcile Your people together, that bound together, we may reflect the light of Christ into the darkness of this world, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 1:1–11

¹The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The Wickedness of Judah

²Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth;
for the LORD has spoken:

“Children have I reared and brought up,
but they have rebelled against me.

³The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master’s crib,
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand.”

⁴Ah, sinful nation,
a people laden with iniquity,
offspring of evildoers,
children who deal corruptly!
They have forsaken the LORD,
they have despised the Holy One of Israel,
they are utterly estranged.

⁵Why will you still be struck down?
Why will you continue to rebel?
The whole head is sick,
and the whole heart faint.

⁶From the sole of the foot even to the head,
there is no soundness in it,
but bruises and sores
and raw wounds;
they are not pressed out or bound up
or softened with oil.

⁷Your country lies desolate;
your cities are burned with fire;
in your very presence
foreigners devour your land;
it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners.

⁸And the daughter of Zion is left
like a booth in a vineyard,
like a lodge in a cucumber field,
like a besieged city.

⁹If the LORD of hosts
had not left us a few survivors,
we should have been like Sodom,
and become like Gomorrah.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!

¹¹“What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the LORD;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
and the fat of well-fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.

Silence for reflection on God's Word.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle: Romans 15:4–13

⁴For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles

⁸For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name.”

¹⁰And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

¹¹And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him.”

¹²And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Silence for reflection on God's Word.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 3:1–12

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

¹In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” ³For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’”

⁴Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Silence for reflection on God's Word.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

L In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.

881 Christ, Mighty Savior

LSB 881



1 Christ, might - y Sav - ior, Light of all cre - a - tion,
2 Now comes the day's end as the sun is set - ting,
3 There - fore we come now eve - ning rites to of - fer,
4 Give heed, we pray You, to our sup - pli - ca - tion,
5 Though bod - ies slum - ber, hearts shall keep their vig - il,



You make the day - time ra - diant with the sun - light
Mir - ror of day - break, pledge of res - ur - rec - tion;
Joy - ful - ly chant - ing ho - ly hymns to praise You,
That You may grant us par - don for of - fens - es,
For - ev - er rest - ing in the peace of Je - sus,



And to the night give glit - ter - ing a -
 While in the heav - ens choirs of stars ap -
 With all cre - a - tion join - ing hearts and
 Strength for our weak hearts, rest for ach - ing
 In light or dark - ness wor - ship - ing our



dorn - ment, Stars in the heav - ens.
 pear - ing Hal - low the night - fall.
 voic - es Sing - ing Your glo - ry.
 bod - ies, Sooth - ing the wea - ry.
 Sav - ior Now and for - ev - er.

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Sermon

“Many Lights Are Brighter – Together!”

Pastor King

Magnificat

LSB 248



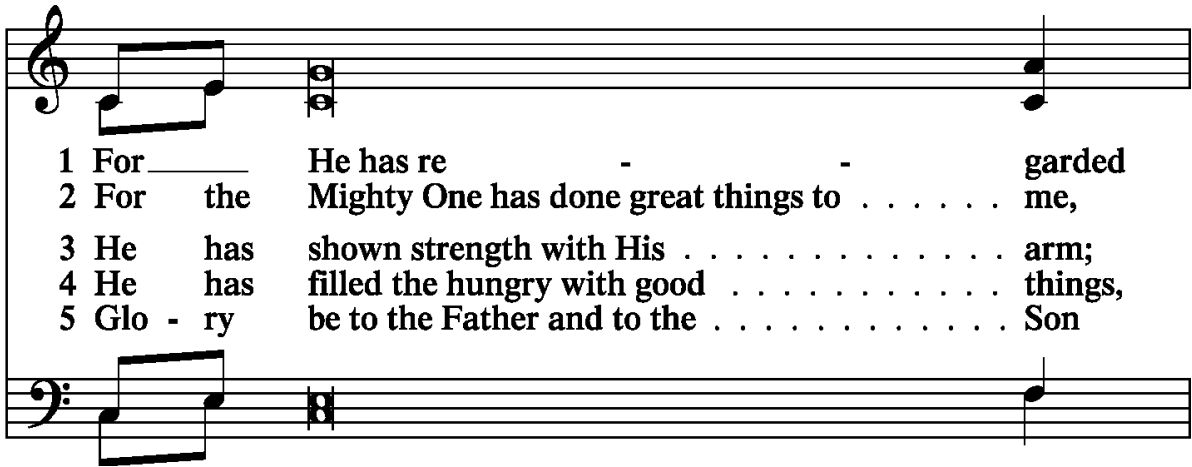
My soul mag - ni - fies the Lord, and my spir - it re -



