



# Christ Lutheran CHURCH

2610 Campbell Street  
Valparaiso, Indiana 46385  
(219) 462-6660 • [clcvalpo.org](http://clcvalpo.org)



February 1, 2026

## **We welcome you to Christ Lutheran Church! We are a community of people sharing God's love through Christ and growing together in faith.**

We celebrate all the ways we are made in the image of God, seeking to see God in everyone. We honor and respect each person's age, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity, gender expression, life history, mental well-being, physical ability, relationship status, sexual orientation, skin color, and socioeconomic standing. Together, we strive to love and serve our neighbor and all creation, including working toward racial and social justice. We would love to walk with you on this creative adventure\* of faith, grace, and love.

\* *The first sermon ever preached at Christ Lutheran was titled "A Call to Creative Adventure."*

### **ABOUT WORSHIP**

We gather to worship weekly to hear and remember our shared hope: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ makes all things new, even us.

You will find everything that happens in worship printed in this bulletin, with hymns found in the red hymnals ("ELW") in the seats in front of you.

If you have a prayer request, note it on a yellow card from the seatback holder and pass it to an usher; the other side is for any information you would like about Christ Lutheran. Please feel welcome to remain seated as necessary during the service.

### **CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN CHURCH!**

God's people come in all shapes and sizes – it is a gift to the whole community when the smallest of us are present! Sitting with parents and learning to treasure times of worship is the foundation for helping build a growing faith in a child's life. There's some noise and movement that we expect from little ones - feel free to make use of the **activity bags, doodle pads, bookshelf in the overflow area and cry room at the back of the sanctuary** as needed. Whatever sacrifice of energy and effort you make to include your children in worship is multiplied as the good news of God's love takes root in their lives!

### **WHEN NURSERY CARE IS NEEDED DURING WORSHIP**

A fully equipped and staffed Nursery is available for both infants and toddlers during all services. The Nursery is located west of our gathering area in **Room 110**.

### **RESTROOMS**

Men's and women's restrooms off the Gathering Area and Church Hall have changing tables, as does the all-gender restroom near the nursery. A second all-gender restroom is through the Vestry off the East hallway, past the Welcome Center.

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

**Holy Communion** is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

Our services are on video, and occasional photographs are taken for our website and e-mail news. If you have concerns, please speak to a church staff member.

*Hearing assistance devices are available to those who need help with listening to the service and are located at the entrance to the sanctuary, or please see an Usher for assistance.*

**A Reminder: Please turn off all cell phones during worship services.**

*Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.*

## **GATHERING**

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

### **PRELUDE**

*Fugue in G Major*

J.S. Bach

### **WELCOME**

*If you are joining us for the first time, welcome! We'd love to meet you, or if there's anything you'd like to know about the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church, please consider filling out a Connection Card online (you can point your phone at the graphic to the right) or using a yellow Connection Card in the pew holders.*



**Prayer requests** can be posted to the live chat or use a yellow Prayer Request (on the backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.

*If you are worshipping with us via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/ cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*

### **CONFESSiON AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity,  one God,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
the Word who spoke life into being,  
the Wind stirring the waters.

**Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Mighty God, lover of justice,  
**you call us to life in community,**  
**but we have served our own interests**  
**at the expense of our neighbors.**  
**We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.**  
**We say the right words,**  
**but our hearts are far from you.**  
**Turn us to seek your face.**  
**Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,**  
**that we may do justice, love mercy,**  
**and walk humbly with you.**  
**Amen.**

The former things have passed away,  
and new things God now declares:  
Like a spring of water that never fails,  
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,  
and forgives your sin in  $\dagger$  Jesus' name.  
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,  
and bless you with the gift of peace.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN ELW #710**

*Let Streams of Living Justice*

1 Let streams of living justice flow down up - on the earth;  
 2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,  
 3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;  
 give free - dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.  
 for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.  
 your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.  
 The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,  
 Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;  
 Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,

the mourn-ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.  
 on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.  
 our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home-land bright-ly gleams.

Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;  
 O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;  
 In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;

a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo-ple's hour.  
 dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.  
 your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: William Whitla, b. 1934

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

Text © 1989 William Whitla.

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

*Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.  
 Let us rejoice and be glad in it!*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

*Silence is kept before the prayer.*

Foolish God,  
 shaming the strong  
 through the weakness of love;  
 turning upside down  
 the wisdom of the world:  
 may your blessing dwell  
 with the poor and hungry,  
 the grieving and abused;  
 may your peaceful revolution  
 be our joy and our reward  
 through Jesus Christ, the power of God.

**Amen.**

## WORD

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

### **CHILDREN'S TIME**

*The assembly is seated as children are invited for a time together.*

### **READING: Micah 6:1-8**

*With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has “wearyed” Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God’s service.*

<sup>1</sup> Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup> Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD,  
and you enduring foundations of the earth,  
for the LORD has a case against his people,  
and he will contend with Israel.

<sup>3</sup> “O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearyed you? Answer me!

<sup>4</sup> For I brought you up from the land of Egypt  
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.

<sup>5</sup> O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,  
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,  
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

<sup>6</sup> “With what shall I come before the LORD  
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?

<sup>7</sup> Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

<sup>8</sup> He has told you, O mortal, what is good,  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice and to love kindness  
and to walk humbly with your God?

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM: Psalm 15

*The congregation is invited to sing the psalm refrain when indicated (R). Verses will be chanted alternately by the leader and the people.*

#### Refrain

LORD, who may abide up - on your ho - ly hill?

#### Psalm Tone

LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?  
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

<sup>1</sup> LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?  
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup> Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,  
who speak the truth from their heart; R

<sup>3</sup> they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup> In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD.  
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.

<sup>5</sup> They do not give their money in hope of gain,  
nor do they take bribes against the innocent.  
Those who do these things shall never be overthrown. R

## READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

*According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.*

<sup>18</sup> The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup> Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.*



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

*Repeat alleluia*

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

## GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12

*Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup> “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup> “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

*The assembly is seated. Time for reflection follows the sermon.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY ELW #669

*Rise Up, O Saints of God*

*The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.*



1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;  
2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulfs earth's frame;  
3 Rise up, O saints of God! The king - dom's task em - brace;  
4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;  
5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod;



Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.  
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, the word of hope pro - claim.  
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se-quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.  
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.  
and, quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

## APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

\*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

## PRAYERS

*Our prayers draw on the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle and the Church's calendar of Commemorations. Further information is found each week at the end of the bulletin.*

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

*A brief silence.*

God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries, including Lutheran World Relief, ELCA World Hunger, and Global Refuge. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth. In Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Western Sahara, and Tunisia, grant peace, justice, and good governance. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you, especially Ansgar and the Martyrs of Japan. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

**Amen.**

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*We invite those worshiping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the live chat, and for those in person we turn to offer them our greeting of peace before sharing a sign of peace with one another: **Peace be with you!***

## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

## OFFERING

*This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the participation and support of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts **Hilltop House** [hilltophouse.org](http://hilltophouse.org) and **Refugee Family Support Fund**.*



If you wish to give electronically, use the QR code, browse to our secure on-line portal at [clcvalpo.org/give](http://clcvalpo.org/give) or use our CLC app (download at [clcvalpo.org/app](http://clcvalpo.org/app)).

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM (8:00 am):** *Offertory*

Ness Beck

*With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, shall I come before him with yearning calves? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give Him my firstborn for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man; He has shown you what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.*

(Micah 6: 6-8)

## OFFERTORY (10:30 am):

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

*The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.*

God of majesty,  
**no eye has seen, no ear has heard**  
**what you have prepared for those who love you,**  
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.  
**Use what we have gathered**  
to feed us with the reign of God come near,  
**Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**  
**Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

*The pastor continues the prayer then all join in singing:*

## SANCTUS

*(An ancient practice invites us to make the sign of the cross in honor of Jesus at the words "Blessed is he.")*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of

power and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## TABLE PRAYER

### LORD'S PRAYER

*Children: The Spirit makes us one. We pray as Jesus taught us:*

**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

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!  
Come to the table; taste and see.

