

# Holy Innocents

Sunday, December 28, 2025



Remembering the Holy Innocents



198 Westridge Avenue, Burlington, Wisconsin  
262-763-8229 | stjohnsburlington.org  
Pastor Kirk Lahmann | Pastor Kenneth Rodrigue

## **Welcome to Worship**

Thank you for joining us for worship today! We are honored that you are with us. We pray that the Word of God you hear will strengthen your faith and increase your love for the Lord! Please fill out a "Welcome to Worship" card (found in the hymnal racks) and place it in an offering plate, located near the sanctuary doors, as you leave worship. If you are a guest, know that we are thankful you have joined us and hope that you will join us again soon.

## **Prepare for Worship**

To prepare for worship, read through the service focus and the Scripture readings. Ponder the words of the Psalm of the Day. Spend time in prayer, using the prayers on the inside cover of the hymnal or on pages 255-258. For those intending to receive the Lord's Supper, read through the "Christian Questions" on pages 295-296. Consider reading through portions of the Small Catechism on pages 286-293.

## **Today's Focus for Worship – Remembering the Holy Innocents**

For centuries the Christian Church has commemorated the Massacre of the Holy Innocents on December 28, three days after Christmas. This commemoration, also called Childermas, recalls the sad events prophesied in Jeremiah 31 (First Lesson) and fulfilled in Matthew 2 (Gospel), when King Herod, in his hunt for Jesus, massacred the baby boys of Bethlehem. Innocent of crimes against the state, they became the first to die in the name of Christ. Today we remember these holy innocents and ask God to shine the light of his Christmas Gospel into our dark and violent world.

## **Serving at Worship**

Preacher: Pastor Kirk Lahmann

Accompanist: Pastor Kenneth Rodrigue

## **Acknowledgments**

Today's service is adapted from *Christian Worship: Hymnal*, © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House, p. 207 – "Morning Prayer (Matins)." 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. Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House. Created by *Christian Worship: Service Builder* © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. The Closing Collect is reprinted from *Now and Forever: Contemporary Collects...*, © Paul C. Stratman.

# Morning Prayer

## Matins



### Opening Hymn

Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising | 362  
8:00: Please stand to sing the final stanza.

### Holy Baptism (10:30)

Allister Jade Brunke  
*Christian Worship: Hymnal, p. 151*

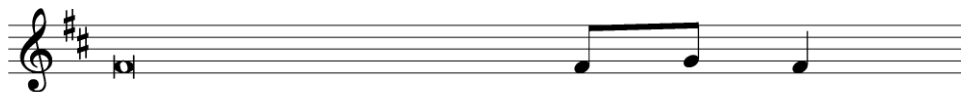
*Psalm 51:15; 70:1*

O Lord, o - pen my lips,  
and my mouth shall de - clare your praise.  
Has - ten to save me, O God;  
O Lord, come quick - ly to help me.  
*Christmas* To us the Christ is born:  
praise and thanks to God!

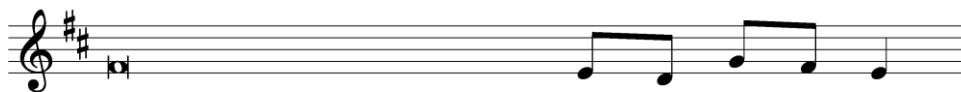
10:30: The service continues here after the baptism. Please remain standing.

## O Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord *Venite*

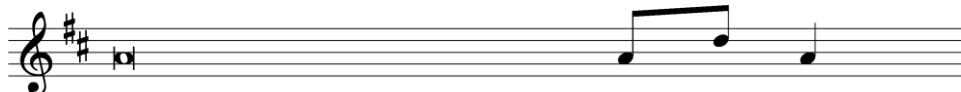
*Psalm 95:1-7*



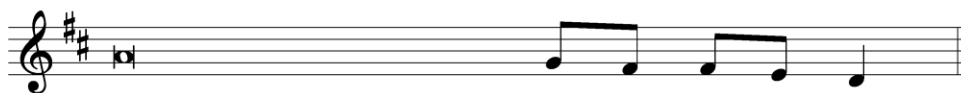
- 1 O come, let us sing to the Lord,  
2 For the Lord is a great \_\_\_\_\_ God  
3 The sea is his, for he made \_\_\_\_\_ it,



- 1 let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our sal - va - tion.  
2 and a great king a - bove all gods.  
3 and his hand formed the dry \_\_\_\_\_ land.