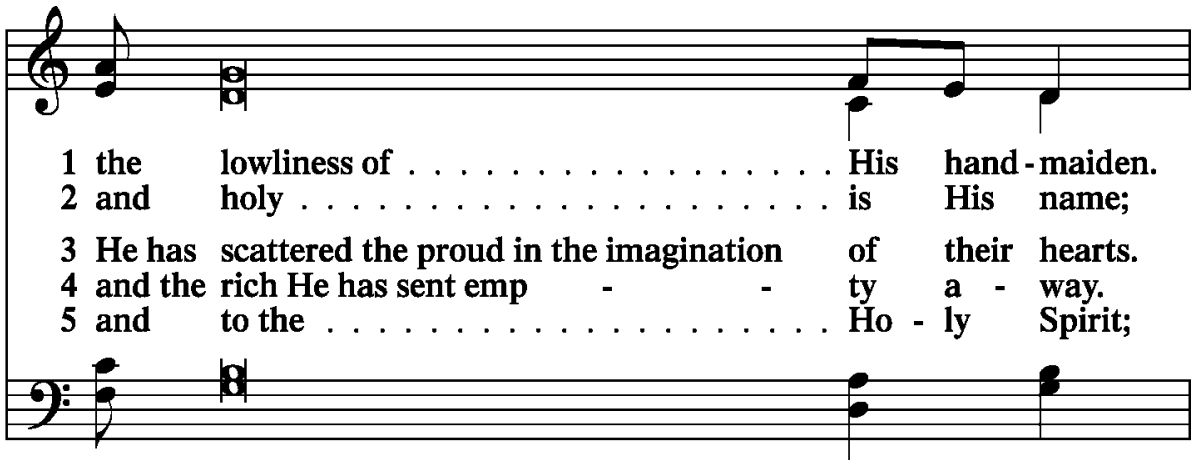
joic - es in God, my Sav - ior. My soul mag - ni - fies the



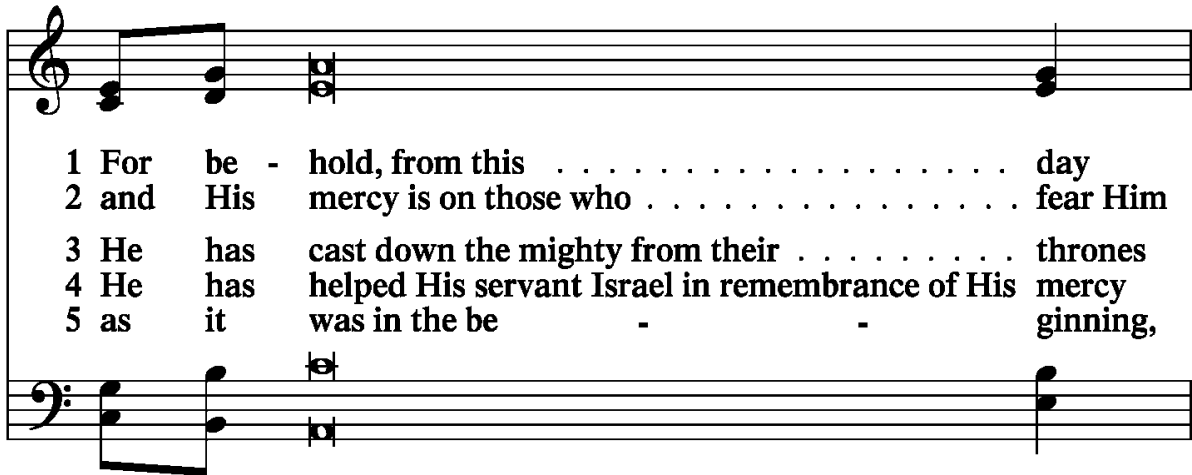
Lord, and my spir - it re - joic - es in God, my Sav - ior.



1 For _____ He has re - - - - - garded
 2 For the Mighty One has done great things to me,
 3 He has shown strength with His arm;
 4 He has filled the hungry with good things,
 5 Glo - ry be to the Father and to the Son



1 the lowliness of His hand - maiden.
 2 and holy is His name;
 3 He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
 4 and the rich He has sent emp - - - - - ty a - way.
 5 and to the Ho - ly Spirit;



1 For be - hold, from this day
 2 and His mercy is on those who fear Him
 3 He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
 4 He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy
 5 as it was in the be - - - - - ginning,

1 all generations will call me blessed.
 2 from generation to gen - er - ation. *Refrain*
 3 and has exalt - - - - - ed the lowly.
 4 as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for - ever.
 5 is now, and will be forever. A - men. *Refrain*

Offering –“Savior of the Nations Come” Handbells

Litany

- P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For peace and salvation, for reconciliation and unity, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For endurance and encouragement, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For pastors, teachers, and all ministers and leaders in Your Church, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For those who labor in difficult or dangerous vocations, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For favorable weather and the nourishment of Your creation, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For those who have not known the light of Christ or have fallen away into the darkness of the world, let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

- P** For all those who suffer illness and grief, [*especially . . .*], let us pray to the Lord
- C** with one voice.

