

Images of the Nativity

Advent
Midweek
Worship



George Constant *The Holy Family*
American, 1892-1978 1930 Drypoint

Series inspired by the
Thrivent Religious Art
Collection

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL

5110 Grand Avenue, Gurnee, Illinois 60031 – (847) 244-9647

Pastor Ben Squires

Cell phone: 224-419-5519 or email: pastor@bethelgurnee.org

Cindy Daluga, Disciple Care Coordinator
Cindy.daluga@bethelgurnee.org

Ben Sanders, Mission Facilitator
office@bethelgurnee.org

Website: www.BethelGurnee.org

A LITURGY OF DOUBT AND HOPE

Worship in a traditional order drawing on along with words of doubt and hope
from Scripture, poets, and writers.

Opening Hymn

We Bring Our Art to You

tune: LSB 331



1 We bring our art to You, Our Sec - ond Ad - vent King;
2 We bring our art as prayer, Our suff' - ring and our dreams;
3 We see You in the art, Truth whe - ther known or not;
4 We are the art You made, But we are flawed and torn;
5 Your Ad - vent art in us Will be our hope for now;



We paint and draw to hon - or You, The new world You will bring.
I - mag - ine rooms which You pre - pare For us who'll be re - deemed.
All things can be a place You start Point - ing to what You taught.
Yet in Your love we do not fade; With Je - sus, hope's re - born.
One Day we'll see the God You are: Ar - tist Most Glor - i - ous.

Text: Benjamin C. Squires, 1973. © 2023.

Invocation

Jude 1-2,20-22,25

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

C: Amen.

P: To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:
May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

**C: To the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority,
before all time and now and forever. Amen.**

P: We come to be built up in our most holy faith,
building one another up through the Word of God.
God the Father calls on us to have compassion on one another:

C: "Have mercy on those who doubt."

P: God the Son calls on us to support one another
as we wait for His mercy that leads to eternal life:

**C: Jesus is able to keep us from stumbling
and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory
with great joy. Amen.**

Confession of Sins

Based on "Emmanuel" by Aaron Niequist

P: Can we just admit together that we're not fine?

C: Because I'm not fine, and you're not fine.

P: Can we just admit together that we're afraid?

C: Because I'm afraid, and you're afraid.

P: Can we just admit together that we have doubts?

C: Because I have doubts, and you have doubts.

P: Can we just admit together that we're not free?

C: Because I'm not free, and I want to be.

P: If you're not free, then call out to God with me:

C: Emmanuel,

God with us today,

We humbly call out Your Name:

Emmanuel,

As near as our need,

As close as the air that we breathe,

Emmanuel.

Lord, have mercy.

P: Can we just admit together that we have failed?

C: Because I have failed, and you have failed.

P: Can we just admit that our hands aren't clean?

C: And our hearts aren't clean, and they'll never be.

P: Until we're freed, and mercy sings.

C: Emmanuel,

God with us today,

We desperately cling to Your Name:

Emmanuel,

As near as our need,

As close as the air that we breathe.

Emmanuel.

Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Absolution (Forgiveness)

Based on liturgy by Bernie Seter and "Emmanuel" by Aaron Niequist

P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, which means He does not desire our death. But rather He calls us to turn from our wicked ways and find life in the life of Christ. He has had mercy upon us. He graciously forgives our sins through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. He strengthens us by the power of the Holy Spirit to amend our sinful lives according to His will, and will keep us in His grace until that day when He will take us to be with Him for eternity.



C: Amen.

**Emmanuel,
God with us today,
In thanksgiving we praise Your Name:
Emmanuel,
Who came near so we are freed,
As close as the Word that we hear.
Emmanuel.
The Lord has had mercy on us.**

P: Now we can admit together that we've failed,

C: Because I am forgiven, and you are forgiven.

P: Now we can admit together that our hands aren't clean,

C: Because Jesus made me clean, and He made you clean.

