

— A REAL —
CHRISTMAS

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

*A Real Christmas
Results in Great Joy*

December 22, 2024





4651 Kernan Blvd S,
Jacksonville, FL 32224
(904) 642-8900

8:00am Worship
9:15am Bible Class and
Sunday School
10:30am Worship with
Livestream

victorylutheran.org



*Find us on Facebook,
Instagram, and YouTube!*



*Victory is affiliated with
the Wisconsin Evangelical
Lutheran Synod.*

Welcome to Victory!

- Thank you for choosing to worship the Triune God with us! May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you as we join together in worship.
- We prepare for worship by quietly meditating on the theme for the day and respectfully listening to the music chosen and prepared by our musicians.
- If you are looking for a church home, we would be thrilled to serve your spiritual needs. Our name comes from 1 Corinthians 15:57: **“Thanks be to God! He gives us the VICTORY through our Lord Jesus Christ!”**
- Our mission as a Christian congregation is to: “Win souls for Christ and coach Christians for life.”
- Please sign the Connection Card inside the worship folder to give us a record of your visit, and so we can properly thank you for joining us!
- Restrooms are located in the hallway to the right as you enter the front doors. Changing tables are available in both the women’s and men’s restrooms.
- A Quiet Room for children who need a quiet moment with a caretaker is located on the right before entering the sanctuary.

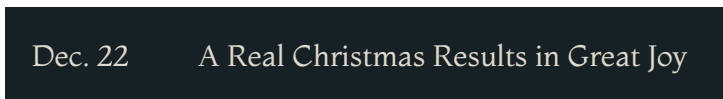
Today's Worship: A Real Christmas Results in Great Joy

Multiple studies have proven that the holiday season exacerbates mental health issues. For some, the pressure to have “a perfect Christmas” can be overwhelming. For others, their loneliness is amplified. Such people need a real Christmas, one that results in great joy. But joy is not the same thing as happiness. It is infinitely better. Happiness is an emotion. Joyfulness is a condition. Happiness comes from your circumstances. Joyfulness comes from Christ assuring you of his abiding love and your glorious future. Therefore, happiness—“holiday cheer”—is fleeting. Joyfulness is enduring. As we near end of Advent, we ask Christ to empower us to rejoice.

Current Sermon Series: A Real Christmas

A parent says, “I want to give my kids a real Christmas.” What do you think that parent means? Perhaps they are thinking of a trimming a freshly cut tree or finding the perfect presents or spending the holidays with extended family. Perhaps they are thinking about all those things. “Then it will be a real Christmas!” Certainly, all those are wonderful things. However, none of them are what makes Christmas real. The sad truth is Christmas is the most beloved holiday of so many, yet so few know what Christmas is really about.

If you want a real Christmas, then you need to observe Advent. Advent is Latin for “coming.” In the season of Advent, Christians observe the connection between the first time the Son of God came into our world as the Savior and the second time he will come as the Judge. Advent prepares our minds and hearts, so that we might soon celebrate a real Christmas.



Join us for our Christmas Worship Services:



Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Worship: <i>4pm and 7pm</i> God Gives Heaven's Best Gift in Earth's Unlikeliest Place
Dec. 29	Lessons and Carols Service: God Gives Both Substitute and Sacrifice

The Service: Setting One



Opening Hymn

CW305 | Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates

Invocation

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

C: Amen.

Confession of Sins

M: God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.

C: **Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

James 4:6, 10

M: Dear friends, the season of Advent is a time of preparation as we await Christ's second coming on the Last Day. We prepare our hearts to meet him as we humbly seek his forgiveness.

C: 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

M: If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?

