

**ASSISTING IN WORSHIP**

**Lector/Intercessor:** Margaret Garrison  
**Communion Assistant:** Margaret Garrison  
**Acolyte:** Noah Pittard  
**Ushers:** Michael Rinker, Ashley Cline,  
Jeff Koenig, Barbara Albright  
**Greeter:** Amy Griffith  
**Building Supervisor:** Mike Rinker

**PRAYER LIST**

Cecil Berry (friend of Gretchen Walker); Family of Michael Black (nephew of Patsy Black); Patsy Black; Caroline Bost; Patrick Bryn (son of Kirby & Sondra Bryn); Angie Buchanan; Mike & Debbie Cagle (friends of Robert & Debbie Davis); Noah Clifton; Karey Conrad (friend of Dee Pieschel); Jennifer Cook (friend of Fonda Shumate); Catherine Durst (daughter of Anne & Dee Hodges); Nadine Filipak (friend of Al & Dee Pieschel); Ed Frost (friend of the Marlow's); Jeff Gilbert; Tom Grady; Harriett Huss Hodge; Maureen Hollmeyer; Hunter Huss; Dale Johnson (Friend of Dale Merrell); Mary Frances Johnson (cousin of Francie Davis); Karen Johnston (friend of Judy Benz); Ruth Lawler (friend of Dee & Al Pieschel); John Ledford (brother of Deb Black); Barbara Merrell; Deb & Roger Myers (friends of Deb Black); Dave Olsen (friend of Patsy Black); Stan Parnell (friend of Rob & Debbie Davis); Becky Phillips; Al Pieschel; Lori Pittard; Tom Ridenhour; Ruby Tyer (niece of Beth Huss' friend); Jesse Woodard (son-in-law of Beth Huss).

To assist in your offering  
Secure Online Giving



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Thank you for supporting St. James!

**The First Sunday in Lent**  
**February 22, 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

Feb. 22 – Nina Folino, Travis Nesbit, Kelly Propst  
Feb. 23 – Caroline Bestler, Connie Rezza  
Feb. 25 – Margaret Garrison, Martha Matthews  
Feb. 27 – Mary Propst  
Feb. 28 – Joseph Beasley, Robert Beasley, Joel Crainshaw

## CHURCH CALENDAR THIS WEEK

Sunday, Feb. 22	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	9:00am	Choir
	9:30am	Children's Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship
	11:00am	Social Ministry (Parlor)
	<b>11:00am</b>	<b>Lenten Family Event</b>
Mon., Feb. 23	10:30am	Quilting
Thurs., Feb. 26		<i>Amazing Grace Advocacy Spaghetti Fundraiser</i>
	6:30pm	Choir
Sunday, March 1	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	9:00am	Choir
	9:30am	Children's Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship

## AMAZING GRACE ADVOCACY SPAGHETTI DINNER – FEB. 26

Amazing Grace Advocacy invites you to attend their Spaghetti Fundraiser on Thursday, February 26 in the Fellowship Hall.

Lunch will be served from 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., with dinner from 4:00–7:00 p.m. Enjoy a delicious meal while supporting an important mission. Proceeds benefit life and job skills programs for youth with disabilities.



## 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 KYRIE

**A** In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** **Lord, have mer - cy.**

**A** For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**C** **Lord, have mer - cy.**

**A** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**C** **Lord, have mer - cy.**

**A** For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **C** **Lord, have mer - cy.**

**A** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra- cious Lord. **C** **A - men**

## THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** The Lord be with you

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Lord God, our strength, the battle of good and evil rages within and around us, and our ancient foe tempts us with his deceits and empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your Word and, when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**



*Please sit.*

**THE FIRST READING:** Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.’

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God say, “You shall not eat from any tree in the garden”?’ <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; <sup>3</sup> but God said, “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.”’ <sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not die; <sup>5</sup> for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, <sup>[a]</sup> knowing good and evil.’ <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

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

**THE SECOND READING:** Romans 5:12-19

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned—<sup>13</sup> sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

