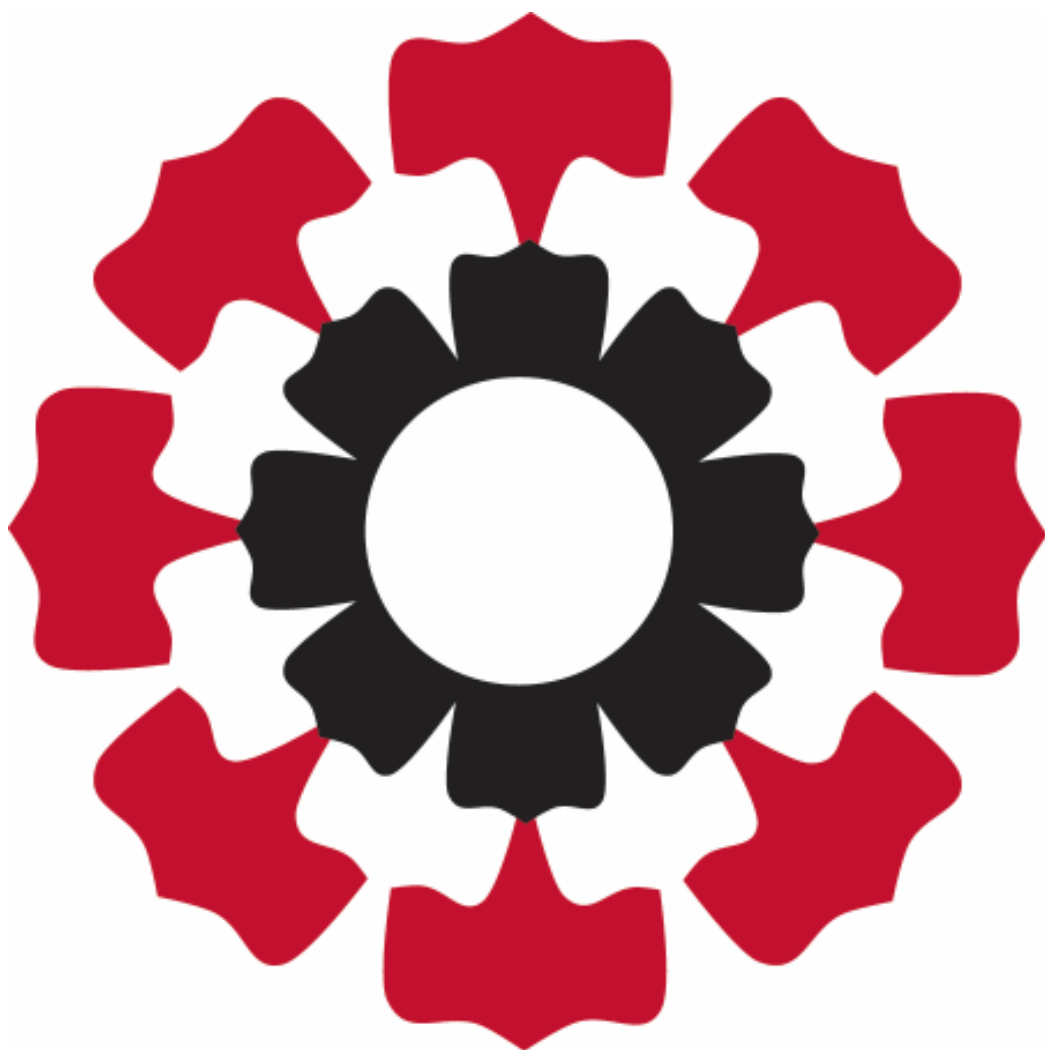




TIME AFTER PENTECOST
LECTIONARY 24
SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

Christ Ascension Lutheran Church
Philadelphia, PA

GATHERING

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

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. 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, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

