

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Lector: Lindsey Olsen

Communion Assistant: Margaret Garrison

Acolyte: Christine Ruff

Ushers: Chip Popovici, Jimmy Harris,

Jeff Jones, Jeff Gilbert, Phil Tesh

Videographer: Kim Haberman

Greeter: Jean Beasley

Building Supervisors: Jeff Gilbert, Chip Popovici

PRAYER LIST

Cecil Berry (friend of Gretchen Walker); Family of Michael Black (nephew of Patsy Black); Patsy Black; Patrick Bryn (son of Kirby & Sondra Bryn); Angie Buchanan; Mike & Debbie Cagle (friends of Robert & Debbie Davis); Jay Clemmer; Noah Clifton; Karey Conrad (friend of Dee Pieschel); Catherine Durst (daughter of Anne & Dee Hodges); Nadine Filipak (friend of Al & Dee Pieschel); Phyllis Freeman (Mother of Fonda Shumate); Ed Frost (friend of the Marlow's); Ginger Gibbs (Friend of Jeff & Deedee Gilbert); Jeff Gilbert; Nancy Haney (loved one of Betsy Ballard); Ryan Hardister (son of Bill & Reggie Hardister); Maureen Hollmeyer; Hunter Huss; Mary Frances Johnson (cousin of Francie Davis); Karen Johnston (friend of Judy Benz); Mary Anne Lanahan (Aunt of Francie Davis); Ruth Lawler (friend of Dee & Al Pieschel); John Ledford (brother of Deb Black); Leonard "Buddy" McEachern; Jason Matthews; Barbara Merrell; Deb & Roger Myers (friends of Deb Black); Dave Olsen (friend of Patsy Black); Mason Overby; Stan Parnell (friend of Rob & Debbie Davis); Becky Phillips; Al Pieschel; Corinne Robbins; Lori Ruff (mother of Christine Ruff); Jessica Seeley (cousin of Christine Ruff); Ruby Tyler (niece of Beth Huss' friend); John Walker.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The altar flowers for today are given to the Glory of God in honor of Elizabeth Hurley's birthday.

To assist in your offering
Secure Online Giving



Open Camera – Scan QR Code
Thank you for supporting St. James

**The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
July 26, 2026**

**The Holy Communion
10:00am**



**St. James Lutheran Church
104 Union Street South
PO Box 684
Concord, North Carolina 28026
704-786-0166
www.sjnc.net
Rev. William C. Ridenhour, Pastor**

Welcome to St. James Lutheran Church

Maybe you need forgiveness, or maybe you need to forgive ... Maybe you're tired and you need a little space to breathe ... Maybe you're trying church for the first time, or maybe you're trying church for the last time... Maybe you've spent your whole life wondering if God really loves you... Maybe you're lonely... Maybe you're sick... Maybe you came here looking for a miracle... Maybe you came here looking for another church but got disoriented and came here instead, and now it's too late to get up and walk out... Maybe, with God, there are no accidents... Maybe, with God, there is hope and healing and miraculous companionship... Maybe, with God, there is space to breathe and forgiveness on top of forgiveness... Maybe, with God, there is love... Maybe, with God here in our midst, we will hear those words that still split open the heavens, "You are my son! You are my daughter! You are my beloved. You. In you I am well pleased!" Maybe this is why we gather together, week after week after week, here at St. James.

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome in this place - not just by the Saints at St. James, but by the God who revealed himself in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, our brother, and our friend.

Welcome to St. James.

If you are comfortable doing so, please introduce yourself to Pastor Bill. If you have visited with us a number of times and think you might want to "make it official," please speak to Pastor Bill. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to the person next to you or to an usher.

Restrooms are located on the first and second floor of the Education Building. A **nursery** is available for children up to and including five years of age on the first floor of the education building. An usher will be happy to help you find them.

If you're visiting or if you have been here for 99 years (and are willing to do so), please sign a pew pad.

Let us know you visited!



Scan to connect!