**Thanks be to God!**

### DISTRIBUTION

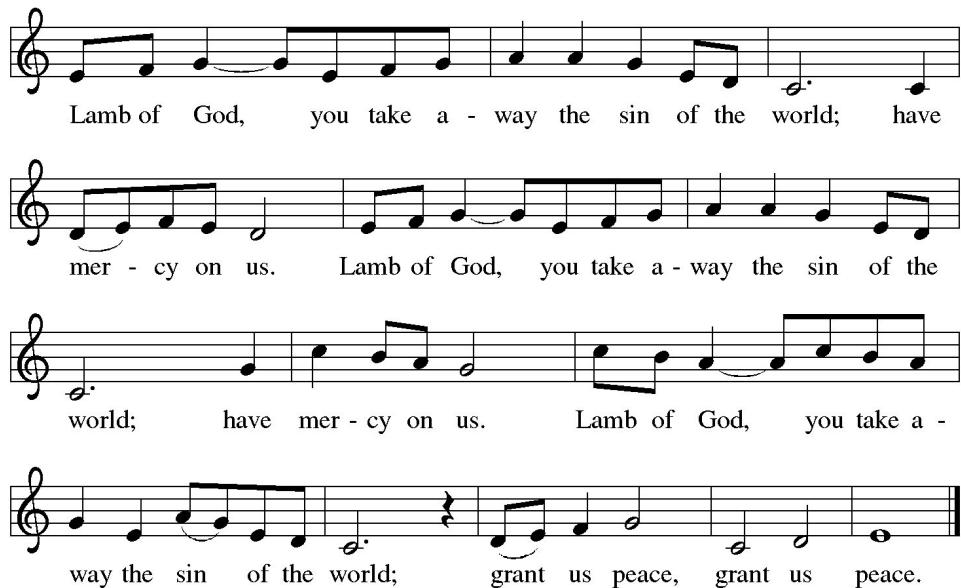
*The assembly is seated. The pastor invites those worshipping via **livestream** to commune:*

The body of Christ, given for you.  
**Amen (receive the bread)**

The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
**Amen (receive the cup)**

**In-person distribution:** When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. **WINE** is lighter-colored and **GRAPE JUICE** is dark; wine is received either by Common Cup or from individual cups in the trays. **USED GLASSES** are placed in the basket located near the ramp. **GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE**, please indicate to the server that you require this.

## LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -  
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

## COMMUNION MUSIC

(10:30 only) Special Music: *Premier Solo*

Bourdeau

ACS #977 *Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table*



1 Look who gath - ers at Christ's ta - ble! Hear the sto - ries  
 2 Clouds of light sur - round the ta - ble; an - cient fol - low -  
 3 Their sad sto - ries are re - peat - ed in a thou - sand  
 4 Bring your joy and bring your sad - ness, and pre - pare to



that they bring. Some are weep - ing; some are laugh - ing;  
 ers ap - pear, saints con - fess - ing how they wres - tled  
 dif - f'rent ways, but they share one thing in com - mon:  
 be sur - prised by the host whose hands are wound - ed,



some have songs they want to sing. Oth - ers ask why they're in -  
 with their guilt, their doubt and fear. Pe - ter tells of his de -  
 they all end in thanks and praise for the host who has in -  
 who will o - pen wide your eyes when he bless - es bread and



vit - ed, bur - dened by the wrong they've done. Christ in - sists they  
 ny - ing Christ was ev - er in his sight; Paul re - lates his  
 vit - ed north and south and east and west to con- verge a -  
 breaks it - truth and man - na from a - bove! — and then pass - es



all are wel - come. There is room for ev - 'ry - one.  
 fruit - less ef - forts to ob - lit - er - ate the light.  
 round this ta - ble, where all life is fed and blest.  
 wine that wa - kens in your heart the taste of love.