**We confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

**Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.**

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

**Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through † Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

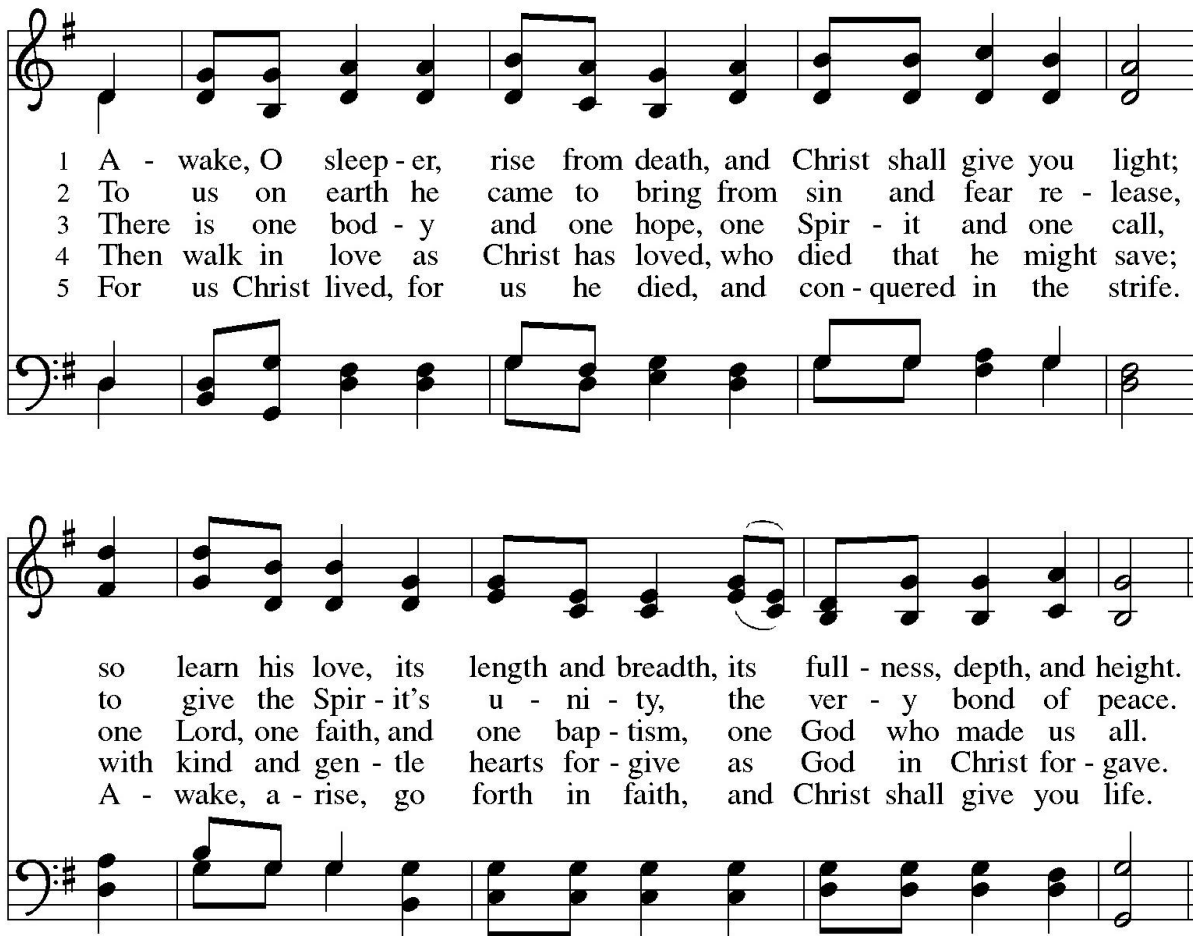
Amen.

The service continues with gathering song.