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

July 26 – Kirby Bryn, Elizabeth Hurley, Al Pieschel
July 27 – Janet Patterson, Michael Rinker,
July 29 – Luke Baker, Noah Clifton, Julianna Popovici, Jim Steel
July 30 – Jay Cruse, Hudson Davis, Kyle Moran
July 31 – Amy Clifton, Jo Ann Fowler, Allison Hinson, Jill Irvin
Aug. 1 – Hillary Pruette

CHURCH CALENDAR THIS WEEK

Sunday, July 26	9:00am	Choir
	10:00am	Worship
	5:30pm	Vacation Bible School
Monday, July 27	10:30am	Quilting
	5:30pm	Vacation Bible School
Tuesday, July 28	5:30pm	Vacation Bible School
Sunday, August 2	9:00am	Choir
	10:00am	Worship

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT CHOIR INTEREST PREVIEW

Have interest in singing in *Carols by Candlelight*? The St. James Parish Choir invites anyone interested in participating this year's performance to attend a special preview on **Sunday, August 9, at 2:00 p.m.**

If you are interested in participating, please complete the interest form and join us for the preview.

Scan to complete interest form:





St James Lutheran Church:
Growing in Christ through Worship, Learning, Fellowship and Service.

THE HOLY COMMUNION



Please silence your phones. Thank you.

When not printed, hymn harmonies may be found in the green LBW hymnal.

Welcome

Prelude

Please stand.

THE INVOCATION

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

C **Amen.**

THE BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Please sit or kneel, as able.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

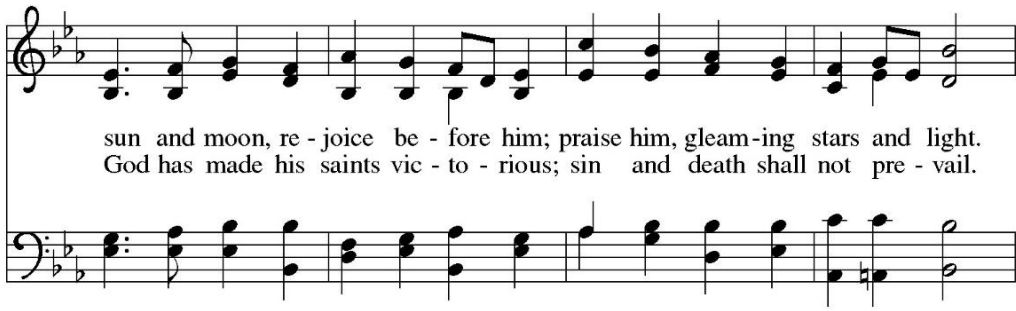
C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

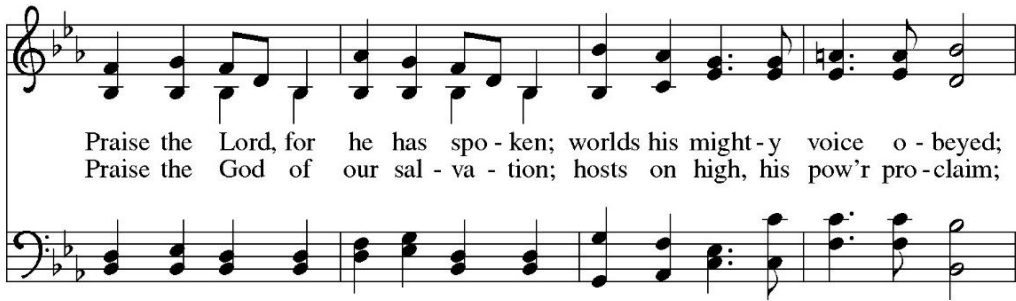
C **Amen**

THE ENTRANCE HYMN: #540 Praise the Lord! O Heavens Adore Him

1 Praise the Lord! O heav'ns, a - dore him; praise him, an - gels, in the height;
2 Praise the Lord, for he is gra - cious; nev - er shall his prom - ise fail.



sun and moon, re - joice be - fore him; praise him, gleam-ing stars and light.
God has made his saints vic - to - rious; sin and death shall not pre - vail.



