



**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

2610 Campbell Street • Valparaiso,
Indiana 46385 • (219) 462-6660
clcvalpo.org • office@clcvalpo.org



Season of Easter

May 7, 2023

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

At Christ Lutheran people of all backgrounds and experiences gather to worship because we all share a common 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. If you have a prayer request, the yellow cards in the seatback holders have a place for them; 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.

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; they are received via individual cups in the trays. The **COMMON CUP** is available for anyone who wishes. **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. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

COVID Procedure Update

Masks are encouraged but optional during worship. Naturally if you prefer to stay masked throughout the service, you are of course welcome to do so. Masks are not required for singing but suggested.

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.

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

Cantilene in F

Rheinberger

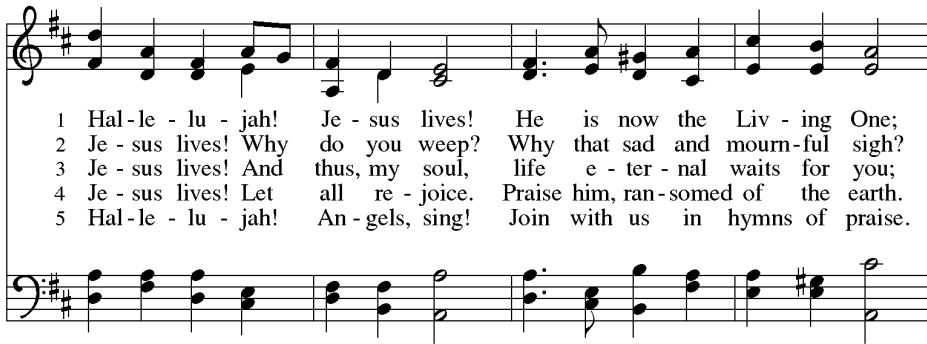
WELCOME

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.

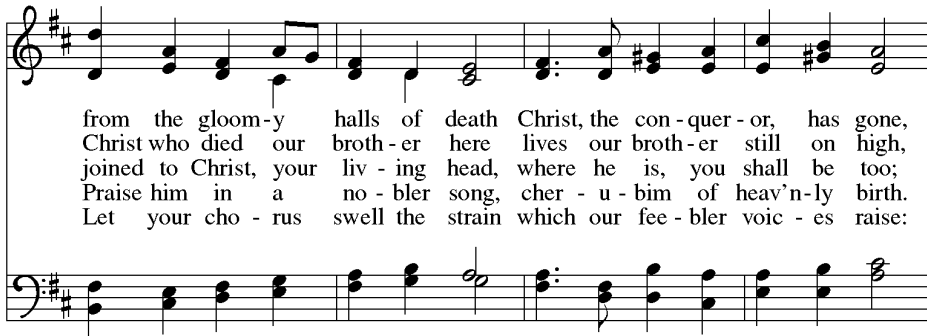


***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request (backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.*

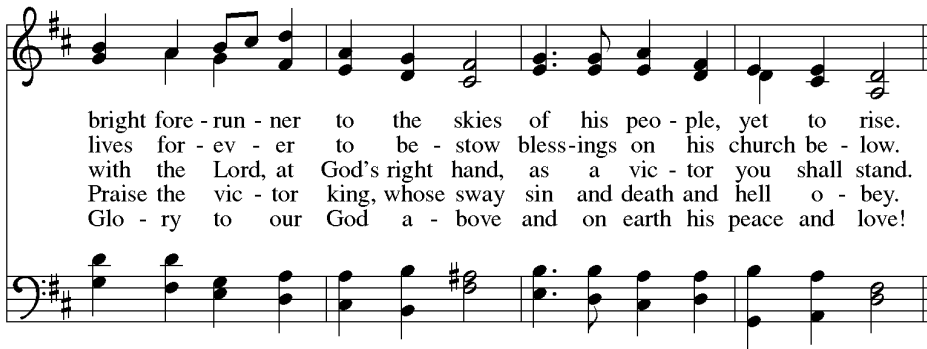
*If you are worshipping with us via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*



1 Hal-le - lu - jah! Je - sus lives! He is now the Liv - ing One;
 2 Je - sus lives! Why do you weep? Why that sad and mourn-ful sigh?
 3 Je - sus lives! And thus, my soul, life e - ter - nal waits for you;
 4 Je - sus lives! Let all re - joice. Praise him, ran-somed of the earth.
 5 Hal-le - lu - jah! An - gels, sing! Join with us in hymns of praise.



