



LORD of LOVE
Lutheran Church



New Year's Eve Worship
December 31, 2024

The symbol on the cover of the bulletin tonight is the Alpha and Omega. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. In Scripture Jesus Christ is called the Alpha and Omega. He is the beginning and the end, the eternal, changeless God. The passage of time affects us, but the one in whom we trust is outside and above it all.

Prayer at Close of Day

From Christian Worship New Service settings (adapted)

OPENING HYMN (CW 441)

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:

Under the shadow of your throne,
Your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting you are God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in your sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Still be our guide while troubles last,
And our eternal home!

OPENING RESPONSES

M: The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

C: Amen.

M: It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

C: to sing praise to your name, O Most High,

M: to herald your love in the morning,

C: your truth at the close of day.

M: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

C: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

PRAYER

M: Lord God, our refuge and fortress, your faithfulness has protected us through this day. Now send your holy angels to guard us from danger through this night. Give us peaceful rest, free from fear, that we may wake refreshed to serve you, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

For everything there is an appointed time.

There is an appropriate time for every activity under heaven:

² a time to give birth and a time to die,

a time to plant and a time to uproot plants,

³ a time to kill and a time to heal,

a time to tear down and a time to build,

⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh,

a time to mourn and a time to dance,

⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones,

a time to embrace and a time not to embrace,

⁶ a time to search and a time to stop searching,

a time to keep and a time to throw away,

⁷ a time to rip and a time to sew,

a time to be silent and a time to speak,

⁸a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

⁹What does the worker gain from his hard work? ¹⁰I have seen the task which God has given the children of Adam to keep them busy. ¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time. Yes, he has also put eternity in their hearts, yet it is not possible for man to understand the work that God has done from beginning to end.

HYMN (CW 415)

Be Still, My Soul

Be still, my soul; the Lord is on your side; Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide; In ev'ry change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul; your best, your heavenly friend
Through stormy ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul; your God will undertake, to guide the future as he has the past.
Your hope, your confidence, let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul; the waves and winds still know,
his voice who ruled them while he lived below.

Be still, my soul; though dearest friends depart, and all is darkened in the vale of tears;
Then you will better know his love, his heart, who comes to soothe your sorrows and your fears.
Be still, my soul; your Jesus can repay,
From his own fullness all he takes away.

Be still, my soul; the hour is hastening on, when we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone, sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul; when change and tears are past,
All safe and bless-ed we shall meet at last.

SERMON

Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

Closing the Case on Sin

RESPONSIVE PRAYER FOR THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR

M: I will exalt you, my God and King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.

C: Every day I will praise you and extol your name.

M: It is fitting, O Lord, in the final hours of this year, to express our gratitude for the countless gifts of grace we have received from you.

C: You have been faithful to your promises and loving toward all you have made.

M: You clothe your creation with beauty; you feed even the birds and tell us that we are much more valuable than they.

C: You know what we need, and you give us all good things.

M: Clothing and food, safety and health, possessions and money, even life itself – all these come to us from your generous hand.

C: We thank you for these blessings, and we ask that you continue to grant them to us.

M: We thank you especially for your Word and Holy Supper, which strengthen our faith, shield us from temptation, and equip us for service.

C: Increase our commitments to these precious gifts, so that we may continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

M: Almighty and eternal God, you have been gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love. As you led your people Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so lead us by the light of your Word that we may live our lives to your glory and be prepared to die in your peace.

C: We ask these things in the name of Jesus. In his name we began this year; in his name we bring it to a close. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

CONFESSION OF SINS & ABSOLUTION

M: I now ask you before God who searches the heart, do you sincerely confess that you have sinned against God and deserved his wrath and punishment? Then declare so by saying: I do confess.

C: I do confess.

M: Truly, you should confess, for Holy Scripture declares: If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). Do you heartily repent of all your sins committed in thought, word, and deed? Then declare so by saying: I do repent.

C: I do repent.

M: Truly, you should repent, as did the penitent sinners: Kind David, who prayed for a contrite heart; Peter, who wept bitterly; the sinful woman; the prodigal son; and others. Do you sincerely believe that God, by grace, for Jesus' sake, forgives all your sins? Then declare so by saying: I do believe.

C: I do believe.

M: Truly, you should so believe, for Holy Scripture declares: God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). Do you promise that with the aid of the Holy Spirit you will henceforth amend your sinful life? Then declare so by saying: I do promise.

C: I do promise.

M: Truly, you should so promise, for Christ, the Lord, says: Let your light shine before men, that may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16). Finally, do you believe that through me, a called servant of God, you receive the forgiveness of all your sins? Then declare so by saying: I do believe.

C: I do believe.

M: May it be to you as you believe.

Upon your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to 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 Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Thanks be to God! Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

LAMB OF GOD

M: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world. Have mercy on us, and grant us your peace.

C: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

In accordance with the Scriptural practice of closed Communion, we invite to the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood the communicant members of this congregation. We invite also the communicant members of our sister congregations in our fellowship (the WELS and the ELS) who have made their intention known to one of our pastors. We ask other guests in attendance to refrain from taking the Sacrament with us today, and we invite you to speak with a pastor about how you may join our fellowship and commune with us in the future.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN (CW 389)

Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

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| 1) Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood
From thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure:
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r. | 2) Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save and thou alone. |
| 3) Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress,
Helpless, look to thee for grace.
Foul, I to the fountain fly -
Wash me, Savior, or I die! | 4) While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne.
Rock of Ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee! |

SONG OF SIMEON

M & C: Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. Amen.

THE BLESSING

M: The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD look on you with favor, and give you peace.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN (CW 332)

Go, My Children, with My Blessing

Go, my children, with my blessing, Never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; You are my own.
In my love's baptismal river
I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing - You are my own.

Go, my children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure.
Here you heard my dear Son's story;
Here you touched him, saw his glory.
Go, my children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.

Go, my children, fed and nourished, Closer to me;
Grow in love and love by serving, Joyful and free.
Here my Spirit's power filled you;
Here his tender comfort stilled you.
Go, my children, fed and nourished, Joyful and free.

I the Lord will bless and keep you And give you peace;
I the Lord will smile upon you And give you peace;
I the Lord will be your Father,
Savior, Comforter, and Brother.
Go, my children; I will keep you And give you peace.