- 1 Let us come into his presence with thanks - giv - ing,  
2 The deep places of the earth are in his hand;  
3 O come, let us worship and bow \_\_\_\_\_ down,  
4 For he is our God,



- 1 let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise.  
2 the heights of the hills are al - so his.  
3 let us kneel before the Lord our mak - er.  
4 and we are the people of his  
pasture and the sheep of his \_\_\_\_\_ hand.

*Be seated*

## First Reading

Jeremiah 31:15-17

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD says: “A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD says: “Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,” declares the LORD. “They will return from the land of the enemy. <sup>17</sup>So there is hope for your descendants,” declares the LORD. “Your children will return to their own land.

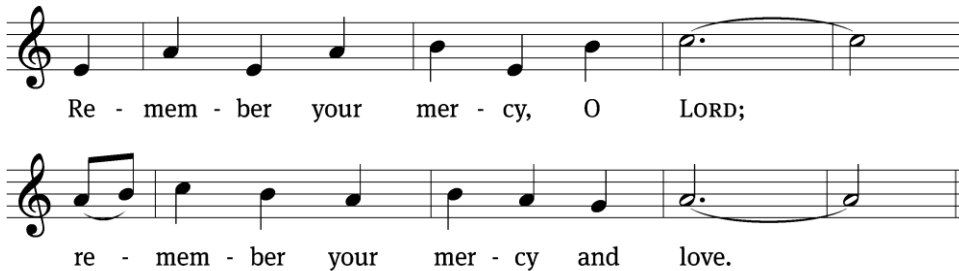
The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm of the Day

Remember Your Mercy, O LORD | 130-B

### Refrain



### Tone



Out of the depths I cry to / you, LORD;

Lord, / hear my voice.

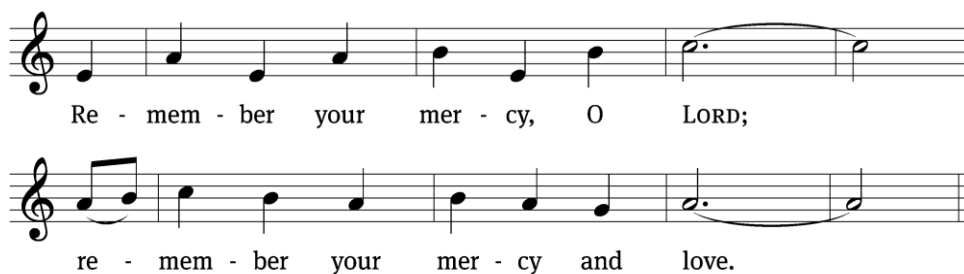
Let your ears be at- / tentive

to my cry for / mercy.

If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, / who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, / serve you. *Refrain*

I wait for the LORD, my whole / being waits,  
 and in his word I / put my hope.  
 I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the / morning,  
 more than watchmen wait for the / morning.  
 Israel, put your hope / in the LORD,  
 for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full re- / demption.  
 He himself will redeem / Israel  
 from / all their sins.  
**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**



## Second Reading

1 Peter 4:12-19

<sup>12</sup> Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup> But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. <sup>14</sup> If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. <sup>15</sup> If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. <sup>16</sup> However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. <sup>17</sup> For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup> And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

<sup>19</sup> So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

# Psalm Response

Why Are Nations Raging | Psalm 2-C



1 Why are na - tions rag - ing and con - spir - ing  
2 But the Lord has scorn on them, laugh - ing and en -  
3 God's de - cree un - to the King tells us what the  
4 There - fore, lead - ers of the earth, serve the LORD with



plots in vain? Rul - ers of the world rise up,  
throned on high. God brings wrath up - on their work;  
LORD did say: "You are my own ho - ly Son;  
ho - ly fear; trem - bling come be - fore the throne



weav - ing webs of death and pain. Then a - gainst the  
filled with an - ger God re - plies: "It is my own  
I've be - got - ten you this day. Ask of me and  
or God's an - ger will ap - pear. Kiss God's feet in