Praise the Lord, for he has spo - ken; worlds his might-y voice o - beyed;
Praise the God of our sal - va - tion; hosts on high, his pow'r pro - claim;



laws which nev - er shall be bro - ken for their guid - ance he has made.
heav'n and earth, and all cre - a - tion, laud and mag - ni - fy his name!

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O God, your ears are open always to the prayers of your servants. Open our hearts and minds to you, that we may live in harmony with your will and receive the gifts of your Spirit; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
C **Amen.**



Please sit.

THE FIRST READING: I Kings 3:5-12

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, ‘Ask what I should give you.’ ⁶ And Solomon said, ‘You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?’

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, ‘Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.

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

THE SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

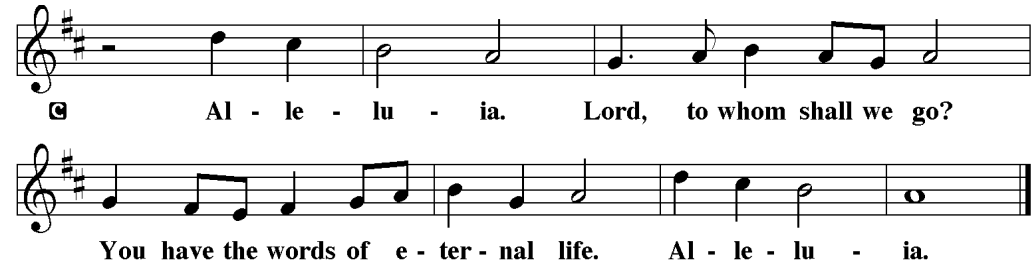
31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33 Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written,

‘For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.’

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A The Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Please stand.
THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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

THE HOLY GOSPEL

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 13th chapter.
C Glory to you, O Lord

He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’

33 He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.’

44 ‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

47 ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

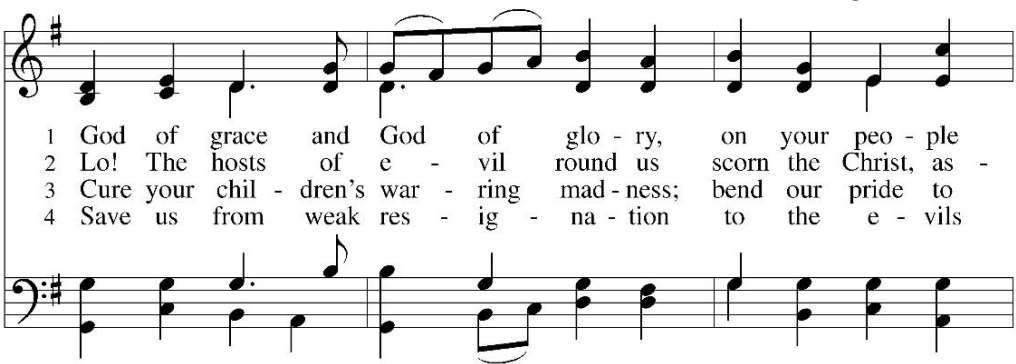
51 ‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ 52 And he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.’

P The Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

Please sit.
THE SERMON

Pastor Bill Ridenhour

Please stand.
THE HYMN OF THE DAY: #415 God of Grace and God of Glory



1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple
2 Lo! The hosts of e - vil round us scorn the Christ, as -
3 Cure your chil - dren’s war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your pow'r; crown your an - cient chur - ch's sto - ry;
 sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us
 your con - trol; shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
 we de - plore; let the gift of your sal - va - tion

bring its bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
 lest we miss your king - dom's goal, lest we miss your king - dom's goal.
 serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
 He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried.
 He descended into hell.*
 On the third day he rose again.
 He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 He will come again 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**

THE PRAYERS

A Let us lift our hearts, hands, and voices in prayer to God on behalf of all people.