from the gloom-y halls of death Christ, the con-quer - or, has gone,
 Christ who died our broth - er here lives our broth - er still on high,
 joined to Christ, your liv - ing head, where he is, you shall be too;
 Praise him in a no - bler song, cher - u - bim of heav'n-ly birth.
 Let your cho - rus swell the strain which our fee - bler voic - es raise:



bright fore - run - ner to the skies of his peo - ple, yet to rise.
 lives for - ev - er to be - stow bless-ings on his church be - low.
 with the Lord, at God's right hand, as a vic - tor you shall stand.
 Praise the vic - tor king, whose sway sin and death and hell o - bey.
 Glo - ry to our God a - bove and on earth his peace and love!

Text: Carl B. Garve, 1763–1841; tr. Jane L. Borthwick, 1813–1897, alt.
 Music: FRED TIL BOD, Ludvig M. Lindeman, 1812–1887

GREETING

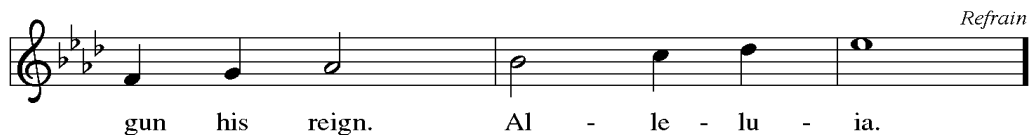
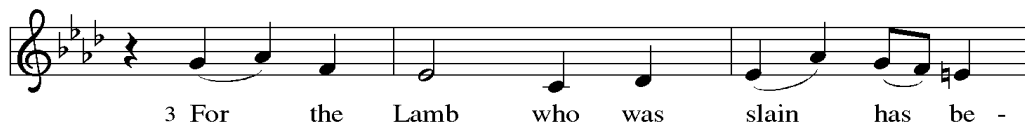
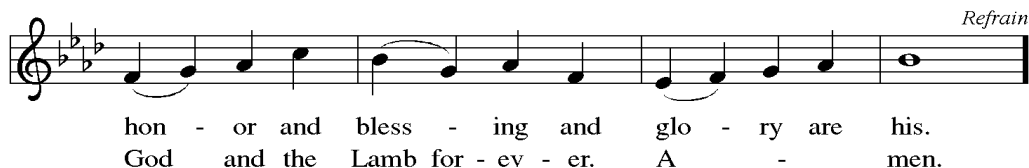
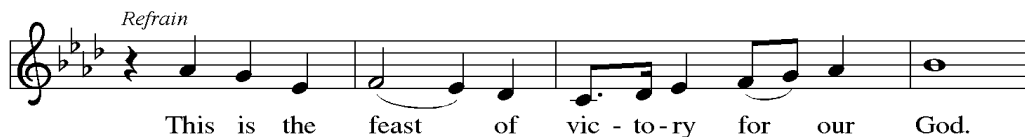
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

THE CANTICLE OF PRAISE



PRAYER OF THE DAY

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Generous God,
Whose way is love,
Whose truth is searching,
whose life is freely given
in Jesus Christ our Lord:
as you have opened for us
your house of many rooms,
so may we make a place
for the rejected and unloved,
and share the work of peace;
through Jesus Christ, the image of God.
Amen.

WORD

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

When children read, they may read a version that is appropriate to their reading level and voice, which may vary from the printed texts.

CHILDREN'S TIME

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

READING: Acts 7:55-60

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

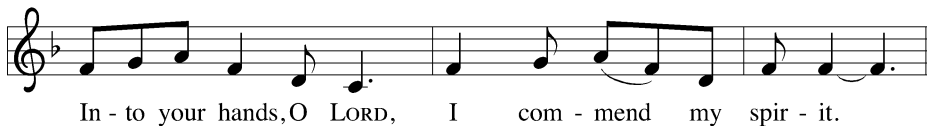
⁵⁵Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶“Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 31:1–5, 15–16

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

Refrain



Psalm Tone



In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be | put to shame;
deliver me | in your righteousness.

²**Incline your | ear to me;
make haste to de- | liver me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag | and my stronghold;
for the sake of your name, lead | me and guide me.