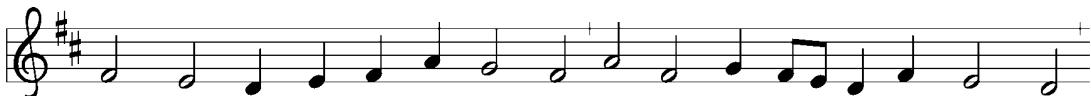
Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: COPELAND, Michael Corzine, b. 1947

Text © 2002 Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

Music © 2000 Michael Corzine, admin. Augsburg Fortress

ELW #462 *Now We Join in Celebration*



1 Now we join in cel - e - bra - tion at our Sav - ior's in - vi - ta - tion,  
2 Lord, as round this feast we gath - er, fill our hearts with ho - ly rap - ture!  
3 Lord, we share in this com-mu - nion as one fam - ly of God's chil - dren,



dressed no more in spir - it som-ber, clothed in-stead in joy and won - der;  
For this bread and cup of bless-ing are for us the sure pos-sess - ing  
rec - on-ciled through you, our broth-er, one in you with God our Fa - ther.



for the Lord of all ex - is - tence, put - ting off di - vine tran - scen - dence,  
of your lov - ing deed on Cal - v'ry, of your liv - ing self, our vic - t'ry,  
Give us grace to live for oth - ers, serv-ing all, both friends and strang - ers,



stoops a - gain in love to meet us, with his ver - y life to feed us.  
pledge of your un - fail - ing pres - ence, fore - taste here of heav'n-ly glad - ness.  
seek - ing jus - tice, love, and mer - cy till you come in fi - nal glo - ry.

Text: Joel W. Lundeen, 1918–1990

Music: SCHMÜCKE DICH, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

Text © Joel W. Lundeen, admin. Augsburg Fortress

*After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands as the minister continues.*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Radiant God,

we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the sacrament of his body and blood

you have drawn us to your heart.

Send us from this table with delight,

that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,

and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **SENDING**

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

## **INVITATIONS**

*The assembly is seated as brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.*

## **BLESSING**

May the triune God,

who has put a new song in your mouth

and tuned your heart for praise

☩ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN ELW #873 *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart*

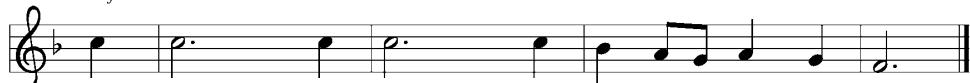


1 Re - joice, ye pure in heart! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing;  
 2 With voice as full and strong as o - cean's surg - ing praise;  
 3 With all the an - gel choirs, with all the saints on earth  
 4 Still lift your stan - dard high, still march in firm ar - ray,



your fes - tal ban - ner wave on high, the cross of Christ your king.  
 send forth the stor - dy hymns of old, the psalms of an - cient days.  
 pour out the strains of joy and bliss, true rap - ture, no - blest mirth.  
 as pil - grims through the dark - ness wend till dawns the gol - den day.

*Refrain*



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!

5 At last the march shall end;  
 the wearied ones shall rest;  
 the pilgrims find their home at last,  
 Jerusalem the blest. *Refrain*

6 Praise God who reigns on high,  
 the Lord whom we adore:  
 the Father, Son, and Spirit blest,  
 one God forevermore. *Refrain*

