

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH
200 West Anderson Lane - Austin, Texas 78752
Called by grace, led by faith, welcoming all to share God's love.

FIRST SUNDAY
OF CHRISTMAS



DECEMBER 28, 2025

✝ You are invited to make the sign of the cross

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE Patience Jones

WELCOME TO WORSHIP Pr. Joe Leavengood Presiding

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVNESS (responses in bold type)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever. Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and
given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and
humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and
unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do.
Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may
live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our
Savior and Lord. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin,
and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been
saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.
Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit,
that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. Amen.

GATHERING SONG The Bells of Christmas + ELW 298

GREETING

CANTICLE OF PRAISE Angels from the Realms of Glory+ ELW 275

PRAYER OF THE DAY verses 1 & 2

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own
powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the
needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior
and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one
God, now and forever.

(Please be seated)

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING Isaiah 63:7-9

...Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

PSALM 148

¹ Hallelujah! Praise the Lord ¹ from the heavens;
praise God ¹ in the heights.
² Praise the Lord, ¹ all you angels;
sing praise, all you ¹ hosts of heaven.
³ Praise the Lord, ¹ sun and moon;
sing praise, all you ¹ shining stars.
⁴ Praise the Lord, heav- ¹ en of heavens,
and you waters a- ¹ bove the heavens.
⁵ Let them praise the name ¹ of the Lord,
who commanded, and they ¹ were created,
⁶ who made them stand fast forev- ¹ er and ever,
giving them a law that shall not ¹ pass away.
⁷ Praise the Lord ¹ from the earth,
you sea monsters ¹ and all deeps;
⁸ fire and hail, ¹ snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, do- ¹ ing God's will;
⁹ mountains ¹ and all hills,
fruit trees ¹ and all cedars;
¹⁰ wild beasts ¹ and all cattle,
creeping things and ¹ flying birds;
¹¹ sovereigns of the earth ¹ and all peoples,
princes and all rulers ¹ of the world;
¹² young ¹ men and maidens,
old and ¹ young together.
¹³ Let them praise the name ¹ of the Lord,
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over ¹ earth and heaven.
¹⁴ The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for
all ¹ faithful servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. ¹ Hallelujah!

SECOND READING Hebrews 2:10-18

...Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God. (Please stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Angels We Have Heard on High + ELW 289

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-23 verse 1

The holy gospel according to Matthew. Glory to you, O Lord...

...The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ. (Please be seated)

SERMON (Please stand following)

HYMN OF THE DAY Gentle Joseph Heard a Warning + ACS 1060

APOSTLES' CREED ELW page 105 (on insert)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

...Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great ...

...With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our
prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and
eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

PEACE (Please be seated following)

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GATHERING OF OFFERING Michael Harrison

OFFERTORY Of the Father's Love Begotten + ELW 265, verse 5

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your
goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time,
and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in
feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave
himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

(Please stand)

The Lord be with you. And also 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... It is indeed right...

...and join their unending hymn... (Holy, Holy, Holy + ELW 191)

...Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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 (Please be seated following)

SONGS DURING COMMUNION

Lamb of God + ELW 196

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord + ELW 286

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice + ELW 288

TABLE BLESSING & PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this
gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move
us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of
our lives, through Christ born in us. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding
Comforter, ✝ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. Amen.

(Please stand for the sending song)

SENDING SONG Go Tell it on the Mountain + ELW 290

DISMISSAL

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Patience Jones

FIRST READING: Isaiah 63:7-9

⁷ I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,
the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
because of all that the Lord has done for us
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.
⁸ For he said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will not act deceitfully,”
and he became their savior
⁹ in all their distress.
It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

PSALM 148

SECOND READING: Hebrews 2:10-18

¹⁰ It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying,
“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”
¹³ And again,
“I will put my trust in him.”
And again,
“Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”
¹⁴ Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:13-23

¹³ Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:
¹⁸ “A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,

Participating In Worship

Pr. Joe Leavengood, *presiding minister*
Terry Neal, *liturgist*
Patience Jones, *pianist*
Michael Harrison, *cantor*
JoAnn Gerbig, *music director*

Joy and Sorrow at Christmas

The joy-filled carols of Christmas still seem to echo in the nave as the assembly gathers for worship. There is praise of God in the psalm this day as the psalmist sings of the Lord present in all creation even as the same creation reveals a Creator worthy of praise. Still, our joy is not complete for sin continues, even in these days. Herod, bent on destroying Jesus, orders the murders of the youngest children of Bethlehem. Even today the distress present in a dangerous and unjust human society presses in. Human sin severs our relationships with God and one another.

In the midst of our distress, Jesus comes in flesh and blood and is proclaimed in today’s readings to be fully human, and even vulnerable, just as we are. Yet the Christ child also is Lord and Savior. Even while Herod plots, God makes a way to use this for good. Guiding Joseph by dreams, Jesus and his family are saved and the words of Hosea 11:1 are fulfilled. In this way we are reminded once more this is no ordinary child, this is the Christ child, the Messiah, the one sent to save and redeem a broken and sinful humanity.

Once more we discover God does not simply fix our lives, removing all obstacles and difficulties. Instead, God uses the harsh realities of life as opportunities for the gospel to be proclaimed, hope to triumph, and grace to shine forth. This is Jesus, our Emmanuel, God with us, when we flee to Egypt and as we return to dwell in Nazareth.

Gospel continued

Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

¹⁹ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰ “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³ There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