⁴**Take me out of the net that they have secretly | set for me,
for you are my tow- | er of strength. R**

⁵Into your hands I com- | mend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, | God of truth.

¹⁵**My times are | in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who | persecute me.**

¹⁶Let your face shine up- | on your servant;
save me in your | steadfast love." R

READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Christ is the cornerstone of God's saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God's chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”
⁷To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,”
⁸and

“A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.”
They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order
that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his
marvelous light.

¹⁰Once you were not a people,
but now you are God’s people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



HOLY GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” ⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

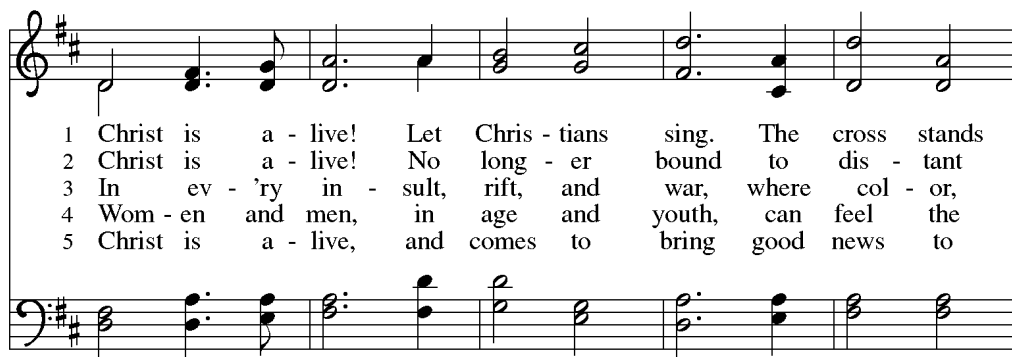
SERMON

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

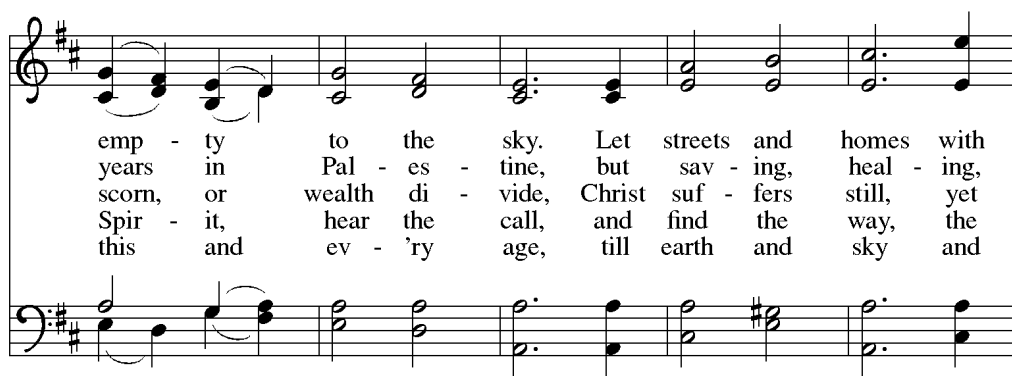
HYMN OF THE DAY ELW #389

Christ Is Alive! Let Christan Sing

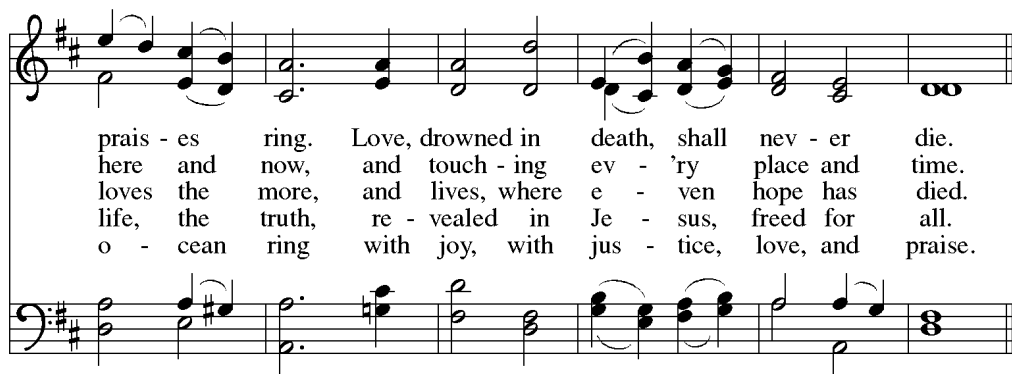
The assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.



