



## **New Year's Eve**

2022 Bethel/Grace Joint Service

# **BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** | York, Nebraska

*December 31, 2022*

## **THEME OF THE DAY: VALUE THE TIME GOD HAS GIVEN YOU**

With the coming of a new year, it's a time where we reflect on everything that happened this past year, and also look ahead at the year that is to come. As we do this we see how valuable the time that God has given us truly is. Because every year that God blesses us with, is time for us to stay connected to the means of grace, which God works through to pour out his grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

**Worship Leader**  
**Organist/Pianist**

Pastor Justin Wilkens  
Debbie Owen

## **Acknowledgments**

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## The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)

### Hymn: 367 Across the Sky the Shades of Night

- 1 Across the sky the shades of night  
this New Year's Eve are fleeting.  
We deck your altar, Lord, with light,  
in solemn worship meeting;  
and, as the year's last hours go by,  
we raise to you our earnest cry,  
once more your love entreating.
- 2 Before the cross, subdued, we bow,  
to you our prayers addressing,  
recounting all your mercies now  
and all our sins confessing.  
We ask you, Lord, this coming year  
to keep us in your faith and fear  
and crown us with your blessing.
- 3 We now remember, as we pray,  
our dear ones in your caring  
who brightly shine in endless day,  
past death and all despairing.  
When ends our life, Lord, as your  
own, bring us with them around your  
throne, the joys of heaven sharing.
- 4 Then, gracious God, in years to come,  
we pray your hand may guide us,  
and, onward through our journey  
home, your mercy walk beside us  
until at last our ransomed life  
is safe from peril, toil, and strife  
when heav'n itself shall hide us.

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### *Stand*

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Confession**

*CW 154*

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just  
and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins  
with his innocent suffering and death.**

**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Lord, Have Mercy**

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Glory Be to God**

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



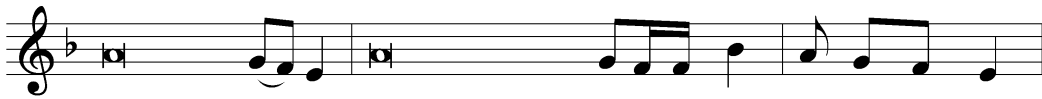
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



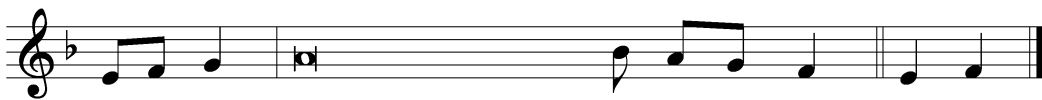
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

## THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we commit to your mercy and forgiveness the year now ending and commend to your blessing and love the times to come. In the new year, abide among us with your Holy Spirit that we may always trust in the saving name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## **First Reading**

*Ecclesiastes 12:1–7*

*In his wisdom, King Solomon tells his readers that a day of destruction is coming, so now is the time to cling to their God.*

<sup>1</sup> So remember your Creator in the days of your youth,  
before the bad days come and the years arrive when you will say,

“I have no delight in them,”

<sup>2</sup> before the sun and the light of the moon and the stars are darkened,  
before the clouds return after the rain,

<sup>3</sup> before the day when the watchmen of the house tremble,  
and the strong men are bent over,  
and the women who grind grain cease because they are few,  
and those watching through the windows can barely see.

<sup>4</sup> Then the double doors to the street are shut,  
as the grinding of the mill grows quiet.

A person wakes up at the sound of a bird,  
but all the sounds of music are muffled.

<sup>5</sup> Then they fear heights and terrors along the road.

The almond blossoms become white. The grasshopper drags himself along,  
and the caperberry has no effect.

Why? Because the man is heading to his eternal home.  
Then the wailing mourners will go around in the street.

<sup>6</sup> Remember your Creator before the silver cord is snapped, and the golden bowl is broken,  
before the jar is shattered by the spring,  
and the waterwheel is broken by the well,

<sup>7</sup> and the dust goes back into the ground—just as it was before,  
and the spirit goes back to God who gave it.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm of the Day: 90A Fill Us with Your Love, O Lord

### Refrain



Fill us with your love, O Lord, and we will sing for joy!



Fill us with your love, O Lord, and we will sing for joy!

### Tone

Lord, you have been our / dwelling place  
throughout all gener- / ations.

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the / whole world,  
from everlasting to everlasting / you are God.