Collect for Peace

P O God, true peace can be found only in You. Though we have often walked in the darkness, You have sought us with the light of Christ. Cease all our sad divisions and bring peace to Your Church; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

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.

Benedicamus

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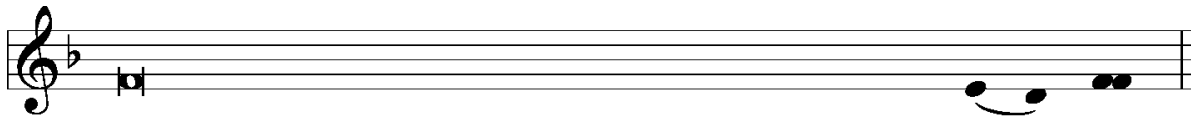
L Let us bless the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

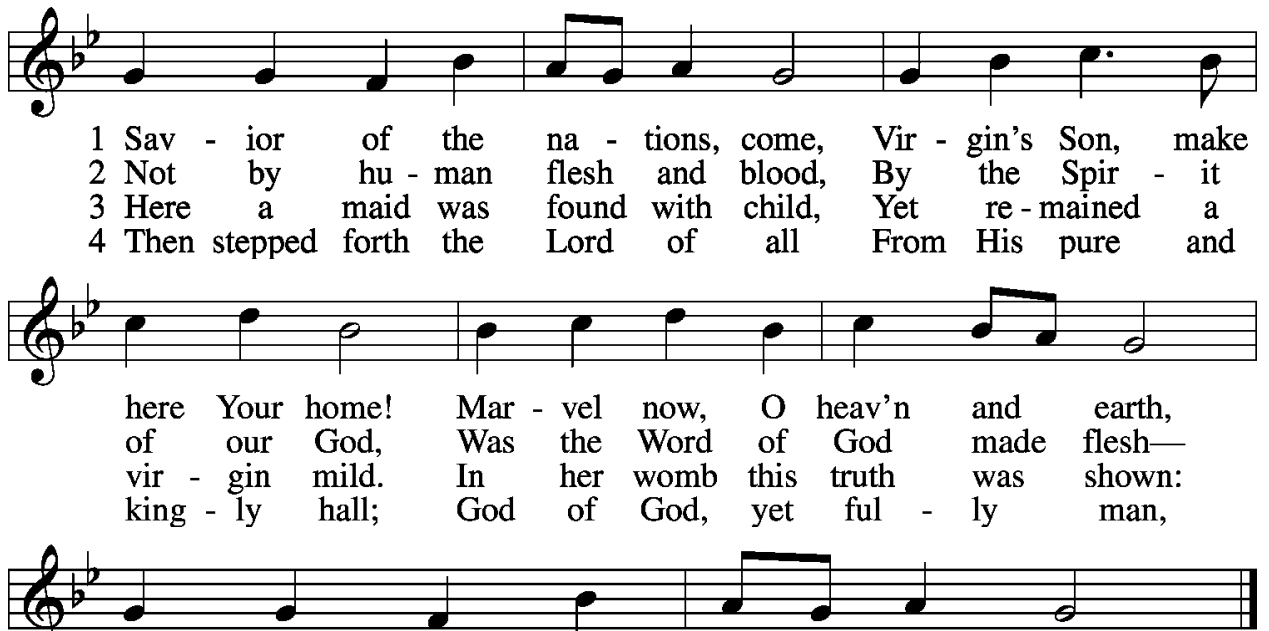
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P The almighty and merciful Lord,
the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and pre - serve you.



C A - men.



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
 3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
 4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and

 here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
 of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
 vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
 king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,

 That the Lord chose such a birth.
 Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
 God was there up - on His throne.
 His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

5 God the Father was His source,
 Back to God He ran His course.
 Into hell His road went down,
 Back then to His throne and crown.

6 For You are the Father's Son
 Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
 By Your mighty pow'r make whole
 All our ills of flesh and soul.

7 From the manger newborn light
 Shines in glory through the night.
 Darkness there no more resides;
 In this light faith now abides.

△ 8 Glory to the Father sing,
 Glory to the Son, our king,
 Glory to the Spirit be
 Now and through eternity.

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Immanuel Lutheran Church

Midweek Advent Service 2
Evening Prayer – Service of Light

December 13, 2017
LSB 243