LORD they cry, and a - gainst God's ho - ly Son, "Let us  
ho - ly will that the Christ shall ev - er reign, and on  
I will make all the na - tions your own stay. These pos -  
trem - bling awe or the LORD will use the rod, mak - ing



tear their bonds from us and with their con - trol be done."  
Zi - on's ho - ly hill my A - noint - ed I'll main - tain."  
ses - sions you shall rule, strong as i - ron smash - ing clay."  
beg - gars of all kings. Blest are those who trust in God.

Text: Fred R. Anderson

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Tune: Public domain

Stand

<sup>13</sup> When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

<sup>14</sup> So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, <sup>15</sup> where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

<sup>16</sup> When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. <sup>17</sup> Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

<sup>18</sup> “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

<sup>19</sup> After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt <sup>20</sup> and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

<sup>21</sup> So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, <sup>23</sup> and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

*Be seated*







1 All hail! You in - fant mar - tyr flow'rs, cut off in  
 2 With ter - ror does the ty - rant hear that God's own  
 3 King Her - od ra - ges at the Word: "Go, sol - dier,  
 4 Oh, what is gained from this of - fense? What prof - it



life's first dawn - ing hours; like rose - buds, snapped in  
 Son to us draws near. On Da - vid's throne he  
 with your ruth - less sword, to him, who stands where  
 comes from vi - o - lence? The Sav - ior - King sur -



dread - ful strife, when Her - od sought our Sav - ior's life.  
 comes to dwell and reign as King of Is - ra - el.  
 we have stood, and stain the In - fant - crib with blood!"  
 lived the day, as Christ was safe - ly whisked a - way!

- 5 A voice is heard in bitter pain  
 as Rachel mourns the infants slain,  
 refusing comfort—sacred lore—  
 because her children are no more!
- 6 Of you, O little lambs, we sing,  
 first victims slain for Christ our King:  
 beneath the heav'nly altar's ray  
 with martyr-palms and crowns you play!
- 7 To you, the virgin-born, we raise  
 thanksgiving and eternal praise,  
 whom with the Father we adore  
 and Holy Spirit evermore.

Text: Aurelius C. Prudentius, 348–after 405; tr. Peter M. Prange, b. 1972

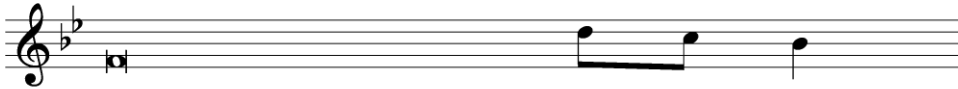
Tune: Rheinfeßsisch Deutsches Catholisches Gesangbuch, Augsburg, 1666

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## The After-Christmas Letdown

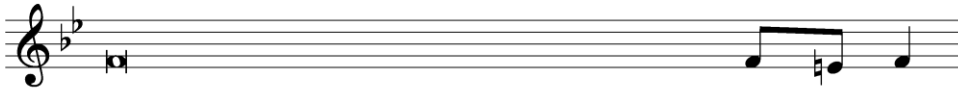
Stand

**We Praise You, O God** *Te Deum Laudamus**Psalm 75:1; Isaiah 6:3; Philippians 2:6-11*

- 1 We praise you, O God, we acclaim      you      as      Lord;
- 2 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of      heav'n - ly      hosts,
- 3 The white-robed army of martyrs      praise —      you.



- 1 all creation worships you,      Fa - ther      ev - er - last - ing.
- 2 heaven and earth are      full —      of      your      glo - ry.
- 3 Throughout the world the      ho - ly      Church      ac - claims      you:



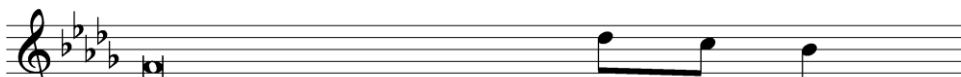
- 1 To you all angels, all the      pow'rs      of heav'n,
- 2 The glorious company of apostles      praise —      you.
- 3 Father of majesty unbounded; your glorious, true, and      on - ly      Son;



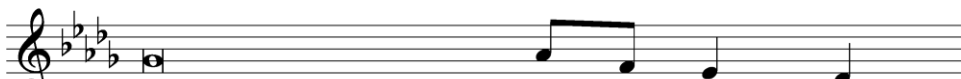
- 1 cherubim and seraphim,      sing      in      end - less      praise:
- 2 The noble fellowship of      proph - ets      praise —      you.
- 3 and the Holy Spirit,      ad - vo - cate      and      guide.



