

# ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD  
LITTLETON, COLORADO

*December 31, 2020*

3:00 p.m.



## **NEW YEAR'S EVE**

Another Year of Grace

## **AS WE GATHER**

As the world rings in the New Year, there are many things to consider from 2020. We consider those who have died in the past year. We consider our own sins and failures. But we also consider all of the ways in which Jesus has continued to lead and guide us. On this night, we remember the love of Christ that sustains us through each passing year, and we pray His blessing on another year of grace.

## **✘ SERVICE OF LIGHT ✘**

**PRELUDE** "Angels From the Realms of Glory"

Michael Burkhardt

**PASTORAL GREETING**



1 Great is Thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;  
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter and spring - time and har - vest,  
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,



There is no shad - ow of turn - ing with Thee.  
 Sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove  
 Thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide;



Thou chang - est not: Thy com - pas - sions, they fail not;  
 Join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness  
 Strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row,



As Thou hast been, Thou for - ev - er wilt be.  
 To Thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
 Bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!



*Refrain*

Great is Thy faith - ful - ness! Great is Thy faith - ful - ness!



Morn - ing by morn - ing new mer - cies I see;



All I have need - ed Thy hand hath pro - vid - ed;



Great is Thy faith - ful - ness, Lord, un - to me!

✧ PSALMODY ✧

**PSALM** *Psalm 98:1–3; antiphon: Psalm 124:8*

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

**People: Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!**

Pastor: His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

**People: The LORD has made known His salvation;**

Pastor: He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

**People: He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.**

Pastor: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

**People: 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.**

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

**PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord God, You have done marvelous things in the sight of all people. Most marvelous of all is Your Son, Jesus Christ, in whom You have made salvation known. As we reflect the year past, help us to forgive others, to learn from our errors, and to not dwell on our past sins. As we look forward to the coming year, keep us in Your steadfast love and faithfulness, so that our lives show forth Your goodness to the ends of the earth, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**



## Verses 1-3, 6



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, Our hope for years to come,  
 2 Un - der the shad-ow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt se - cure;  
 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood Or earth re - ceived her frame,



Our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, And our e - ter - nal home:  
 Suf - fi - cient is Thine arm a - lone, And our de - fense is sure.  
 From ev - er - last - ing Thou art God, To end - less years the same.

6 O God, our help in ages past,  
 Our hope for years to come,  
 Be Thou our guard while troubles last  
 And our eternal home!

## ✠ WORD ✠

**The Epistle: Romans 8:31b–39**

(Nothing separates us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.)

**If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:**

**"For your sake we face death all day long;  
 we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."**

**No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Congregation, please rise for the Holy Gospel.*

**HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 12:35–40**

(Be alert, ready, and always watchful for His coming.)

**Pastor:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twelfth chapter.

**People:** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

**Pastor:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

*"Silence for Reflection....")*

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

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



*New*  
**Beginnings**

## Verses 1-2, 4



1 O re - joyce, ye Chris - tians, loud - ly, For our joy has  
 2 See, my soul, thy Sav - ior choos - es Weak - ness here and  
 4 Je - sus, guard and guide Thy mem - bers, Fill them with Thy



now be - gun; Won - drous things our God has done.  
 pov - er - ty; In such love He comes to thee.  
 bound-less grace, Hear their prayers in ev - 'ry place.



Tell a - broad His good - ness proud - ly, Who our race has  
 Nei - ther crib nor cross re - fus - es; All He suf - fers  
 Fan to flame faith's glow - ing em - bers; Grant all Chris - tians,



hon - ored thus, That He deigns to dwell with us.  
 for thy good To re - deem thee by His blood.  
 far and near, Ho - ly peace, a glad new year!

*Refrain*



Joy, O joy, be - yond all glad - ness, Christ has done a -



way with sad - ness! Hence, all sor - row and re - pin - ing,



For the Sun of Grace is shin - ing!

## SERMON

"Good Riddance"

Pastor John Larson

TEXT: Romans 8:31-39

## Apostles' Creed

People: 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.