C: **But with you there is forgiveness; therefore, you are feared.**

Psalms 130:3, 4

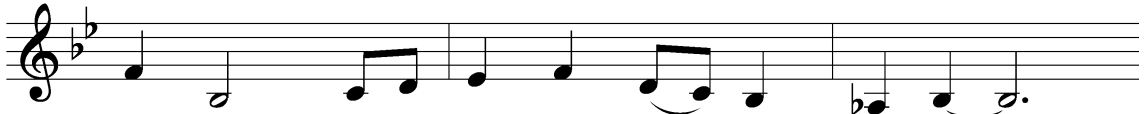
My Soul Will Magnify the Lord

8:00am | Congregation

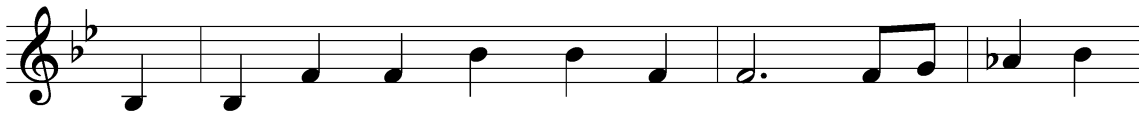
10:30am | Cantor



1 My soul will mag - ni - fy the Lord; I re - joice in God my



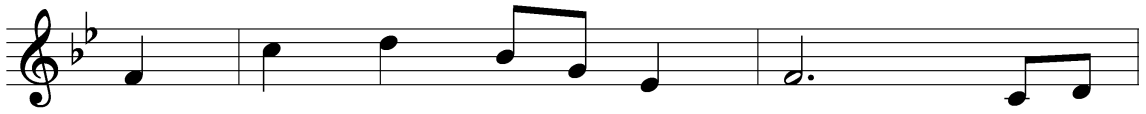
Sav - ior, in the won - der of his fa - vor.



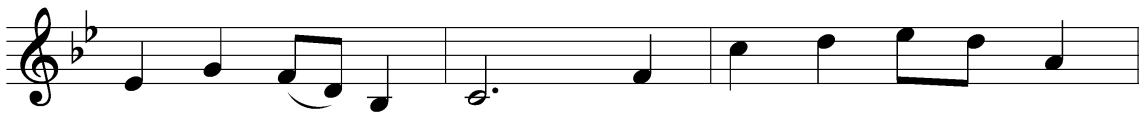
For he has done great things for me, he was mind - ful



of his ser - vant; ev - 'ry age shall call me bless - ed.



The hope of A - bra - ham come in the



giv - ing of a Son; for he who prom - ised is



might - y in re - mem - ber - ing his mer - cy.

Text: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Kristyn Getty, b. 1980; Keith Getty, b. 1974

Tune: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Kristyn Getty, b. 1980; Keith Getty, b. 1974

Text and tune: © 2005 Thankyou Music, admin. CapitolCMGPublishing.com. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716703

M: God's promise to Abraham and his descendants was fulfilled in the coming of his Son. Jesus Christ humbled himself by submitting to God's law. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross. God promises to lift up the humble and fill the hungry with good things because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: **Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, so that we through his poverty might become rich.**

2 Corinthians 8:9

M: Even as we await Christ's second coming, he comes to us here and now in the words he gives his messengers to speak: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

My Soul Will Magnify the Lord

Congregation



2 My soul will mag - ni - fy the Lord for his grace to those who



fear him through ev - 'ry gen - er - a - tion.



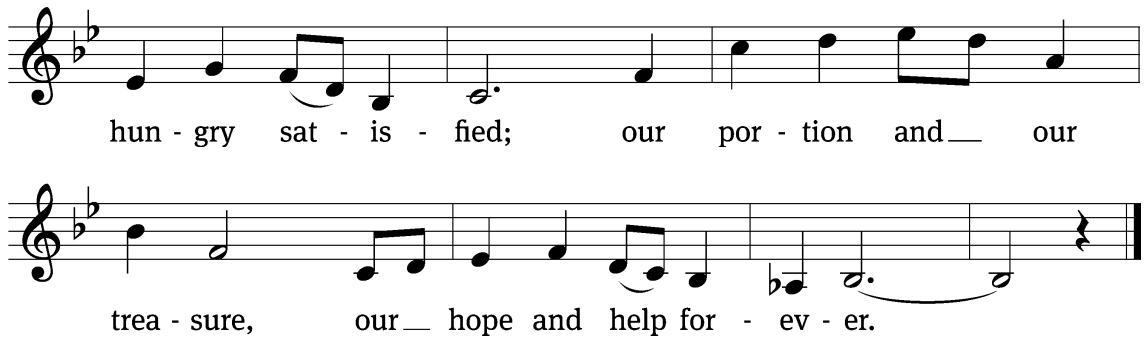
The proud he scat - ters to the wind as the rul - er's