P: If you're now free, then call out to God with me:

**C: Emmanuel,
God with us today,
In thanksgiving we praise Your Name:
Emmanuel.
The Lord has had mercy on us. Amen.**

Tonight's Reading

Matthew 2:13-18 (ESV)

¹³When [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, 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." ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸"A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Collect (Prayer of the Day)

P: Let us pray. O God, the Protector of those who hope and trust in You, You watched over Your beloved Son as Joseph took Him and Mary to live in Egypt, rescuing Him from the sword of Herod. Grant to us, Your servants, protection of body, soul, and mind, until we reach the Last Day when we will be in Your forever kingdom of peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

Hymn of the Day

O God of God, O Light of Light

LSB 810



1 O God of God, O Light of Light, O Prince of Peace and
2 For deep in proph-ets' sa - cred page, And grand in po - ets'
3 That life of truth, those deeds of love, That death so steeped in
4 Then raise to Christ a might - y song, And shout His name, His



King of kings: To You in heav-en's glo - ry bright The song of
wing-ed word, Slow - ly in type, from age to age The na - tions
hate and scorn— These all are past, and now a - bove He reigns, our
mer-cies tell! Sing, heav'n-ly host, your praise pro-long, And all on



praise for - ev - er rings. To Him who sits up - on the throne,
saw their com - ing Lord; Till through the deep Ju - de - an night
King once crowned with thorn. Lift up your heads, O might - y gates!
earth, your an - them swell! All hail, O Lamb for sin - ners slain!



The Lamb once slain but raised a - gain, Be all the glo - ry
Rang out the song, "Good - will to men!" Sung once by first - born
So sang that host be - yond our ken. Lift up your heads, your
For - ev - er let the song as - cend! Wor - thy the Lamb, en -



He has won, All thanks and praise! A - men, a - men.
sons of light, It ech - oes now, "Good - will!" A - men.
King a - waits. We lift them up. A - men, a - men.
throned to reign, All glo - ry, pow'r! A - men, a - men.

Devotion



Confession of Faith (adapted from the Apostles' Creed)

First Nations Version

Our Father and Creator, the One Above Us All,
made all things in the world above and the earth below.

Jesus, his special born Son,
was fathered by the Holy Spirit
and was born into this world through a virgin named Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, a ruler of the Roman people,
who had him nailed to a tree pole, the cross, where he bled to death.
He was buried and then went down to the world of the dead.
On the third day he came back to life, never to die again.
He returned to his Father in the world above
and sat down at his powerful right hand.
One day he will return to this earth to make the final decision
about the eternity of the living and the dead.

After he went to the world above,
Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to us from the Father,
to live in and through us.

There is only one holy and world-wide group of believers in Jesus
—a Sacred Family called his Church.

All of the Holy Spirit's holy people sit together equally in this Family
and share his Sacred Food at his table.

He has forgiven us and set us free from all of our broken ways,
and all who trust in him, even though they cross over to death,
will be brought back to life again,
to a life that will never end. Amen.

Offering

Offertory

Savior of the Nations, Come

LSB 332, st. 8

(we join in singing as the offerings are brought forward to the altar)



△ 8 Glo - ry to the Fa - ther sing, Glo - ry to the
Son, our king, Glo - ry to the Spir - it be
Now and through e - ter - ni - ty.

Prayers of the Church

The Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

All: 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.

Benediction (Blessing)

Colossians 1:19-20

P: God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Jesus Christ, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross. We are reconciled to God the Father, through the work of God the Son, and kept in this faith by God the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



Closing Hymn

Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

LSB 722



1 Lord, take my hand and lead me Up - on life's way;
2 Lord, when the tem - pest ra - ges, I need not fear,
3 Lord, when the shad - ows length - en And night has come,



Di - rect, pro - tect, and feed me From day to day.
For You, the Rock of A - ges, Are al - ways near.
I know that You will strength - en My steps toward home.



With - out Your grace and fa - vor I go a - stray;
Close by Your side a - bid - ing, I fear no foe,
Then noth - ing can im - pede me, O bless - ed Friend;



So take my hand, O Sav - ior, And lead the way.
For when Your hand is guid - ing, In peace I go.
So take my hand and lead me Un - to the end.

Text: Julie von Hausmann, 1825–1901; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt. Tune: P. Friedrich Silcher, 1789–1860
Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001267

Announcements

Acknowledgements

This liturgy arranged and written by the Rev. Dr. Benjamin C. Squires. © 2019.
Portions adapted from Aaron Niequist's songs and texts for A New Liturgy (Nos. 1, 2, & 3). © Aaron Niequist. www.anewliturgy.com

"Absolution" adapted from LCMS World Relief Lenten Series, by Rev. Bernie Seter.

"Confession of Faith" by Rainsong/First Nations Version. © 2013 Rain Ministries, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

"Prayers of the Church" adapted from "Prayer [2]", *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. © 1994 Estate of L. Hughes.

Other portions used by permission: LSB Hymn License .NET, no. 000013448.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2006 Concordia Publishing House.

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



For more information on the Thrivent Collection of Religious Art,
go to: www.thriventcollection.com

thrivent[®]