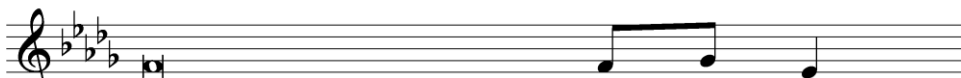
- 4 You, Christ, are the King of      glo - ry,      the eternal Son      of the Fa - ther.



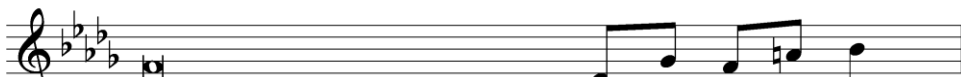
5 When you became man to set us free,  
6 You sit at the right hand of God




5 you humbled yourself to be born of a vir - gin.  
6 in the glory of the Fa - ther.



5 You overcame the sting of death  
6 We believe that you will come



5 and opened the kingdom of heaven to all be - liev - ers.  
6 to be our judge.



7 Come then, Lord, and help your peo - ple,



7 bought with the price of your own blood,



7 and bring us with your saints to glory ev - er - last - ing.

*Be seated*

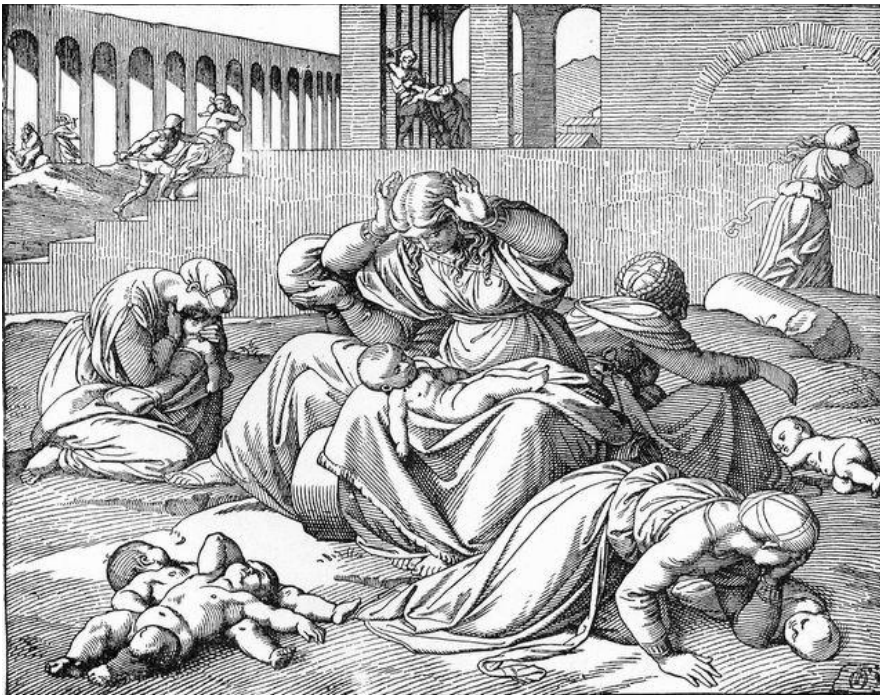
## Offertory

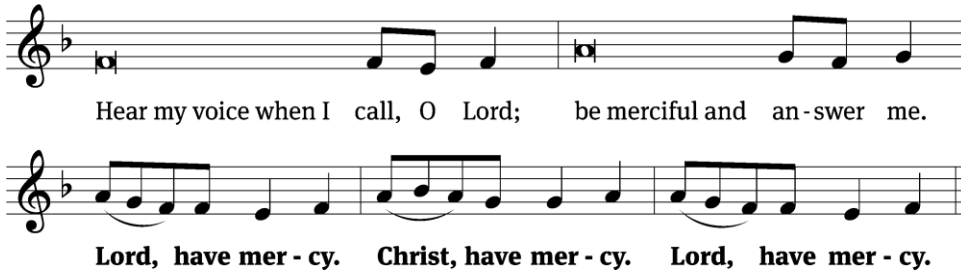
## Coventry Carol

*Offerings given in thanks to the Lord are brought to the Lord's altar. We ask all worshipers to fill out a "Welcome to Worship" card (found in the hymnal racks) and place it in the offering plates at the sanctuary doors following the service.*

*Originally performed in Coventry, England in the 16th century, the Coventry Carol's haunting melody and lyrics are a lullaby sung by the mothers of the innocent children slayed by King Herod in Matthew chapter two. Please ponder the words as the music is played.*

1. Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child,  
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.  
Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child,  
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.
2. O sisters too, how may we do  
For to preserve this day,  
This poor youngling for whom we sing,  
Bye, bye, lully, lullay?
3. Herod the king, in his raging,  
Charged he hath this day  
His men of might in his own sight  
All children young to slay.
4. That woe is me, poor child, for thee  
And ever mourn and may  
For thy parting nor say nor sing,  
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.



**Lord, Have Mercy** *Kyrie**Matthew 15:22; 17:15; Mark 10:47***Prayer of the Church**

Heavenly Father, the charm and beauty of Christmas is quickly replaced by the reality of the world around us. The sinful hearts of mankind stop at nothing to plot and rage against you and your Anointed One.

**Lord, have mercy.**

We mourn the loss of infant lives through murder carried out daily around the world by various methods, including abortion, abandonment, and disposal. We pray that you would open the eyes of parents and citizens everywhere to see and appreciate the priceless gift you gave us through the birth of baby Jesus, that they might in turn also have regard for the lives of every soul he has redeemed by his blood, no matter how small.

