



## HYMN OF PRAISE

"Love Has Come"

sts. 1 & 2

Red Book #292

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*The congregation may sit.*

## THE WORD

### FIRST READING

**Isaiah 62:6-12**

*The prophet invites the people to give God no rest until God reestablishes Jerusalem. In turn, they will receive names full of promise: The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD, A City Not Forsaken.*

<sup>6</sup>Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,  
I have posted sentinels;  
all day and all night  
they shall never be silent.  
You who remind the LORD,  
take no rest,  
<sup>7</sup>and give him no rest  
until he establishes Jerusalem  
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.  
<sup>8</sup>The LORD has sworn by his right hand  
and by his mighty arm:  
I will not again give your grain  
to be food for your enemies,  
and foreigners shall not drink the wine  
for which you have labored;  
<sup>9</sup>but those who garner it shall eat it  
and praise the LORD,

and those who gather it shall drink it  
in my holy courts.

<sup>10</sup>Go through, go through the gates,  
prepare the way for the people;  
build up, build up the highway,  
clear it of stones,  
lift up an ensign over the peoples.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD has proclaimed  
to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion,  
“See, your salvation comes;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.”

<sup>12</sup>They shall be called, “The Holy People,  
The Redeemed of the LORD”;  
and you shall be called, “Sought Out,  
A City Not Forsaken.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 97**      *read responsively*

<sup>1</sup>The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice;  
let the multitude of the isles be glad.

<sup>2</sup>**Clouds and darkness surround the LORD,  
righteousness and justice are the foundations of God’s throne.**

<sup>3</sup>Fire goes before the LORD,  
burning up enemies on every side.

<sup>4</sup>**Lightnings light up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles.**

<sup>5</sup>The mountains melt like wax  
before the Lord of all the earth.

<sup>6</sup>**The heavens declare your righteousness, O LORD,  
and all the peoples see your glory.**

<sup>7</sup>Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false  
gods!

Bow down before the LORD, all you gods.

**<sup>8</sup>Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice,  
because of your judgments, O LORD.**

<sup>9</sup>For you are the LORD, most high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above all gods.

**<sup>10</sup>You who love the LORD, hate evil!**

**God guards the lives of the saints and rescues them from the  
hand of the wicked.**

<sup>11</sup>Light dawns for the righteous,  
and joy for the honest of heart.

**<sup>12</sup>Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous,  
and give thanks to God's holy name.**

## **SECOND READING Titus 3:4-7**

*God saves us not because of what we do. Rather, God is a God of mercy and salvation who graciously cleanses us in baptism and renews our lives through the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>4</sup>When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup>This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The congregation may stand.*

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*"Love Has Come"*

st. 3

Red Book #292

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke, the second chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*The world's deep night is interrupted by the light of God's new day. The glory of God is revealed to poor shepherds, who share the good news with others.*

[<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.]

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered

them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The congregation may sit.*

## **SERMON**

*The congregation may stand.*

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

Red Book #295

## **NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,\*  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

On this day of great rejoicing, let us bring our prayers and concerns to God.

*The congregation may kneel or sit.*

We pray for those from every land who with us celebrate the birth of your Son, and especially for those where the church is persecuted. Keep worshippers safe and make your church a witness to the Prince of Peace even in the face of hatred. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those in situations of terror, hunger, cold, or violence. Today, especially, we remember the people of Haiti, Ethiopia, Ukraine, and Russia, So shine in their lives and their lands that they may not give up the hope of better days. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those who suffer: for those who are lonely, for those troubled by doubt, for those in conflict with their loved ones, and for those who are sick or wounded in body or spirit. Restore dignity and heal our brokenness. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those whose efforts today support those who celebrate: for those who cook, those who clean, those who tend the young and the old, that their work may be measured by joy and met with gratitude. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those whose labors take them away from home today: healthcare and transportation workers, those who serve public safety, and those who are deployed in the armed forces. Let your presence be transparent to them in all that they do. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We remember with thanksgiving those who now see our Savior Christ face to face, who lived in this life by faith in your Word made flesh. We name them now, silently or aloud....Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

Into the manger of your holy love, we lay our prayers, O God, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

### THE MEAL

#### **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

#### **SOLO**

“Mary’s Little Boy Child”

- Jester Hairston

Linda Mathias, *soprano*

#### **OFFERING PRAYER**

*led by the assisting minister*



## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.' The second staff contains 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.' The third staff contains 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.' The fourth staff contains 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The music is written in a single treble clef.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and  
 God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your  
 glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the  
 Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

We thank you, O God,  
 At the beginning your Word created light,  
 And made us and all that exists.  
 By your Word, you chose a people, Israel, for yourself.  
 You set them free from slavery in Egypt,  
 And spoke to them by the prophets.  
 By your word you lead us into wisdom and create faith in our hearts.  
 We thank you, O God, for speaking.  
**We praise you, O God, for your Word.**

We thank you, O God,  
 For sending your Son, Jesus to be born like us,  
 In a city called Bethlehem,  
 which means "house of bread."  
 We thank you that his bed was a manger,

Where animals found their food.  
Now crucified and risen, he is for us the bread of life.  
We thank you, O God, for feeding us.  
**We praise you, O God, for bread.**

On the night, when he was betrayed,  
He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
"Take, eat, this is my body, given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."