1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands
 2 Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant
 3 In ev - 'ry in - sult, rift, and war, where col - or,
 4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the
 5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to



emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
 years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet
 Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the
 this and ev - 'ry age, till earth and sky and



prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.
 here and now, and touch - ing ev - 'ry place and time.
 loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.
 life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.
 o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: TRURO, T. Williams, *Psalmody Evangelica*, 1789

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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 with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic 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.

PRAYERS

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of life, strengthen your church to proclaim your gospel even in times of trouble. As we remember Stephen, we give thanks for diaconal ministry. Bless all deacons and strengthen them for their bridge-building ministry between church and world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, you show your steadfast love through mighty waters, towering mountains, verdant fields, and arid deserts. Protect the earth's diverse habitats from the forces of pollution, erosion, extinction, and global warming. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Mighty God, your Spirit guides us into all truth. Give wisdom to world and local leaders and organizations as they begin, build, or renew relationships. In India, Pakistan, & Sri Lanka, empower the witness of churches; strengthen leaders and aid organizations in areas needing to be rebuilt following conflict, unrest, or natural disaster. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving God, you make your home among us. Abide with refugees, those experiencing homelessness, those fleeing war and poverty, and all who question if there is a home in your heart. We pray for all who are sick. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Assuring God, you accompany your people amid uncertainty and change. Uphold people in this community who have recently moved, changed jobs or schools, retired, or are going through transitions of any kind. Lead us in your ways. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Renewing God, you gather the saints at your heavenly banquet. We give you thanks for the care shown us by those who have gone before us, especially Julian of Norwich and Nicolaus von Zinzendorf. Grant confidence and comfort for all awaiting the place you have prepared. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We invite those worshipping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the 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 with **Summer 2023 Mission Trip to Costa Rica.***

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

OFFERTORY (8:00 a.m.)

Light of Light, O Soul—Begotten

arr. Culli

OFFERTORY ANTHEM (10:30 a.m.)

Lead Me, Lord

Wesley

Lead me, Lord, lead me in Thy righteousness, make Thy way plain before my face. For it is Thou, Lord, Thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.

OFFERING PRAYER

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

Generous God,

in this meal you offer your very self.

We give thanks for these gifts of the earth.

In the breaking of this bread

reveal to us the Risen One.

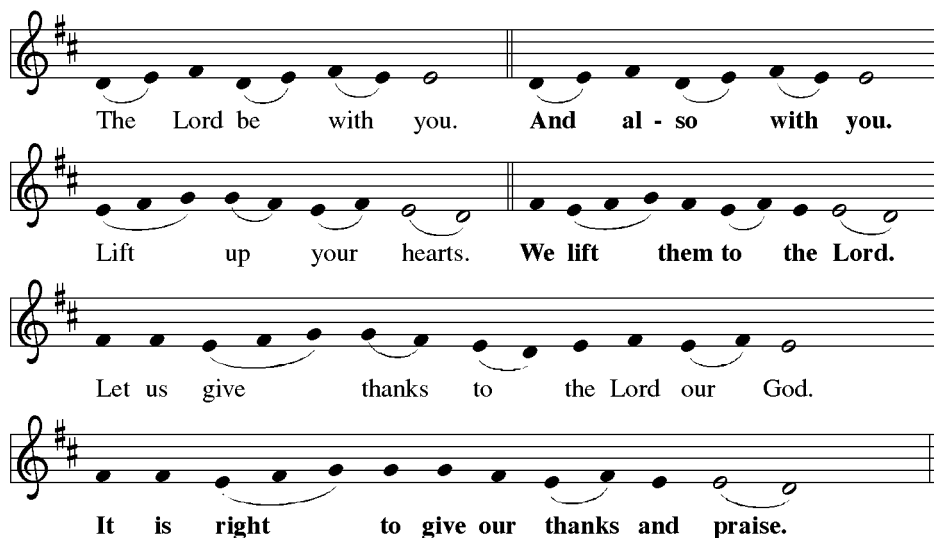
In the pouring of this wine

pour us out in service to the world;