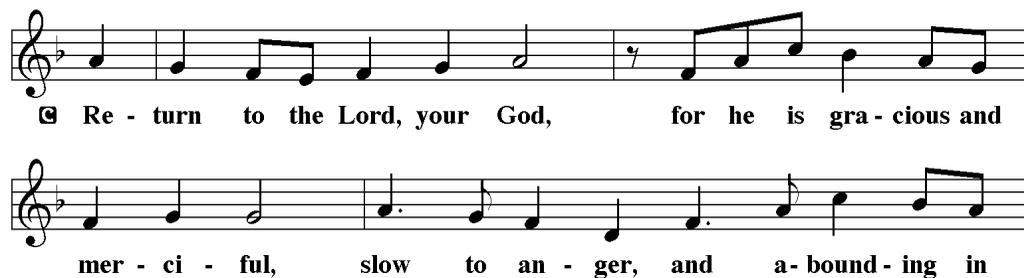
<sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup> And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup> If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup> For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

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

*Please stand.*

**THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and  
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in



stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

**THE HOLY GOSPEL**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter.  
C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' <sup>4</sup> But he answered, 'It is written,

"One does not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup> saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you",

and "On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; <sup>9</sup> and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

"Worship the Lord your God,

and serve only him."

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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: #229 A Mighty Fortress Is our God**

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



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -  
2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -  
3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land all threat - 'ning to de -  
4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, no thanks to foes, who



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and  
ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom  
vour us, we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; they  
fear it; for God him - self fights by our side with



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe  
God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be?  
can - not o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage;  
weap - ons of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house,



has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dread - ful might  
The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,  
in bat - tle we'll en - gage! His might is doomed to fail;  
goods, hon - or, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched a - way,



he arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.  
God's on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.  
God's judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.  
they can - not win the day. The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

**THE 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,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate  
from the virgin Mary, and was made man.  
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,  
With the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.  
He 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.**

*Please kneel or sit as able.*

## THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

A Let us lift our hearts and voices to the Lord in prayer, that he would be merciful to his people.

Father, thank you for Jesus. Thank you for letting him be tempted just as we are when we're at our weakest! Thank you because he stands with us, and for us. Thank you for causing him to dwell in us, through the worst temptations and struggles we face. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, forgive your Church when it falls into lukewarm worship, wayward teaching, fractured fellowship, stingy charity, and halfhearted witness. Forgive it when it condemns certain sinners, but re-brands its favorite sins as virtue. Help it to stand firm in your Word when it is tempted by sins of faithlessness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Forgive our persecuted brethren throughout the world when their anguish curdles into bitterness, retribution, or loss of faith. Strengthen and heal them, so by their witness, you lead their tormentors to repentance and true faith. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Forgive missionaries and all who seek to be your disciples, when their passion for the Gospel cools, or when they become impatient or distracted. Kindle the fire of your Holy Spirit within them, so that they glorify you in all they say and do.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Forgive this congregation when we focus on the speck in another's eye, ignoring the log in our own. Forgive us when we seek our own will, not yours. Forgive us when we boast of ourselves, not the Cross of Christ. Fashion us into the image of Jesus, so others, seeing our good works, glorify you alone. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Strengthen us when we are tempted to sin. Warn and rebuke us, so we resist and repent. Guide us, so we feed on your Word and commit ourselves into your care. Humble us, so we rely only on our Savior, who in all things was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Forgive the nations and leaders of the world, including our own. Forgive the arrogance and ambition that drive decisions. Forgive the cruelty, suspicion, and hatred that fuel wars. Forgive the apathy and prejudice that fuel neglect and injustice. Create new hearts within us, and grant us your peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, have mercy on all who are sick, injured, or handicapped; addicted, abused, or abandoned; despairing, frightened, or ashamed; frightened, grieving or dying. Deliver them from the powers of sin, death, and the devil. Restore them to fellowship with all who love them. Renew their faith in you, their Savior and Lord. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Father, thank you for showing mercy to all who have died trusting in your promises. When the long Lent of this life is complete and the hour of death draws near, let the Cross of Christ sustain us in faith and hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you desire not the death of sinners, but rather that they should turn from their evil way and live: Graciously turn us from those punishments which we by our sins have deserved, and grant us grace evermore to serve you in holiness and pureness of living; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

*Please stand.*

## THE PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

*Please sit.*

## THE ANTHEM

Kyrie from Mass for Two Organs  
(from Messe Solennelle)