***GATHERING HYMN**

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death

(red book) #452



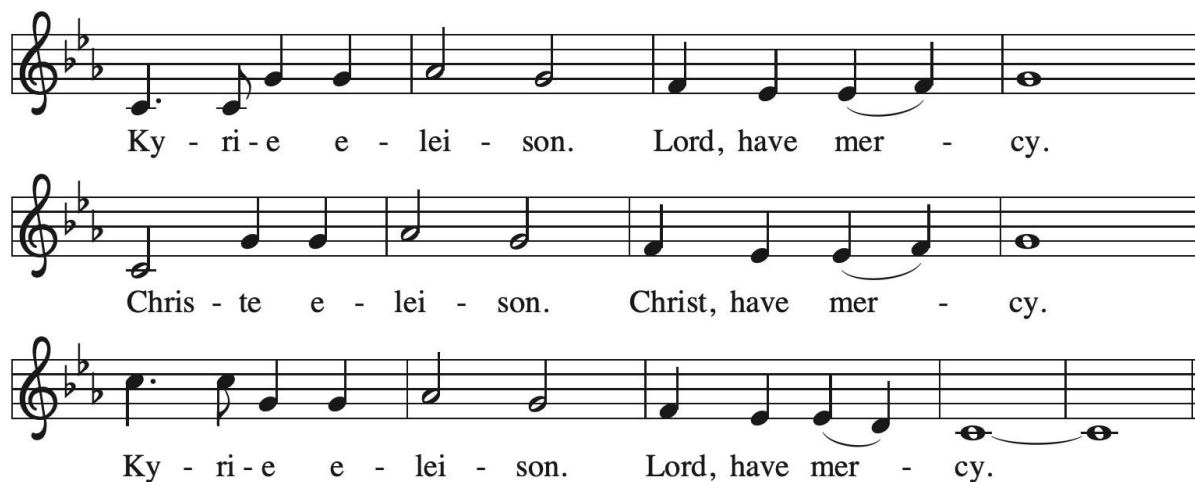
1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.

so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

***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.**

*KYRIE



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

*SONG OF PRAISE



1 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
 2 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
 3 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;

yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
 yours the ho - san - nas, the dy - ing, re - birth.
 yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.

Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
 Ours the re - joic - ing for na - ture re - claimed;
 Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;

ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.

Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;

yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness.

Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

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

FIRST READING

GENESIS 50:15-21

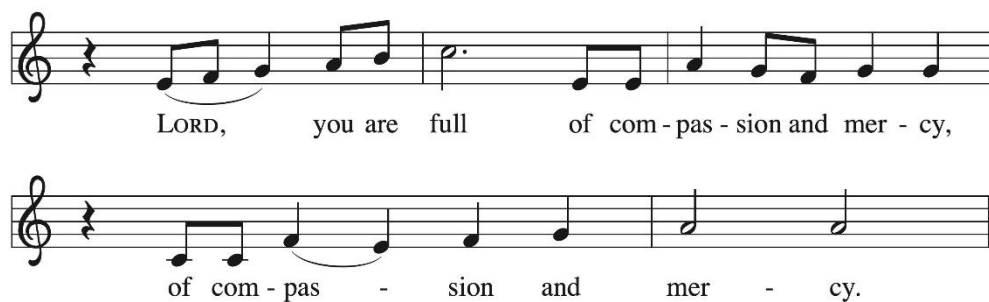
¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves."

¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as God is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way Joseph reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

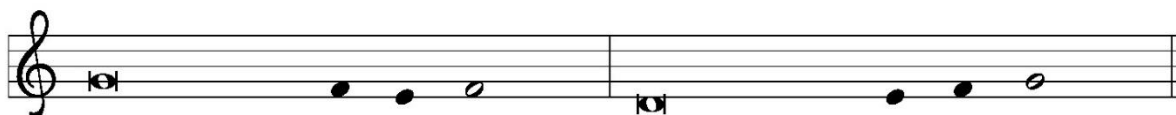
Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 103:8-13

REFRAIN



TONE



- ⁸ **LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love; REFRAIN**
- ⁹ you will not al- | ways accuse us,
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.
- ¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,
nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.**
- ¹¹ For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.
- ¹² **As far as the east is | from the west,
so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.**
- ¹³ As a father has compassion | for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD. REFRAIN

SECOND READING

ROMANS 14: 1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

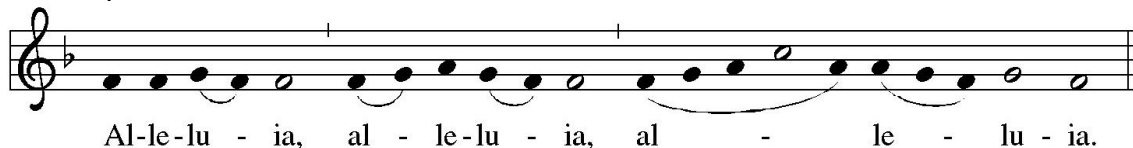
⁷For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your sibling? Or you, why do you despise your sibling? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*The choir sings the alleluias,
Then all sing the alleluias,
The choir sings the proper verse,
Then all repeat the alleluias.*



The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 18:21-35

²¹Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³"For this reason the dominion of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.