through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

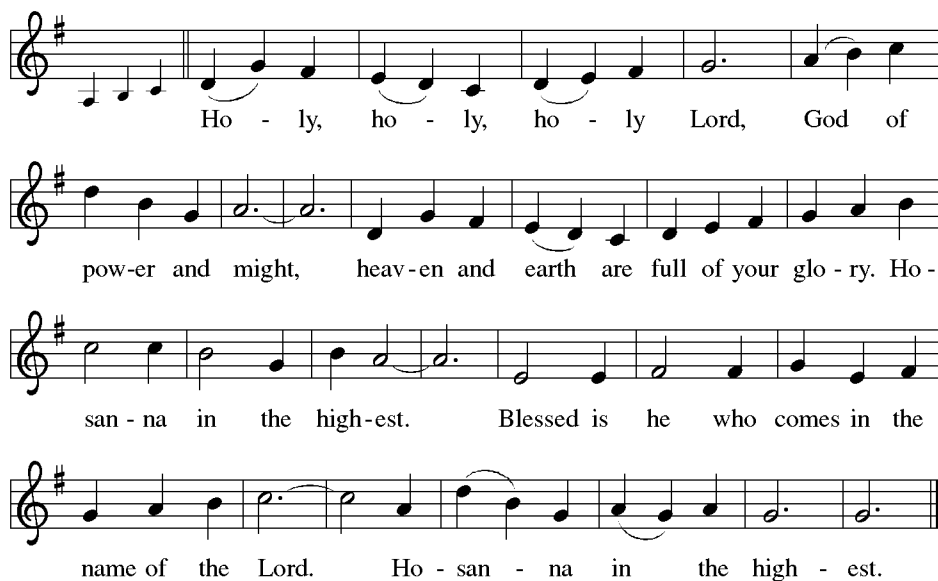
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The pastor begins the prayer and 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.")



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er 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

In their discussions of the Lord's Prayer, our Confirmation students sought to capture what Jesus is teaching in their own language. They worked hard to follow Luther's teaching and discern what Jesus is up to, and offer it to us today as an opportunity for conversation. Thank you, Confirmands!

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

**Our Creator and Teacher,
Help us remember your name is Holy.
Guide us in making your heavenly vision a reality on earth,
keep your will alive in us, making heaven and earth one,
sustain us with what we need each day,
have mercy on us as we are merciful to others,
keep us from sin, save us from evil,
for you made the world, so it is yours,
you alone hold power and glory over us.
Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and know Christ, broken and poured out for you.
Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION

The assembly is seated.

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.

*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; they are received via individual cups in the trays. The COMMON CUP is available for anyone who wishes. 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. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

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 HYMNS ACS #1094


Bring Many Names




1 Bring man - y names, beau - ti - ful and good,
2 Strong moth - er God, work - ing night and day,
3 Warm fa - ther God, hug - ging ev - 'ry child,
4 Old, ach - ing God, gray with end - less care,
5 Young, grow - ing God, ea - ger, on the move,
6 Great, liv - ing God, nev - er ful - ly known,



cel - e - brate, in par - a - ble and sto - ry, ho - li - ness in
plan - ning all the won - ders of cre - a - tion, set - ting each e -
feel - ing all the strains of hu - man liv - ing, car - ing and for -
calm - ly pierc - ing e - vil's new dis - guis - es, glad of good sur -
say - ing no to false - hood and un - kind - ness, cry - ing out for
joy - ful dark - ness far be - yond our see - ing, clos - er yet than



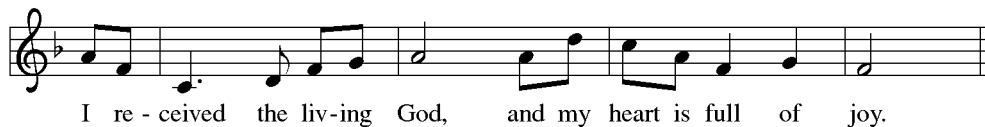
glo - ry, liv - ing, lov - ing God. Hail and ho -
qua - tion, gen - i - us at play: Hail and ho -
giv - ing till we're rec - on - ciled: Hail and ho -
pris - es, wis - er than de - spair: Hail and ho -
jus - tice, giv - ing all you have: Hail and ho -
breath - ing, ev - er - last - ing home: Hail and ho -