Dear Father, Make the Church lovely with Jesus' goodness. May it always treat your Word and Sacraments as precious, living treasures. By the gracious power of your Spirit, draw many to faith in Jesus, so they may never be separated from your love. Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Keep this congregation in your care, knowing that nothing can separate us from your love for us in Christ Jesus. Use our words and deeds to share that love with those around us who need it most. Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Establish your justice among the nations, O Lord; and do not let the scepter of evil hold sway over us. Establish your justice among rulers of countries and captains of industry; among leaders in every field of inquiry and endeavor; and among your people everywhere. Turn our hearts from evildoing and crooked ways; and fix them firmly upon faith toward you and fervent love toward one another. Lord, in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

We pray for justice, concord, and safety to flourish in this land. We pray for wise words, not inflamed rhetoric, from our leaders. We pray for constructive decisions, not rash actions or empty gestures, from those entrusted with authority. We pray for Mason and all those who risk their lives on behalf of others, that even in difficult circumstances they exhibit integrity and valor. We pray that in all circumstances, your will be done. Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

We pray for the sick, injured, dying and bereaved; for the troubled, confused, lonely, or despairing; and for everyone who struggles with the tribulations of this life. Help us to show them that though the world seems against them, you are for them; you love them; you justify them; and you shall indeed make them more than conquerors. Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

Most Holy Father, we remember before you beloved dead. May the witness of all the saints guide our discipleship until, by your great mercy, you gather all the faithful at your heavenly banquet table. Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

P Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
C **Amen.**

THE PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C **And also with you.**

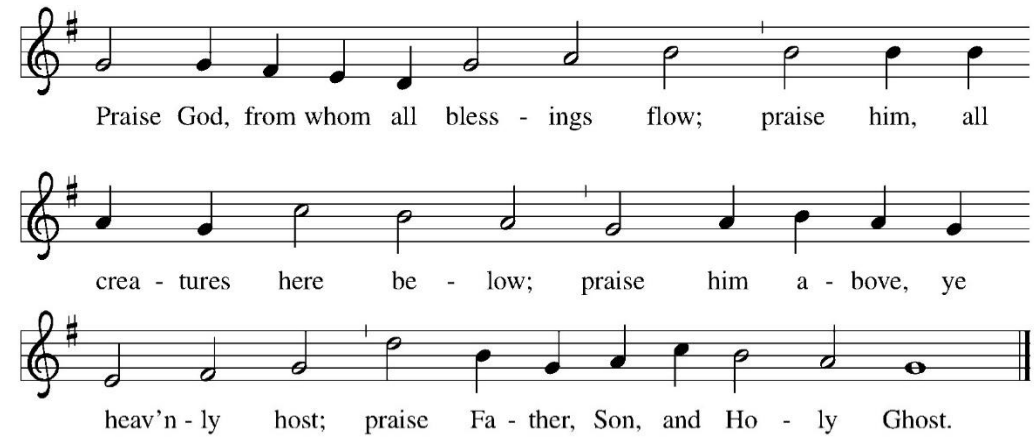
Please sit.

THE ANTHEM

THE OFFERING

Please stand.

THE OFFERTORY #564 “The Doxology”



THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

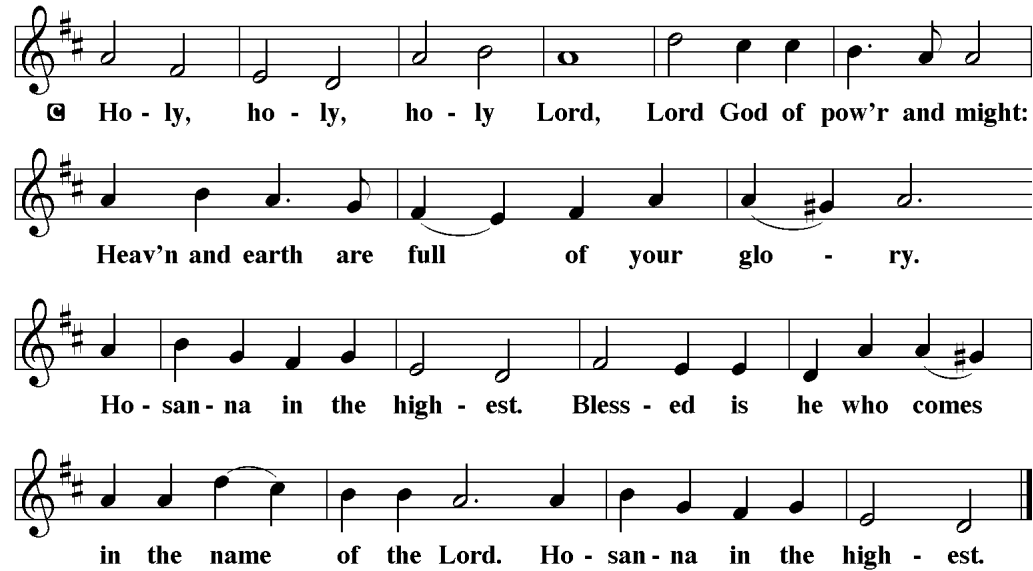
A Let us pray.
A Blessed are you,
C **O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**



