

December 31, 2024



8470 Landen Drive Maineville, Ohio

*At Abiding Word  
We gather around the Word (worship)  
We grow in the Word (education)  
And we share the Word with the world (outreach).*



**Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Wisconsin Synod**  
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### **Welcome!**

To all who have gathered here this morning we welcome you in the name of Christ our Lord. Through him we have access to God in boldness and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12)

### **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 (I 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 here at Abiding Word and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.

If you have any questions about this practice or would like to commune at Abiding Word in the future please talk to Pastor Jacobs. He would love to sit down with you at your convenience and talk about these important matters.

Stand

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

**Amen.**

**CONFESSION OF SINS AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

**M:** As we look back on 2024, we know that the Lord was with us always, no matter what we did. And yet, we think of all the times that we failed Him in thought, word, and deed.

**C:** **Father, we have sinned in so many ways. As we think of the past year, we cannot help but think of all the times we idolized money or possessions, used Your name in vain, despised Your Word by not reading, hearing, and learning it, dishonored our elders and others You have placed in authority, hated our neighbor, lusted, took something not ours, gossiped when we heard some news, and coveted what others had.**

**We have often thought of our sins too lightly. We have often looked at the speck in our neighbor's eye while missing the plank in our own. Against You, Lord, have we sinned and have done what is evil in Your sight. We ask that for the sake of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and not because of anything we have done, that You grant us forgiveness.**

**M:** How many are the sins that we have committed...and yet, how great is the love that the Father lavishes on us. His Son, Jesus Christ, took the punishment of every single one of our sins on Himself so that we are now called children of God! As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our transgressions from us. This is what God tells us in His Holy Word.

**C:** **Praise the Lord! His mercies are new every morning!**

## 561 Before the Throne of God Above



1 Be - fore the throne of God a - bove I have a  
 2 When Sa - tan tempts me to de - spair and tells me  
 3 Be - hold him there, the ris - en Lamb, my per - fect,



strong and per - fect plea; a great High Priest whose name is  
 of the guilt with - in, up - ward I look and see him  
 spot - less right - eous - ness, the great un - change - a - ble I



Love, who ev - er lives and pleads for me. My name is  
 there who made an end of all my sin. Be - cause the  
 AM, the King of glo - ry and of grace. At one with



grav - en on his hands, my name is writ - ten on his  
 sin - less Sav - ior died, my sin - ful soul is count - ed  
 him, I can - not die; my soul is pur - chased by his



heart. I know that while in heav'n he stands no tongue can  
 free; for God the just is sat - is - fied to look on  
 blood. My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my



bid me thence de - part, no tongue can bid me thence de - part.  
 him and par - don me, to look on him and par - don me.  
 Sav - ior and my God, with Christ my Sav - ior and my God.

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# THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you rule over all things in wisdom and kindness. Take away everything that may be harmful and give us whatever is good; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be Seated*

## FIRST READING

**ECCLESIASTES 12:1–7**

<sup>1</sup>Remember your Creator  
in the days of your youth,  
before the days of trouble come  
and the years approach when you will say,  
“I find no pleasure in them”—  
<sup>2</sup>before the sun and the light  
and the moon and the stars grow dark,  
and the clouds return after the rain;  
<sup>3</sup>when the keepers of the house tremble,  
and the strong men stoop,  
when the grinders cease because they are few,  
and those looking through the windows grow dim;  
<sup>4</sup>when the doors to the street are closed  
and the sound of grinding fades;  
when people rise up at the sound of birds,  
but all their songs grow faint;  
<sup>5</sup>when people are afraid of heights  
and of dangers in the streets;  
when the almond tree blossoms  
and the grasshopper drags itself along  
and desire no longer is stirred.  
Then people go to their eternal home  
and mourners go about the streets.

<sup>6</sup>Remember him—before the silver cord is severed,  
and the golden bowl is broken;  
before the pitcher is shattered at the spring,

and the wheel broken at the well,  
7and the dust returns to the ground it came from,  
and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

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

***HYMN: O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST***

**820**

**SECOND READING**

**1 PETER 1:22–25**

<sup>22</sup>Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. <sup>23</sup>For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup>For,

“All people are like grass,  
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;  
the grass withers and the flowers fall,

<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**

Alleluia. Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Alleluia.