You turn people / back to dust,  
saying, "Return to dust, you / mortals."

A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has / just gone by,  
or like a watch / in the night. *Refrain*

Teach us to number / our days,  
that we may gain a heart of / wisdom.

May the favor of the Lord our God / rest on us;  
establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work / of our hands.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son  
and to the Holy / Spirit,  
as it was in the be- / ginning,  
is now, and will be forever. / Amen.**

### Refrain

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## Second Reading

1 Peter 1:22–25

*While every person will one day perish, those who have come to faith in hearing the word will pass from this life into eternity in heaven.*

<sup>22</sup> Since you have purified your souls by obeying the truth, resulting in sincere brotherly love, love one another constantly from a pure heart. <sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not from perishable seed but from imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup> For: All flesh is like grass, and all its glory is like a flower of the field. The grass withers, and the flower falls, <sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word that was preached to you.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## Gospel Acclamation

*Psalm 90:1*



*Refrain*



*Tone*



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## Gospel

*Luke 13:1–9*

*Jesus tells a parable to highlight the truth that those who use their time on earth to stay connected to Him through Word and Sacrament will be nourished, leading to eternal life in heaven.*

## Repent or Perish

<sup>1</sup> At that time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> He answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered these things? <sup>3</sup> I tell you, no. But unless you repent, you will all perish too. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam



fell on them—do you think that they were worse sinners than all the people living in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> I tell you, no. But unless you repent, you will all perish too.”

<sup>6</sup> He told them this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it, but he did not find any. <sup>7</sup> So he said to the gardener, ‘Look, for three years now I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and I have found none. Cut it down. Why even let it use up the soil?’ <sup>8</sup> But the gardener replied to him, ‘Sir, leave it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put fertilizer on it. <sup>9</sup> If it produces fruit next year, fine. But if not, then cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

### **Hymn of the Day: 820 O God, Our Help in Ages Past**

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | O God, our help in ages past,<br>our hope for years to come,<br>our shelter from the stormy blast,<br>and our eternal home:    | 4 | A thousand ages in your sight<br>are like an evening gone,<br>short as the watch that ends the night<br>before the rising sun.  |
| 2 | Under the shadow of your throne<br>your saints have dwelt secure;<br>sufficient is your arm alone,<br>and our defense is sure. | 5 | Time, like an ever-rolling stream,<br>soon bears us all away;<br>we fly forgotten, as a dream<br>dies at the op'ning day.       |
| 3 | Before the hills in order stood<br>or earth received its frame,<br>from everlasting you are God,<br>to endless years the same. | 6 | O God, our help in ages past,<br>our hope for years to come,<br>still be our guard while troubles last<br>and our eternal home! |

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, abr., alt.

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### **Sermon**

*Stand*

### **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 in unity with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian 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.**

*Be seated*

## **Prayer of the Church**

Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.

**Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.**

Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.

## **Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world**

Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.

## **Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.**

Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.

## **Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.**

Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.

## **Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.**

Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity, *[especially . . . here name the person and the cause of the petition]*. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

## **Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors, *[especially . . . here name the person]*. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

## **Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.**

Grant us these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again.

**Amen.**

## **Offering**

### **Offering Hymn: 748 Brothers, Sisters, Let Us Gladly**

*sts. 1–2*

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Brothers, sisters, let us gladly<br>give to God our all, our best:<br>service hearty, thorough, honest,<br>with a living love impressed.<br>All our duty, all our striving,<br>all our time to him belong;<br>praise him, then, with true devotion,<br>come before him with a song. | 2 | By his mercy, by his bounty,<br>by the gift of Christ, his Son,<br>what great goodness he has shown us,<br>what high marvels he has done!<br>Let us to him promptly, freely,<br>yield our bodies and our souls,<br>thankful that his love protects us,<br>that his wisdom all controls. |
|---|---|---|---|

Text: Henry Bateman, 1802–1872  
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Stand

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:  
heav'n 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,  
bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**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.**

## **Words of Institution**

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."