²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸"But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his

fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵"So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive each other from your heart."

The Gospel of the lord. **Praise to you O, Christ.**

SERMON

The Rev. Joseph Varsanyi

*A brief silence is kept for reflection,
then the assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.*

HYMN OF THE DAY

I Come with Joy

(red book) #482



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are
3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er
5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -
done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.
strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.
live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.
love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

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.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.
A brief silence.

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others.
Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus.
Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect Those who are for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Raise up leaders (*like John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we remember today*) to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them.
Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need (*especially*).
Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory.
Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

For what else shall we pray?
Here other intercessions may be offered.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember (*name/s, and*) all those who have gone before us.
Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

***THE PEACE**

The peace of the Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**
We greet one another with a greeting of peace. Please be mindful of touch.

MEAL

God feeds us with Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church. Our offering at Christ Ascension goes to support our ministries in our congregation, in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. If you want to give electronically, you may do so using the DONATE tab on our website: christascension.org, or by scanning the QR Code. For those physically present in worship, an offering plate is in the back of the sanctuary on the usher's table.

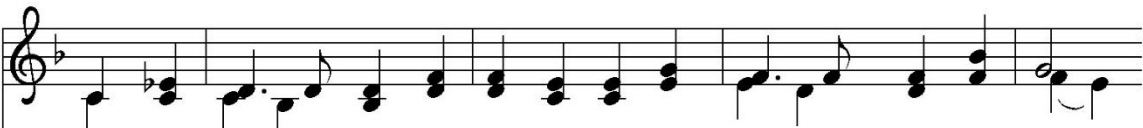
***OFFERING HYMN** *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending (red book) #678*



1 God, whose giv - ing knows no end - ing, from your rich and end - less store:
 2 Skills and time are ours for press - ing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
 3 Trea - sure, too, you have en - trust - ed, gain through pow'rs your grace con - ferred;




na - ture's won - der, Je - sus' wis - dom, cost - ly cross, grave's shat - tered door,
 all at peace in health and free - dom, rac - es joined, the church made one.
 ours to use for home and kin - dred, and to spread the gos - pel word.

gift - ed by you, we turn to you, of - f'ring up our - selves in praise;
 Now di - rect our dai - ly la - bor, lest we strive for self a - lone;
 O - pen wide our hands in shar - ing, as we heed Christ's age - less call,




thank - ful song shall rise for - ev - er, gra - cious do - nor of our days.
 born with tal - ents, make us ser - vants fit to an - swer at your throne.
 heal - ing, teach - ing, and re - claim - ing, serv - ing you by lov - ing all.



***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

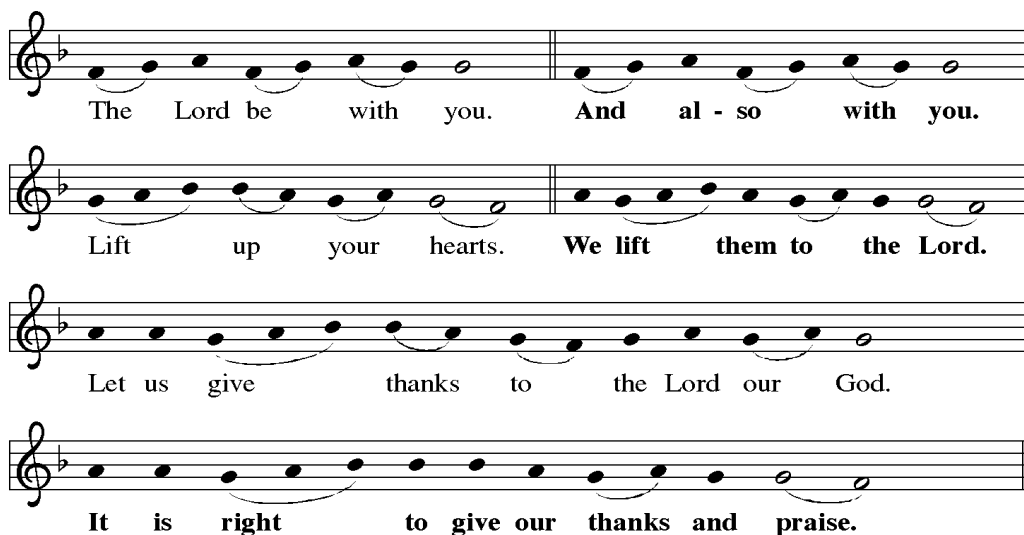
A brief silence is kept to prepare for prayer.