**GOSPEL****LUKE 13:6-9**

<sup>6</sup>Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. <sup>7</sup>So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

<sup>8</sup>“ ‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. <sup>9</sup>If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

<b><i>HYMN: NOW GREET THE SWIFTLY CHANGING YEAR</i></b>
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<b>368</b>
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**SERMON on LUKE 13:6-9**

## **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.**

**Offering**

*Stand*



## **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. 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 Lynn Young and Mary Shaffer. 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.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## CHRISTIAN QUESTIONS

Prepared by Dr. Martin Luther for those who intend to go to the Sacrament (page 295 in the hymnal)

Do you believe you are a sinner? *Yes, I believe that I am a sinner.*

How do you know this? *I know this from the 10 Commandments, which I have not kept.*

Are you sorry for your sins? *Yes, I am sorry that I sinned against God.*

What have you deserved from God because of your sins? *I deserve his wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation.*

Are you convinced that you are saved? *Yes, such as my confidence.*

In whom, then, do you trust? *I trust in my dear Lord Jesus Christ.*

Who is Jesus Christ? *Jesus Christ is the son of God, true God and true man.*

How many gods are there? *There's only one God, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

What has Christ done for you that you trust in him? *He died for me and shed his blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.*

Did the Father also die for you? *He did not; For the Father is God only, the Holy Spirit likewise. But the Son is true God and true man. He died for me and shed his blood for me.*

How do you know this? *I know this from the holy gospel and from the words of the sacrament of Holy Communion.*

Which are those words? *Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night that he was betrayed, took bread; And when he 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."*

Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the sacrament? *Yes, I believe it.*

What moves you to believe this? *I am moved to believe this by the words of Christ, "Take and eat this is my body... Drink from it drink from it, all of you; This is my blood of the new covenant."*

What does Christ want you to do when you eat his body and drink his blood in the Lord's supper? *Christ wants me to remember and proclaim his death and pouring out of his blood as he taught me: do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.*

Why does Christ want me to remember and proclaim his death? *He wants me to do this that (1) I learn to believe that no creature can make satisfaction from my sins, but only Christ, who is true God and man, could and did do that; (2) I learn to look with terror upon my sins and regard them as great indeed; (3) I find joy and comfort in Christ alone and believe that I have salvation through faith in him.*

What moved him to die and make a complete payment for your sins? *He was moved to do this by his great love for his Father and for me and other sinners as the scriptures teach.*

Finally, why do you desire to receive Holy Communion? *I desire to do this so that I learn to believe that Christ out of great love died for my sins and that I also learn from him to love God and my neighbor.*

What admonishes and moves you to receive the Holy Communion frequently? *The command and the promise of Christ my Lord admonish and move me. Also, the burden of sin that lies heavy upon me causes me to feel a hunger and thirst for Holy Communion.*

But what can a person do if he or she is not aware of the burden of sin and does not feel hunger and thirst for Holy Communion? *To such a person no better advice can be given than that, in the first place, he put his hand on his chest and feel whether he feels flesh and blood, and that he by all means believe what the scriptures say about this. Secondly, that he look around to see whether he is still in the world and keep in mind that there will be no lack of sin and trouble as scriptures say. Thirdly, that person will certainly have the devil also with him. With his lying and murdering, day and night, the devil will let him have no peace.*

What can you do if you were sick and unable to come to Holy Communion? *I can send for my pastor to pray with me and to give me Holy Communion privately.*

When is the proper time to do this? *The time to do this is not only when the death is at hand but earlier before all physical and mental power is gone.*

Why would you want to do this? *I would want to do this to receive the assurance through Holy Communion that my sins are forgiven and that salvation is mine.*

### Consecration Of The Elements

*Sung to "From Heaven Above"*

**Sing: The night our Savior was betrayed He took the bread and then he prayed.  
Gave thanks and gave to them the bread And to his true disciples said:**

**M:** "Take and eat. This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

**Sing: Then when the sacred meal was o'er, Our blessed Savior spoke once more.  
He offered thanks and lifted up To give to all the blessed cup:**

**M:** "Drink from it, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

### Agnus Dei

*Sung to "From Heaven Above"*

**Sing: O Jesus, Lamb of God, you take The sin of all; atonement make.  
Oh, grant us from our sins release: Have mercy on us! Grant us peace!**

*There will be no hymn during the distribution*

**The Nunc Dimittis** *Sung to "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow"*

**Lord, let your servant now depart. Your joy and peace are in my heart.  
Your saving pow'r my eyes have known. Your love through all the earth is shown.**

**Lord, let us show the world your light. Let us declare your glory bright.  
Proclaim your death until you come To take your ransomed servants home.**

### PRAYER & BENEDICTION

**M:** O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**M:** The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people.

*Rev. 22:21*

**C: Amen.**