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: God is our refuge and strength in all generations. Standing on the doorstep of another year of His grace, let us thank and praise Him for all of His benefits to us: For the gift of life, for food and drink, for house and home, for all that we need to support this body and life,

**People: we thank You, Lord.**

Pastor: For the beauty of Your creation; for the gifts of art and music to enrich our worship, for the freedoms we enjoy to worship and serve You as is proper. For those whom You have placed in our lives: our spouses, parents and children; our friends and neighbors; our co-workers, our pastors and teachers,

**People: we thank You, Lord.**

Pastor: For the blessings of health and contentment in the year to come; for the strength of faith to trust in all of Your promises, love, and care for us. For all who are caught up in or devastated by conflict, all who suffer illness (*especially ...*), bring Your mercy and peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: *...Additional intercessions may be added here.* Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: For the spread of the Gospel, that You would give us courage and strength to seize opportunities to boldly share the love of Christ in word and action. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.**

**OFFERING**      *Offerings will be collected at the back, in the Narthex.*

## HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION

*The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.*

## ✠ SACRAMENT ✠

### PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

*2 Timothy 4:22*

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

*[Colossians 3:1]*

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*[Psalm 136]*

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

### PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: 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, for by His incarnation He has embraced all of humanity and filled the world with good news and great joy. 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

## Joy to the World

### Sanctus

ANTIOCH

Andrew R. Jones

George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.

The musical score is written on four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are printed below the notes. The melody is simple and joyful, with a clear cadence at the end of the fourth staff.

Joy to the world, the Lord is born, The Lord of hosts is  
He! He comes to bring, great joy this  
morn, For all the world to see, For all the world to  
see, For all, for all the world to see.

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**THE WORDS OF OUR LORD** *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

**LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

**People:** 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.



**AGNUS DEI**

**Joy to the World**

**Agnus Dei**

ANTIOCH

Andrew R. Jones

George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.

The musical score is written on four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are: 'Joy to the world, the Lamb of God, Is born for us to - day! He comes to spread His joy a - broad, The light, the peace, the way, The light, the peace, the way, The light, the light, the peace, the way.' The melody is simple and joyful, with a clear cadence at the end of the fourth staff.

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## DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

“Across the Sky the Shades of Night” Verses 1-2, 4-5

LSB 899



1 A - cross the sky the shades of night This New Year's Eve are  
2 Be - fore the cross sub - dued we bow, To You our prayer ad -  
4 We now re - mem - ber, as we pray, Our dear ones in Your  
5 Then, gra - cious God, in years to come, We pray Your hand may



fleet - ing. We deck Your al - tar, Lord, with light, In  
dress - ing, Re - count - ing all Your mer - cies now, And  
car - ing Who bright - ly shine in end - less day, Past  
guide us, And, on - ward through our jour - ney home, Your



sol - emn wor - ship meet - ing; And as the year's last  
all our sins con - fess - ing; Be - seech - ing You this  
death and all de - spair - ing. At our life's end, Lord,  
mer - cy walk be - side us Un - til at last our



hours go by, We raise to You our ear - nest cry,  
com - ing year To keep us in Your faith and fear  
as Your own, Bring us with them a - round Your throne,  
ran - somed life Is safe from per - il, toil, and strife



Once more Your love en - treat - ing.  
And crown us with Your bless - ing.  
The joys of heav - en shar - ing.  
When heav'n it - self shall hide us.

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” (Organ)

arr. Paul Manz

## GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

✘ SENDING ✘

Pastor: Let us pray.

Gracious Lord, we give You thanks for the year now past, especially for the

good we were permitted to give and to receive. The year is now past, and we commit it to You. We entrust to You the new year and rest in Your peace, for You are our help, and You neither slumber nor sleep. Hear us for the sake of Your name.

**People:** Amen.

## CLOSING SENTENCES

**Pastor:** Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping

**People:** that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.

## BENEDICTION

**Pastor:** The blessing of almighty God—the Father, who kept His promise and sent His Son into the world; the ✠ Son, who was born as one of us to die in our place; and the Holy Spirit, who has worked faith in our hearts to rejoice at the news of Jesus' birth—bless you and keep you in Christmas peace, now and forever.

**People:** Amen.

## HYMN

“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”

LSB 922

### Verses 1-3



1 Go, My chil-dren, with My bless - ing, Nev - er a - lone.  
2 Go, My chil-dren, sins for - giv - en, At peace and pure.  
3 Go, My chil-dren, fed and nour - ished, Clos - er to Me;



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you; You are My own. In My  
Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure. Here you  
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, Joy - ful and free. Here My



love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you Mine for - ev - er.  
heard My dear Son's sto - ry; Here you touched Him, saw His glo - ry.  
Spir - it's pow - er filled you; Here His ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, My chil-dren, with My bless - ing— You are My own.  
Go, My chil-dren, sins for - giv - en, At peace and pure.  
Go, My chil-dren, fed and nour - ished, Joy - ful and free.

## CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS

### DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

Roger Wilson

## Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

Pastor John Larson  
Michael Zehnder

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