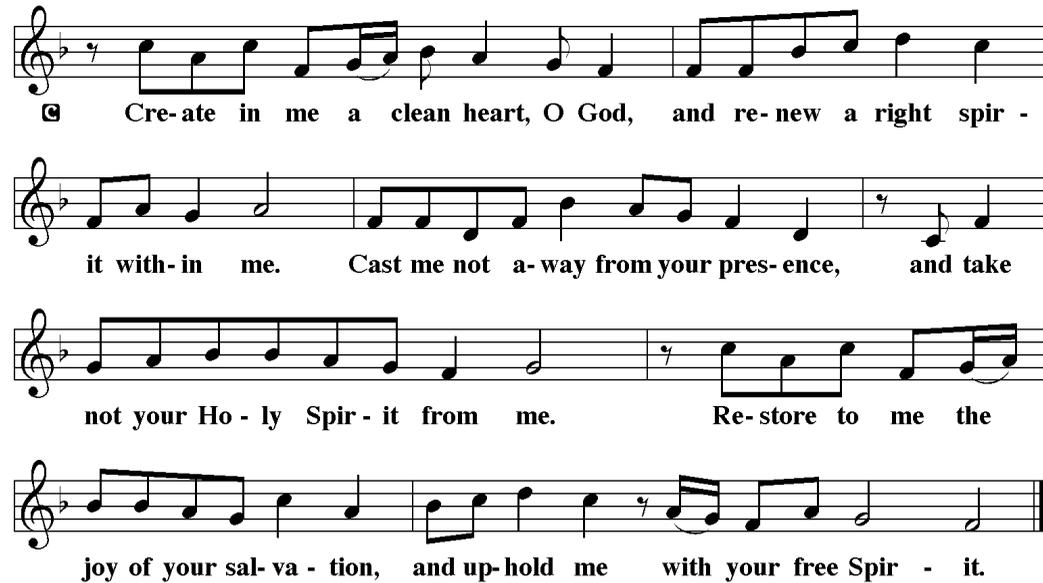
Louis Vierne

*Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.  
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.*

## THE OFFERING

*Please stand.*

## THE OFFERTORY



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -  
it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the  
joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

## THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

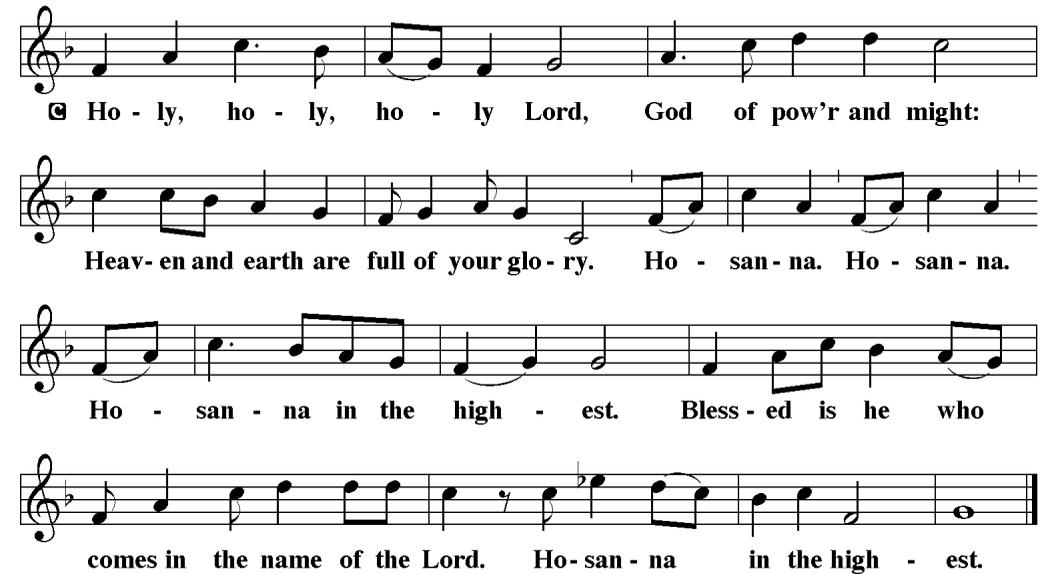
A Merciful Father,  
C we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our  
selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love.  
Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen.



## 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.  
You bid your people cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast.  
Renew our zeal in faith and life,  
and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God.  
And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



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

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**

**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.**

**C** 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.

*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 Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his through the same 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: #343 Guide Me Ever Great Redeemer

*Please see next page.*

THE DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Pastorale

Lowry



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Prayers adapted from [lutherancore.website](http://lutherancore.website)

1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this  
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing  
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me with your  
 wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me all my  
 fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me safe on

pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
 jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,  
 Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es,

feed me now and ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
 shield me with your might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.  
 I will raise for - ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.