Again, after supper, he took the cup,  
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying,  
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin.  
As often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

Great, therefore, is the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Therefore, O God,  
as we take this bread and cup,  
we remember him in the manger;  
we remember him on the cross;  
we remember him rising from the dead;  
we look forward to his coming again!  
Come again, Lord Jesus!  
**Come, Lord Jesus!**

We pray for your Spirit,  
Who leads us in love and service.  
Make our city a house of bread, where no one is hungry.  
Make our homes into mangers, filled with forgiveness and love.  
Make us one with your people around the world and throughout time,  
That we may be one with you in the communion of saints.

Come to us, Holy Spirit!  
**Come, Holy Spirit!**

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in unity with the Holy Spirit,  
we praise you O God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

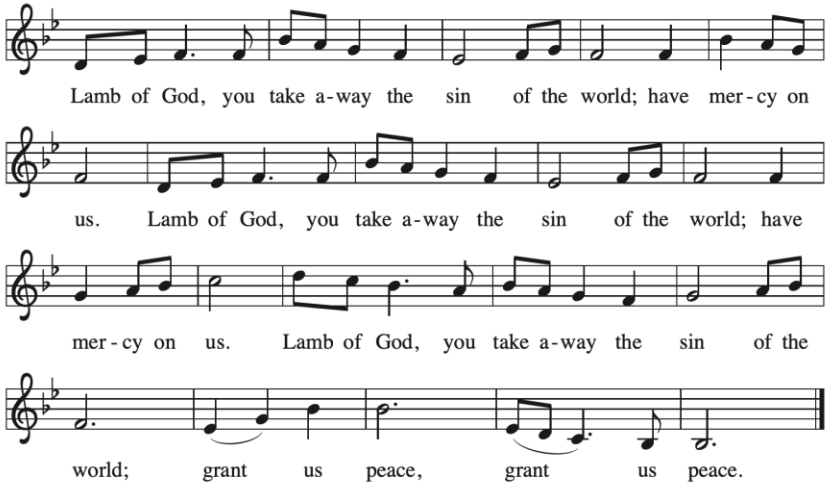
United as one family and with one voice, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Here with bread and wine is the Word made flesh. Taste and see that the  
Lord is good.

## LAMB OF GOD



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, grant us peace.

## SHARING OF THE SACRAMENT

*All are welcome to Holy Communion today. Lutherans believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine. The ushers will invite you forward to receive. Gluten free wafers are available; please let the pastor know if you wish to receive them. If you are able to receive either bread or wine (but not both), please know that you still receive the full communion.*

## BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Amen.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

### BLESSING

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ child, and Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Red Book #270

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. The Lord is with you!

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

“Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow”

- African American Spiritual

## SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Kimberly van Driel	<b>Presiding Minister</b>
Sharon Heist Miller	<b>Assisting Minister</b>
Amy Beiler	<b>Reader</b>
Christiaan van Driel	<b>Crucifer</b>
Claudia van Driel	<b>Acolyte</b>
Kevin Mathias	<b>Organist</b>
Marlin Boltz	<b>AV Assisting Minister</b>
Karen Boltz	<b>PowerPoint Assisting Minister</b>
Roxanne Glagola	<b>Altar Guild</b>
Bill and Judy Vilcheck	<b>Ushers</b>
Jim and Jeanette Cunningham	<b>Counters</b>

*Altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Dorothy Croupe, in loving memory of her husband, Clyde L. Croupe.*

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST ENGLISH

Monday, 12/26		<b>No Community Dinner</b>
	8:00 PM	NA Meeting (Social Hall)
Wednesday, 12/28	7:00 PM	AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Thursday, 12/29	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	7:30 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Saturday, 12/31	12:00 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Sunday, 1/1	10:00 AM	Worship (no Bible study)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Production issues have caused the 2023 offering envelopes to be delayed.** We are hoping that they will be available by January.

**Reminder: Please send the photo** that you would like to include in the new church directory to [officefelc@zoominternet.net](mailto:officefelc@zoominternet.net). (*preferred file types include: .jpeg; .tiff; .png*) If you have any changes to your contact information that you have not yet communicated to the church office, please send those updates along with your photo. Thank you!

**Support First English's ministry:** In thanksgiving to God, financial contributions to the congregation can be placed in the offering plate at the rear of the worship space or made online at [www.firstenglishbutler.org/giving](http://www.firstenglishbutler.org/giving).

## PRAYERS

Shirley Mould; Dave Adams; Tracy Steadman; family of Paul Throm; Jim Cunningham; Gracie Love; Thelma Hassler; family of David Hartle; family of Chris Holman; family of Hazel Warheit; 6-month-old baby girl in Ohio; Jack Beiler; Karen Knepp; Zachary Sutton; Tony Sequite; Kyle Badger; Joyce Mitchel (Matt Cooper's grandma); those affected by hurricane Ian; Brian Salisbury; Mark Vogel & family; continued healing for Graham Cannon; Stan Graff; Aryl Bashline; Patrick Frank; Holly Schubert; Ellen Dodge; Tad Sellers; Claudia; Pam Patterson; Tom Olson

## NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

**Numbers 6:22-27**

*The Aaronic blessing*

**Psalms 8**

How majestic is your name in all the earth! (*Ps. 8:1*)

**Galatians 4:4-7**

*We are no longer slaves, but children*

**Luke 2:15-21**

*The child is circumcised and named Jesus*

**ZOOM MEETING INFO**

To join online, click 'Join Our ZOOM Meeting' in the email.

Meeting ID: 956 305 5281

Password: 408299

To join via telephone, dial: +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 956 305 5281

Password: 408299

*Liturgical portions of today's service are reprinted with permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS028762.*