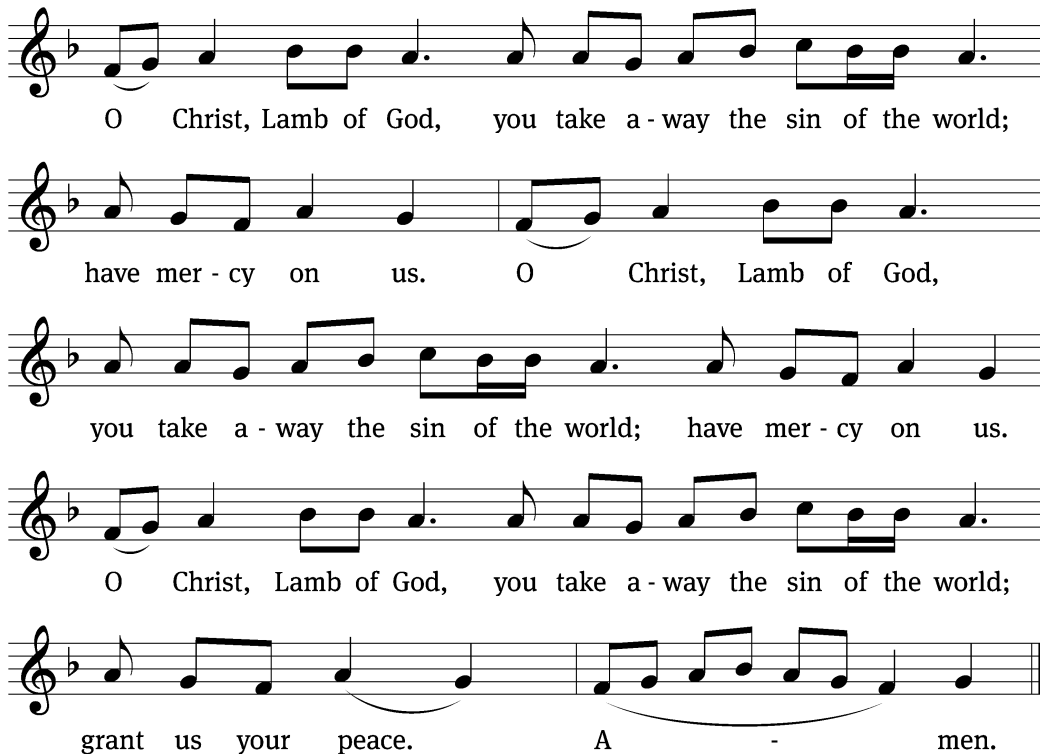
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

## O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;  
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,  
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;  
grant us your peace. A - men.

*Be seated*

## Distribution

**Close Communion** We ask that only those who have previously spoken to our pastor or are members in good standing of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to Holy Communion today. Our practice of Close Communion (which has been the practice of the Christian Church throughout the ages) is in no way trying to judge anyone's faith. What we are trying to do is follow the Bible's clear teaching (1 Corinthians 11) to first study God's Word together. As we do so, we can share with/review with you what the Lord's Supper is all about. You, then, also have an opportunity to examine what we believe and teach before you come to the Lord's Supper and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.

## Distribution Hymn: 676 Take and Eat

- Ref Take and eat, take and eat,  
this is my body given up for you.  
Take and drink, take and drink,  
this is my blood given up for you.
- 1 I am the Word that spoke and light was made;  
I am the seed that died to be reborn;  
I am the bread that comes from heav'n above;  
I am the vine that fills your cup with joy.  
(Refrain)
- 2 I am the way that leads the exile home;  
I am the truth that sets the captive free;  
I am the life that raises up the dead;  
I am your peace, true peace my gift to you. (Refrain)
- 3 I am the Lamb that takes away your sin;  
I am the gate that guards you night and day; you are my flock: you know the shepherd's voice;
- 4 I am the cornerstone that God has laid;  
a chosen stone and precious in his eyes;  
you are God's dwelling-place, on me you rest;  
like living stones, a temple for God's praise. (Refrain)
- 5 I am the light that came into the world;  
I am the light that darkness cannot hide;  
I am the Morning Star that never sets;  
lift up your face, in you my light will shine. (Refrain)
- 6 I am the first and last, the Living One;  
I am the Lord who died that you might live; I am the bridegroom, this is my wedding son; you are my bride, come to the marriage feast. (Refrain)

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Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Blessing

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.

**Amen.**

## Hymn: 368 Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year

*sts. 1–4*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Now greet the swiftly changing year<br>with joy and penitence sincere.<br>Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace<br>another year of grace. | 3 This Jesus came to end sin's war;<br>this name of names for us he bore.<br>Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace<br>another year of grace. |
| 2 Remember now the Son of God<br>and how he shed his infant blood.<br>Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace<br>another year of grace.       | 4 His love abundant far exceeds<br>the volume of a whole year's needs.<br>Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace<br>another year of grace.    |

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