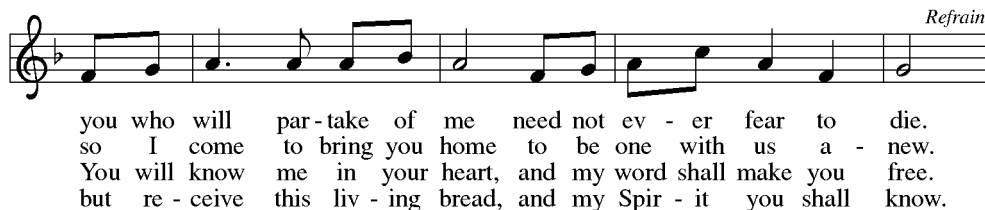
san - na! Bring man - y names!
san - na, strong moth - er God!
san - na, warm fa - ther God!
san - na, old, ach - ing God!
san - na, young, grow - ing God!
san - na, 6 great, liv - ing God!

Text: Brian Wren, b. 1936
Music: WESTCHASE, Carlton R. Young, b. 1926
Text and music © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

ELW #477 *I Received the Living God*



- 1 Je - sus said: I am the bread, knead - ed long to give you life;
- 2 Je - sus said: I am the way, and my Fa - ther longs for you;
- 3 Je - sus said: I am the truth; come and fol - low close to me.
- 4 Je - sus said: I am the life, far from whom no thing can grow,



Text: Anonymous
Music: LIVING GOD, Anonymous

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

Gracious God,
in you we live and move and have our being.
With your word and this meal of grace,
you have nourished our life together.
Strengthen us to show your love
and serve the world in Jesus' name.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

INVITATIONS

Brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.

BLESSING

The God of all,
who raised ✠ Jesus from the dead,
bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit
to live in the new creation.

Amen.



1 The church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ, her Lord;
 2 E - lect from ev - 'ry na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
 3 Though with a scorn - ful won - der this world sees her op - pressed,
 4 Through toil and trib - u - la - tion and tu - mult of her war,
 5 Yet she on earth has u - nion with God, the Three in One,

she is his new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word.
 her char - ter of sal - va - tion one Lord, one faith, one birth;
 by schisms . . rent a - sund - er, by her - e - sies dis - tressed,
 she waits the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more;
 and mys - tic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won.

From heav'n he came and sought her to be his ho - ly bride;
 one ho - ly name she bless - es, par - takes one ho - ly food;
 yet saints their watch are keep - ing; their cry goes up: "How long?"
 till with the vi - sion glo - rious her long - ing eyes are blest,
 Oh, bless - ed heav'n - ly cho - rus! Lord, save us by your grace,

with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
 and to one hope she press - es with ev - 'ry grace en - dued.
 and soon the night of weep - ing shall be the morn of song.
 and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.
 that we, like saints be - fore us, may see you face to face.

Text: Samuel J. Stone, 1839–1900

Music: AURELIA, Samuel S. Wesley, 1810–1876

Children join the pastors to send us in mission.

DISMISSAL

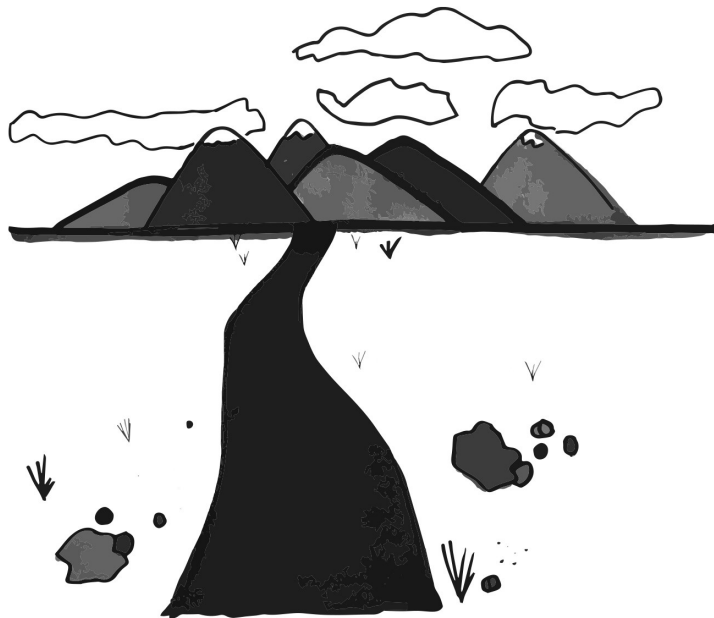
Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing

Kerr

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



Worship Leaders

	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Luke Ridley	Audrey Crill
Lector	Don MacMillan	Doc Knauff
Prayer Assistant	Lanie Steinwart	Grace Safrin
Communion Assistants	Erin Schmidgall Chris Schmidgall	Holly Knauff Phil Hahn
Ushers	Irene Adams Don MacMillan	Portia Novak
Sound/Light	Lance Nolting	Jeff Peiffer
Video/Livestream	-----	Ben Crill
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even	
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch	
Worship Participants	Sanctuary Choir Melissa Summerville, cantor	
Communion Baker	Chrystal Hernes	

May Altar Gifts

Holy Communion	Sara & Jeremy Long ~ In celebration of our Moms JoAnn Murfey ~ In Memory Lori Cross
Altar Candles	Ellen Swayne ~ In memory of Gladys Swayne
Eternal Lamp Candles	To the Glory of God

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of **India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka**.

We **give thanks** for:

- the diversity of peoples in these countries: their cultures, values and spirituality
- for the resilience of minority religious groups and those on the margins of society such as indigenous communities, Dalits, women, youth, the disabled and sexual minorities, amid discrimination and persecution
- for the contributions of Christians and Christian churches in these countries to education and health services and for their innovative attempts in contextualizing their worship, theology and institutional life
- efforts to forge inter-religious solidarity for the sake of the common good.

We **pray** for:

- those who struggle to overcome grinding poverty
- Christians and others who selflessly work in the community, their efforts at ensuring the rights of all citizens, and their collaborative work
- efforts to build understanding and harmony among peoples across religious, caste and ethnic identities
- peoples' movements struggling for the rights of women, Dalits, Indigenous peoples, and the integrity of the earth
- leaders to keep priority on the wellbeing of the people and the earth itself amid demands for economic growth.

COMMEMORATIONS

Week of May 7, 2023

May 8

Julian of Norwich, renewer of the church, died around 1416

When she was about thirty years old, Julian (or Juliana) reported visions that she later compiled into a book, *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*, now a classic of medieval mysticism. The visions declared that love was the meaning of religious experience, provided by Christ who is love, for the purpose of love.

May 9

Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the church, hymnwriter, died 1760

When he was 22, a group of Moravians asked permission to live on Zinzendorf's land. He agreed, and eventually worldwide Moravian missions emanated from this community. Zinzendorf participated in these missions, and is also remembered for writing hymns characteristic of his Pietistic faith.

Are You New Here?

“You know the way to the place where I am going,” Jesus tells his followers (John 14:4), but they aren’t so sure. So he goes on, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6), but they’re still confused. Finally, he asks, “Have I been with you all this time . . . and you still do not know me?” (John 14:9). It’s as if he’s asking them, “Are you new here?”

They’ve had him all this time. They’ve watched him and listened to him and learned from him. But, suddenly faced with the idea that he won’t always be there in quite the same way, it’s as if they remember nothing.

Yet, Jesus isn’t one of those teachers who says, “Do as I say, not as I do.” He lived his very life here on earth as a model for us, even now. Our road map to the place where he is going is to understand his words and actions, not only as *his* way, truth, and life, but as *our own* as well.

It’s as complicated as that, but it’s also that simple. “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (John 14:1), Jesus tells them. Indeed, road maps are meant to reassure us, by giving us direction and setting us on the right course.

He didn’t say it would be easy. He also didn’t tell this to any of them alone, and his words are intended for us to hear in community today as well. Living out our understandings of Jesus as the way, truth, and life is a collective act, not an individual one. We do this every time we gather in community, whether that’s a congregation, a parent-teacher organization, an extended family, or a neighborhood Buy Nothing group.

“You know the way to the place where I am going,” Jesus tells us. We might feel new here, but it turns out we’ve had the road map all along.

Stewardship Snippet

1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

God pours blessings upon people of faith, and there are expectations. Peter reminds us that we belong to God and are called to proclaim the good news and work for justice, peace, and mercy.

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Portions from *Prayers for an Inclusive Church* by Steven Shakespeare.