strength is bro - ken, and the rich are left with noth - ing.



The hum - ble lift - ed high, and the



hun - gry sat - is - fied; our por - tion and our
 trea - sure, our hope and help for - ev - er.

Text: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Kristyn Getty, b. 1980; Keith Getty, b. 1974
 Tune: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Kristyn Getty, b. 1980; Keith Getty, b. 1974
 Text and tune: © 2005 Thankyou Music, admin. CapitolCMGPublishing.com. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716703

- M: We light four Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Mary. He came to share our humanity.
- C: **We remember Jesus, whose name means Savior. He came to save his people from their sins.**
- M: We hear his call to give him a place in our hearts.
- C: **We light four Advent candles as a sign of our joy and hope.**
- M: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.
- C: **Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.**



Lighting of the Advent Wreath

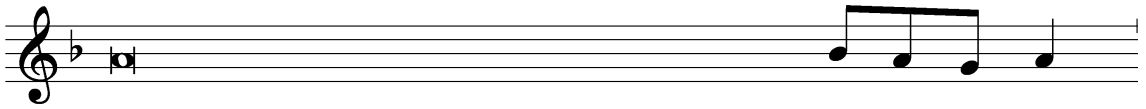
Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie

The congregation sings the parts in bold



In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



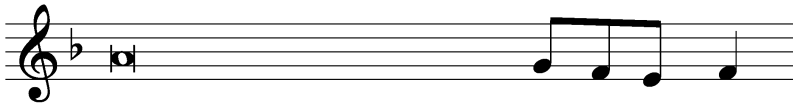
For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



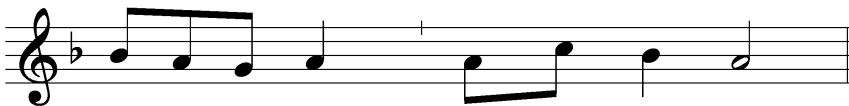
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



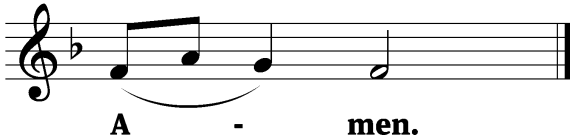
For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us



pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



Tune: Kevin Becker
Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716703

The Word

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

In Bethlehem, a special son would be born, bringing spiritual peace to the ends of the Earth

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

³Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

⁴He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

⁵And he will be our peace.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

What is the reason for our enduring joy? The Lord is near to us

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:10

The congregation sings the whole song



Refrain



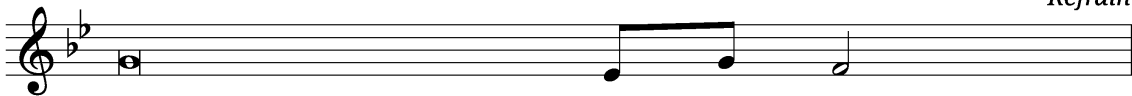
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Tone



I will send my messenger a - head of you,

Refrain



who will prepare your way be - fore you.

Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission. OneLicense no. 716703

Gospel Reading

Luke 3:7-18

Those who rejoice in the good news of salvation joyfully produce fruits of repentance

⁷John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ⁹The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰“What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

¹¹John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

¹³“Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

¹⁴Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. ¹⁶John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Children's Message

All children are invited to join Pastor Tom at the front of the sanctuary for a message based on today's sermon, specifically designed for them! If it would help the children feel more comfortable, an adult is welcome to come up with them.