*Children join the pastors to send us in mission.*

## DISMISSAL

*Children: Go in peace. Do justice.*

**Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

*Toccata in Seven*

Rutter

*As worship concludes we move to the Gathering Place,  
 where we are invited to greet one another and share in fellowship.*

| <b>Worship Leaders</b>       | <u>8:00 a.m.</u>   | <u>10:30 a.m.</u>           |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Acolyte                      | Reid Venstrom  | Noah DeJesus                |
| Lector                       | Don MacMillan  | Cindy McGuire               |
| Prayer Assistant             | Betty Luckett  | Cindy McGuire               |
| Communion Assistants         | Violet Furuness<br>Gabby Soleim  | Cindy McGuire<br>Amy Knauff |
| Ushers                       | Scott Steinwart<br>Don MacMillan   |                             |
| Sound/Light                  | Sam Venstrom   | Tony Reinhold               |
| Video/Livestream             |  |                             |
| Pastors                      | Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr<br>Rev. Erica Gibson-Even                        |                             |
| Director of Music Ministries | Brian Bartusch   |                             |
| Cantor                       | Karl Stefans   |                             |
| Worship Participants         | Sanctuary Choir<br>Jonathan Malchow, bassoon<br>Ruth Ausema, accompanist |                             |
| Communion Baker              | The Bull Family  |                             |

## **Ecumenical Prayer Cycle**

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Western Sahara, Tunisia.**

### **We are thankful for:**

- How the early Christian church developed here.
- The biodiversity of plants, animals and the natural terrain.
- How Berber, Arab and European cultures have blended.
- How these countries have remained and stood against the invasion of cultural and military forces from elsewhere.

### **We pray for:**

- all the people of these countries: Muslims, the tiny remnant of Christians, those of other faiths who continuing bearing witness to their faiths and for all people of good will.
- an end to political violence.
- an end to how dominating powers have fought over these lands and their resources through the years.
- for those suffering exploitation and mistreatment as they travel through these countries.

## **COMMEMORATIONS**

Week of February 2, 2026

### **February 2**

#### **Presentation of Our Lord**

Forty days after the birth of Jesus we mark the day Mary and Joseph presented him in the temple in accordance with Jewish law. There they were greeted by Simeon, an aged priest who offered the song “Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace,” as well as by the prophet Anna, who spoke of the redemption of Israel.

### **February 3**

#### **Ansgar, Bishop of Hamburg, missionary to Denmark and Sweden, died 865**

A monk who helped bring Christianity to Scandinavia, Ansgar returned to Germany where he was named bishop of Hamburg. He is remembered for his love for poor people.

### **February 5**

#### **The Martyrs of Japan, died 1597**

Christianity was brought to Japan in the sixteenth century by Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries. The religion was suppressed, however, and in 1597 twenty-six missionaries and converts were crucified. Nevertheless, Christianity survived and later prospered.

## Something Bigger Than Us

The beatitudes could easily be read as a list of rewards and consequences, and the kind of behaviors that will merit one or the other. We are well accustomed to understanding the world in such terms. Children receive rewards for good behavior. Students earn awards or scholarships. Athletes win medals or trophies. Success is a ladder we climb and, if we've done our part, our job is rewarded in the end.

Jesus talks about a great reward, but it's not one we can earn. On a closer look, the nature of many of the so-called "blessings" in the beatitudes is as much about what is done to us as about anything we do for ourselves. Jesus begins his sermon by going up the mountain, but his words push us not to new heights but to greater depths. Poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger, thirst, and persecution—these are not behaviors to strive toward for a reward. Instead, they are circumstances in which we can find ourselves when the ladder we've been climbing falls to the ground. Alternatively, to be merciful or pure in heart or a peacemaker is to choose to get off the ladder altogether for the sake of something bigger than our small selves.

The beatitudes as a whole suggest that Jesus wants more for us than simply collecting a heavenly prize in the end. His blessings assure us that all along the way, no matter our circumstances, we have an inherent, God-given dignity that no one and nothing can strip from us. At the table of Christ, all who hunger and thirst for righteousness are filled. This meal isn't awarded to us for a job well done. Rather, it feeds us for the work still to be done, that of sharing God's mercy and peace with others.

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