**Lord, have mercy.**

We pray for all those affected by the death of a child. Give comfort to the parents who have lost a baby through miscarriage or whose child was taken from them by death during childbirth or childhood. While few others may fully understand their pain, remind them that you do. Fill them with the peace that comes from the child in the manger. And to those parents who suffer from the guilt of abortion, come in mercy. Heal them in body and soul, and help them to know that with you there is forgiveness, healing, and hope.

**Lord, have mercy.**

We thank you for your grace which sent your Son to live a holy life for us, from conception and birth, so that even our newborn infants might have the sure hope of holiness when connected to your death and resurrection through baptism.

**We give thanks to you, O Lord.**

We thank you for your grace which sent your Son to shed his innocent blood at the hands of the Roman soldiers and to endure your eternal wrath over our sins on the cross. We also thank you for giving us your Son's body and blood through the Supper he instituted, so that we also may share in his holiness.

**We give thanks to you, O Lord.**

We thank you for your grace which sends your holy Word among us, convicting us of our sin, proclaiming forgiveness and victory through Jesus, and guiding us in the path of godliness.

**We give thanks to you, O Lord.**

Grant us one day to join the happy throng of the innocents martyred in your Son's name when he was young, and of all those who have suffered and been killed in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,

**In whose name we pray. Amen.**

## **Prayer of the Day**

We remember today, O Lord, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by order of King Herod. Receive into the arms of your mercy all who lay down their lives for your sake, and prepare us by your grace to be ready at all times to live and die for you; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer** *Pater Noster*

*Matthew 6:9-13*

**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.**

## Closing Collect

O God, when Herod killed the children of Bethlehem, you saved your only Son from death, so that later, by his death, he would redeem the world and give us full rights as your children. Help us realize this privilege and freedom, and to live as your people all the days of our lives; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Let Us Praise the Lord *Benedicamus*

*1 Corinthians 15:57*



Let us praise the Lord.



Thanks be to God.

## Blessing *Apostolic Benediction*

*2 Corinthians 13:14*



The grace of our Lord + Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the fellowship of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



A - men.

## Closing Hymn

Let Us All with Gladsome Voice | 332