THE COMMUNION RITE

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
P Lift up your hearts.
C **We lift them to the Lord.**
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**
P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you,
O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord;
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 the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



P You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God;
you are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.
You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
that whoever believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.
Having come into the world, he fulfilled for us your holy will
and accomplished our salvation.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving Passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension, and his promise to come again,
we give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought, but as we are able;
and we implore you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving,
and, with your Word and Holy Spirit, to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine;
that we and all who share in the body and blood of your Son
may be filled with heavenly peace and joy,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be sanctified in soul and body,
and have our portion with all your saints.

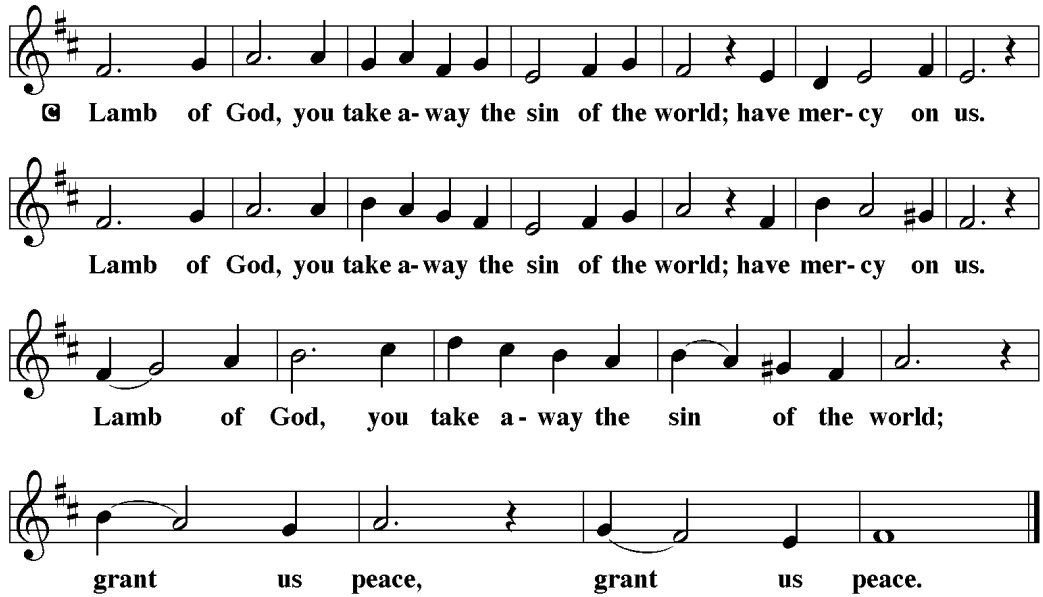
All honor and glory are yours, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, now and forever.

C Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **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.



A 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.

Please sit.
THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

- Q: What is the Sacrament of the Altar?
- A: Instituted by Christ himself, it is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, given to us Christians to eat and to drink.
- Q: What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?
- A: We are told in the words “for you” and “for the forgiveness of sins.” By these words the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament, for where there is forgiveness of sins, there are also life and salvation.