God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always.

Amen.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

***DIALOG**



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.

***PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

The presiding minister continues:

O God triune, how majestic is your name in all the earth.
Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home, a fragile tree of life. Here by
your wisdom are both life and death, growth and decay, the nest and the hunt,
sunshine and storm, darkness and light. Sustained by these wonders, we creatures
of dust join in the ancient song:
The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer. In Christ you bring life from

death; we remember his cross, we laud his resurrection. Broken like bread, he enlivens our body. Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness. Receiving this mystery, we mortals sing our song:

The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**

We praise you for the heart of Jesus, so filled with your love for this earth. In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song: The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune, you create the worlds, you uphold the living, you embrace the dead. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. Strengthen us for our journey with this meal, the body and blood of Christ. Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth. Empowered by your promises, we rise from our deaths to praise you again:

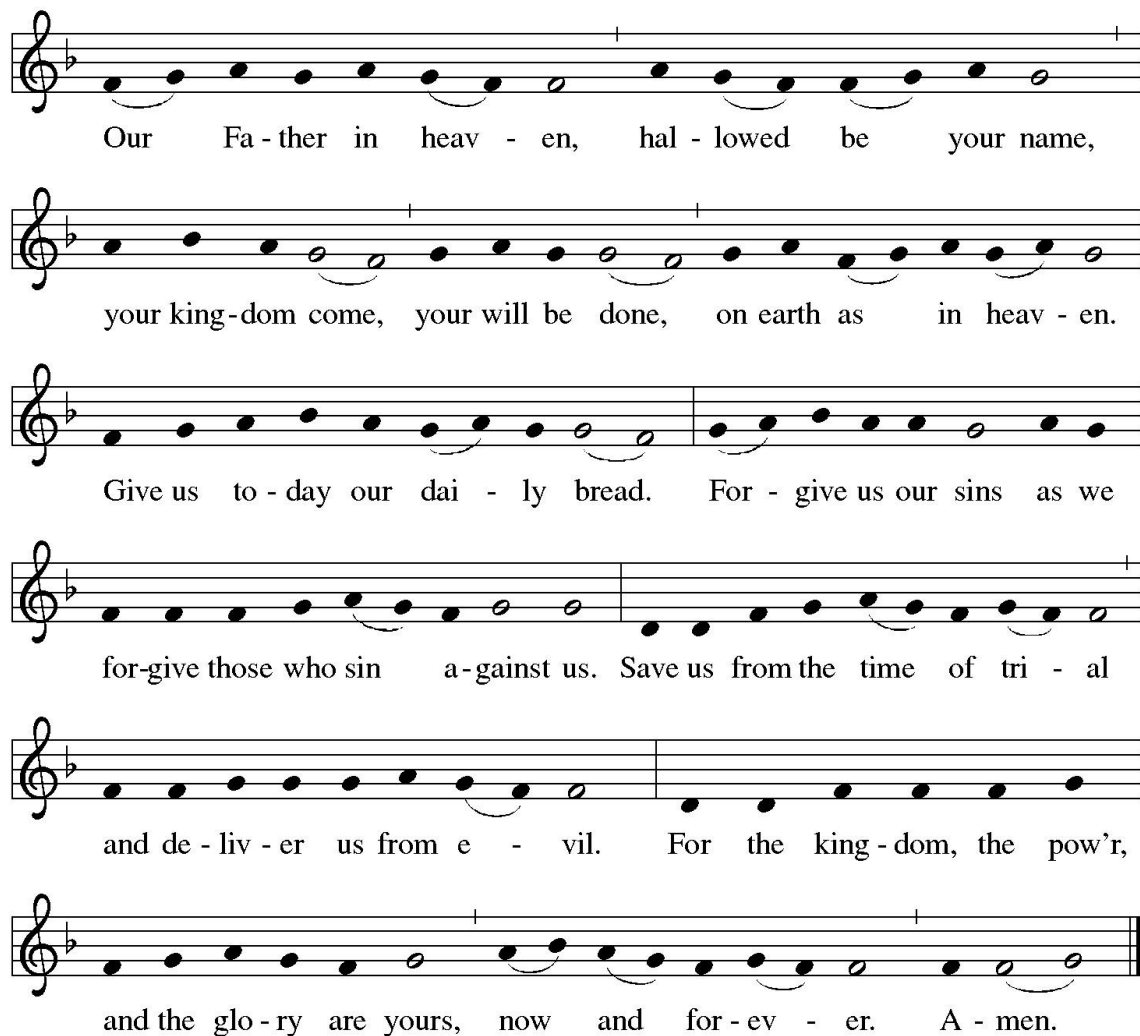
The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**