Children's Church (10:30am Service)

Children ages 3-5 can be dismissed to the kitchen classroom for Children's Church. Children will return from Children's Church to the sanctuary after the conclusion of the sermon.



Hymn of the Day

CW324 | O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

Sermon

Micah 5:2-5a

Pastor Tom Hilliard

Back to Bethlehem

Apostles' Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there 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

M: 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.

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

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

C: Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.

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

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

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

C: Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.

M: 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.

C: Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.

M: Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

C: Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

M: We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

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

Brief intercessory prayers may be added

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

C: Amen.

Offering

Guests: This is the moment in our worship when members and friends of Victory Lutheran respond to God's good news with gifts to support his saving work in Jacksonville, St. Johns County, and beyond. If you are our guest today, you are welcome to participate in this offering, but don't feel forced to! You can also give an online thank offering by using the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code.



Please also fill out the Connection Card found inside your worship folder and drop it in the basket on the back (blue) table. You can also scan the QR code on the left to fill out an online Connection Card.

Prayer

M: Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ 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.

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

CW366 | O Rejoice, All Christians Loudly



Pianist

Mrs. Katie Seelman

Musicians

Erin and Oliver Chesak

Cantor

Miss Annelyse Bond

Special thanks to Pastor Tom Hilliard. Pastor Hilliard is retired from Zion in Gainesville, Florida and lives there. He is the father of Victory member Erica Smith. Victory thanks him for using his gifts to serve as guest preacher this morning.

Acknowledgments

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Liturgical and musical settings of Scripture based on text from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House.

Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2024 Concordia Publishing House.

Join us Christmas Eve as we welcome the coming Savior!



Christmas Worship Series: The Gift of God

When a father puts gifts under the Christmas tree, it is not to compensate his children for doing their chores. That would make whatever is inside that wrapping paper a wage, not a gift. A gift is given voluntarily simply so the giver can show favor to the one receiving the gift, without any expectation of repayment. In the season of Christmas, we receive the gift of God. That does not simply mean we receive the gifts God gives. When we look into the manger, we see that God is the gift.

In the person of Jesus, God gave us himself. And because our God became true man and did everything necessary for our salvation, he is able to give us so many other Christmas gifts: forgiveness, hope, peace, a place in his family, eternal life in paradise. "That is too much!" you object. "I don't deserve any of it!" True enough. However, none of these things are wages. We could not and need not earn them. Because they are gifts, given by our gracious God to show us his favor.

Christmas Eve Worship:
4pm Service and 7pm (Candlelight) Service



CHRISTMAS BREAK WORSHIP

Sunday, December 29th

8:00am and 10:30am Worship

Service of Lessons and Carols

9:30am – Fellowship Hour

Tuesday, December 31st – New Year's Eve Worship

7:00pm with Communion

The Turning of the Year - A Year with the Lord



MY WORSHIP NOTES



For children to use during worship.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

What is the name of the church season or special day today? _____

What is the color of the church today? Circle one:

Blue White Purple Red Green

The Sermon Text Was: _____



This is in the: Old Testament New Testament

What was the sermon about? _____



My favorite song today was:



Did we have a Sacrament today?



Baptism?

Yes
 No



Communion?

Yes
 No

Draw a picture of something you heard or saw today:

What did you learn about God today?

Sermon Notes



VICTORY

LUTHERAN

Church & Preschool

Contact Information

Brad Smith, Office Manager — (904) 642-8900
office@victorylutheran.org

Phil Hoyer, Vacancy Pastor — (904) 307-6717
philhoyer@gmail.com

Anne Grotefend, Preschool Director — (904) 955-1926
director@victorypreschool.org

Jarrett Mielke, Staff Minister — (941) 735-6962
jmielke@victorylutheran.org

Victory is a member congregation of the Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS),
headquartered in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