-Luther’s Small Catechism Part V

Jesus bids all the baptized to feast at his table. For those unable to partake of wine, white grape juice is available. If you wish for the pastor to bring communion to you. Please advise an usher.

Please stand.
THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

C Amen

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

- P Let us pray,
- A Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord
- C Amen**

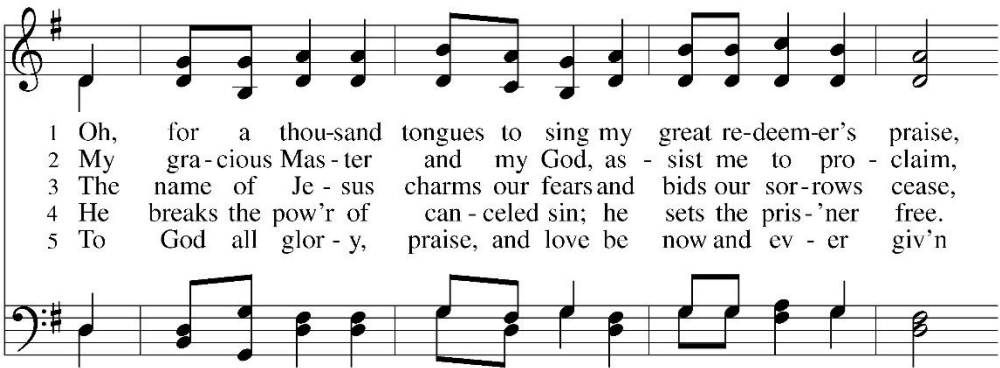
Silence for reflection.



THE BENEDICTION

- P Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
- C Amen**

THE SENDING HYMN: #559 Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing



1 Oh, for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great re-deem-er’s praise,
 2 My gra-cious Mas-ter and my God, as-sist me to pro-claim,
 3 The name of Je-sus charms our fears and bids our sor-rows cease,
 4 He breaks the pow’r of can-celed sin; he sets the pris-’ner free.
 5 To God all glor-y, praise, and love be now and ev-er giv’n

the glo - ries of my God and king, the tri - umphs of his grace!
 to spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of your name.
 sings mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, brings life and health and peace.
 His blood can make the foul - est clean; his blood a - vails for me.
 by saints be - low and saints a - bove, the church in earth and heav'n.

THE DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Postlude



COPYRIGHT:
Lutheran Book of Worship © 1978. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Licenses SAS-002140, SB177826. God of Grace and God of Glory (Arrangement) © CPH Publishing (SESAC). Reprinted/podcast/streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE A-735002.

STAY CONNECTED!

Sign up to receive our weekly Ring Out e-newsletter for news, events, and ministry updates.



Follow us on social media:

Facebook & Instagram: @stjamesnc
YouTube: @stjameslutheranconcord

GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.

Help us prepare for God’s Work. Our Hands. by donating supplies for Lutheran World Relief Kits that will support people in need around the world.

Social Ministry Committee is collecting supplies for:

- School Kits
- Personal Care Kits
- Baby Care Kits
- Fabric Kits

The Christian Education Committee is partnering with Social Ministry by focusing its annual collection on School Kit supplies in place of their traditional pencil drive.

Collection Dates: August 2 – September 6

Assembly Day: Sunday, September 13, following worship

Donations:

Please place school kit items in the "SCHOOL SUPPLIES" collection box located at the Portico Entrance.

Watch for additional collection boxes for Personal Care, Baby Care, and Fabric Kit supplies.

Please consider donating supplies, packing kits, or both to help serve our neighbors around the world.

Scan for supply list:



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Join us during worship on Sunday, August 9 for our annual Blessing of the Backpacks as we pray for students, teachers, and school staff as they begin a new school year.

After worship, stay for a congregational lunch. All are welcome!

STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON

Save the date and join us for a special Stewardship Luncheon after worship on Sunday, August 23. Enjoy a catered lunch and fellowship as we discuss the mission of St. James.