Amen, and Amen.

Amen, and Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.



COMMUNION

This is Christ's Table and Christ himself is present when we share this Meal. All are welcome to receive the bread and wine, Christ's body and blood, given and shed for the sake of the world. Wine, with a grape juice alternative, is offered by pouring chalice. Take a small cup from the tray. Receive the bread in your open palm. Hold your cup steadily for the assisting minister to pour into. You may stand there to drink. When you return to your seat, please dispose of the cup in the bowl provided. For those who desire it, gluten-free bread is available; indicate your desire to the presiding minister. For those who would like to participate, but not to receive bread or wine, please come forward for a blessing. Indicate this desire by crossing your arms in front of you. If you are unable to come forward and would like Communion brought to you in your seat, let the usher know.

*INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

*HYMNS DURING DISTRIBUTION

Be Known To Us, Lord Jesus

(blue book) #Pg. 40



Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.



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



Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.



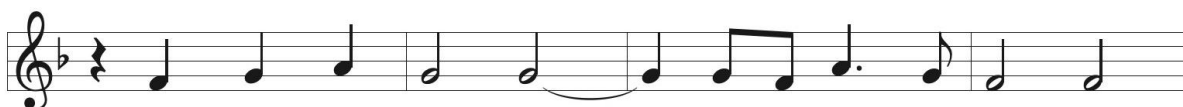
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

When We Are Living

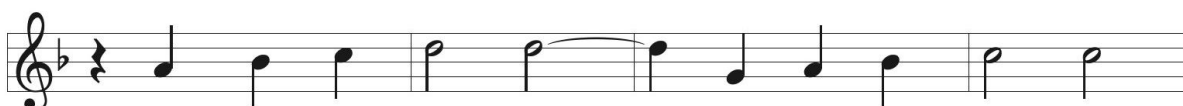
(red book) #639



Pues si vi - vi - mos, pa - ra él vi - vi - mos,
 1 When we are liv - ing, it is in Christ Je - sus,
 2 'Mid times of sor - row and in times of pain,
 3 A - cross this wide world, we shall al - ways find



y si mo - ri - mos pa - ra él mo - ri - mos.
 and when we're dy - ing, it is in the Lord. . . .
 when sens - ing beau - ty or in love's em - brace, . . .
 those who are cry - ing with no peace of mind; . . .



Sea que vi - va - mos o que mu - ra - mos,
 Both in our liv - ing and in our dy - ing,
 wheth - er we suf - fer, or sing re - joic - ing,
 and when we help them, or when we feed them,



so - mos del Se - ñor, so - mos del Se - ñor.
 we be - long to God, we be - long to God.
 we be - long to God, we be - long to God.
 we be - long to God, we be - long to God.

2 En la tristeza y en el dolor,
 en la belleza y en el amor,
 sea que suframos o que gocemos,
 somos del Señor, somos del Señor.

3 En este mundo por doquier habrá
 gente que lloray sin consolar.
 Sea que ayudemos o alimentemos,
 somos del Señor, somos del Señor.

Goodness Is Stronger Than Evil

(red book) #721

Good-ness is stron-ger than e - vil; love is stron-ger than hate;

The first system of music features a treble and bass staff in the key of D major (two sharps). The melody in the treble staff begins with a quarter note D, followed by eighth notes E, F#, G, and A. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

light is stron-ger than dark - ness; life is stron-ger than death; vic-t'ry is

Oh,

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff has a melodic line with some ties. The bass staff continues with a steady accompaniment. The system ends with the word 'Oh,'.

ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Vic-t'ry is

vic-t'ry is ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Oh,

The third system introduces the phrase 'ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us'. The melody in the treble staff has a long note with a slur. The bass staff continues with a consistent accompaniment. The system ends with 'Oh,'.

ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.

vic-t'ry is ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.

The fourth system repeats the phrase 'ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us'. The musical notation is identical to the third system, including the long note with a slur in the treble staff and the accompaniment in the bass staff.

TABLE BLESSING

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

SENDING

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BLESSING**

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

In Thee Is Gladness

(red book) #867



1 In thee is glad-ness a-mid all sad-ness, Je-sus, sun-shine of my
2 Je-sus is ours! . . We fear no pow-ers, not of earth or sin or



heart. By thee are giv-en the gifts of heav-en, thou the
death. He sees and bless-es in worst dis-tress-es; he can



true re-deem-er art. Our souls thou wak-est; our bonds thou
change them with a breath. Where-fore the sto-ry tell of his



break-est. Who trusts thee sure-ly has built se-cure-ly
glo-ry with heart and voic-es; all heav'n re-joic-es



and stands for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia! Our hearts are
in him for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia! We shout for



pin-ing to see thy shin-ing, dy-ing or liv-ing,
glad-ness, tri-umph o'er sad-ness, love him and praise him



to thee are cleav-ing; naught can us sev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!
and still shall raise him glad hymns for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!

*** DISMISSAL**

The assisting minister may send the assembly into mission.

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

Please return this worship folder for use at other services.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BAPTIZED WE LIVE

The adult bible study will follow our Fellowship Hour will be discussing the book, "Baptized We Live - Lutheranism as a way of life". Books are available (Ask an usher) and can be picked up after worship today. Lutherans are part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. But what does it mean to be the "Lutheran family" within this One Church? What unique gifts do Lutherans bring to the Church? How does being Lutheran matter in our daily lives? Come and explore together.

NOONDAY PRAYER

We gather on Wednesdays at 12:15-12:45 in the Reumann Library for Meditation and Prayer. No expertise required! Come and explore the ancient Christian practice known as *Lectio Divina*. (Thoughtful Reading-Meditating).

LEADING IN WORSHIP THIS MORNING

PRESIDING MINISTER AND PREACHER

THE REV. JOSEPH VARSANYI

ASSISTING MINISTER

LEAH HOLBEN

MUSICIAN

KATHERINE REIER

LECTOR

LARRY SMITH

USHER

GORDON GERHART

ALTAR GUILD

STHEPHANIE CHARA TRUJILLO

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- ELW #452 *Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death*
Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895-1984
Music: Carl G. Glaser, 1784-1829
Text © 1980 Augsburg Publishing House
- ELW #482 *I Come with Joy*
Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936
Music: W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835
Text © 1971, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company
- ELW #678 *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*
Text: Robert L. Edwards, 1915-2006
Music C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848-1918
Text © 1961, ren. 1989 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company
- ELW #639 *When We Are Living*
Text: st. 1, based on Romans 14:8; tr. Elise S. Eslinger, b. 1942;
st. 2-3, Roberto Escamilla b. 1931; tr. George Lockwood, b. 1946
Music: *Spanish Traditional*
- ELW #721 *Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven*
Text: From an *African Prayer Book*, Desmond Tutu, b. 1931
Music: John L. Bell, b. 1949
- ELW #867 *In Thee Is Gladness*
Text: Jonathan Lindemann, b. 1549-1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878, alt.
Music: Giovanni Gioacomo Gastoldi; 1556-1622

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