Sunday, January 11, 2026
10:00 am Worship Service
BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Mission Statement: Compelled by God's love and our faith in Jesus Christ, Unity Church, a diverse people of faith, seeks to realize God's dream for the world through worship, learning, giving, and serving.

Core Values: We love children. Serve Christ with courage. Embrace diversity. Nurture community. Be an advocate for justice and peace.

Vision Statement: We are called to Reach Up, Reach In and Reach Out

(302) 658-5288 UnityChurchELCA@gmail.com
2101 Lancaster Avenue, Wilmington, DE 19805
www.unitywilmington.org
We invite you to contact Unity's staff members:

The Rev. Brian K. Sanders, Lead Pastor
443-676-2239; bks0808@aol.com

The Rev. Dr. Melissa P. Lemons, Pastor for Community Ministry
melissalemons@gmail.com; 302-803-8866
Office hours: by appointment

Norwood Coleman, Jr., PhD, Music Director
Mrs. Sharlene Drummond, Choir Director

YOU CAN ACCESS US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:00AM ON YOUTUBE, UNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, WILMINGTON, DE WITH THE CURRENT SUNDAY DATE. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, USE LINK BELOW.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN4vkddPnbKEzTKlFg-Lkvg

"Enter to Worship"

*****Those who are able are invited to stand **** Please, no walking or standing during this time. BOLD PRINT**: Congregation responds, P: Presider, A: Assisting Minister/Worship Leader. Where you see a ☩, you are invited to make the sign of the cross.

THE GATHERING

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

PRAISE & WORSHIP

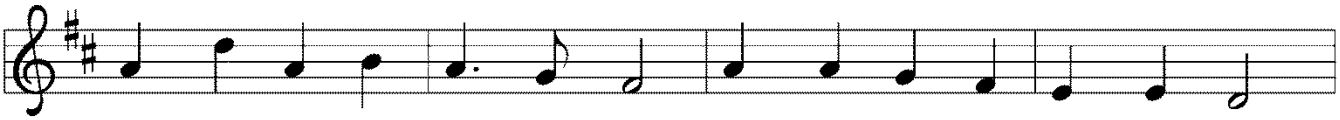
RINGING OF THE BELLS

Introduction

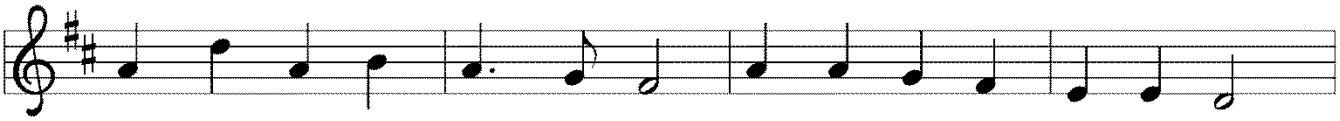
A: In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

OPENING HYMN- "SONGS OF THANKFULNESS AND PRAISE" ELW 310 Please Stand

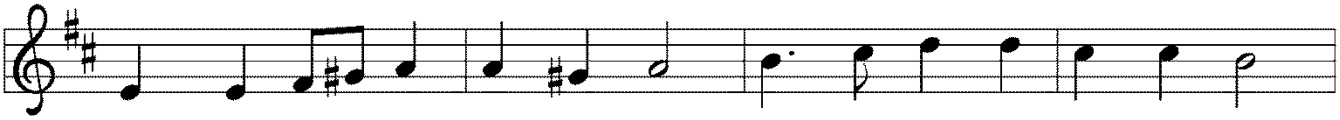
Songs of Thankfulness and Praise



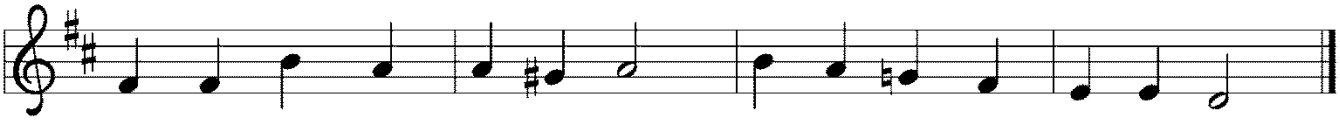
1 Songs of thank-ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to thee we raise;
2 Man - i - fest at Jor - dan's stream, proph - et, priest, and king su - preme;
3 Man - i - fest in mak - ing whole weak - ened bod - y, faint - ing soul;
4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord, pres - ent in thy ho - ly word;



man - i - fest - ed by the star to the sa - ges from a - far,
and at Ca - na wed - ding guest in thy God-head man - i - fest;
man - i - fest in val - iant fight, quell-ing all the dev - il's might;
grace to im - i - tate thee now and be pure, as pure art thou;



branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem in thy birth at Beth - le - hem:
man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, chang - ing wa - ter in - to wine;
man - i - fest in gra - cious will, ev - er bring-ing good from ill:
that we might be - come like thee at thy great e - piph - a - ny,



an - thems be to thee ad - dressed,
an - thems be to thee ad - dressed,
an - thems be to thee ad - dressed,
and may praise thee, ev - er blest,

God in flesh made man - i - fest.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807–1885, alt.
Music: SALZBURG, Jakob Hintze, 1622–1702

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (Please Stand)

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

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

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

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A or P: O God our Father**, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD (Please be seated)

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

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-9

1 Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
2 He will not cry out or lift up his voice
or make it heard in the street;
3 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
4 He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth,
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

5 Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
6 I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
7 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
8 I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.
9 See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;

before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 29 (READ RESPONSIVELY)

1 Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

2 **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**

3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.

4 **The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice; the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.**

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

6 **the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

7 The voice of the LORD bursts forth in lightning flashes.

8 **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

9 The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are crying, "Glory!"

10 **The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forevermore.**

11 O LORD, give strength to your people; give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

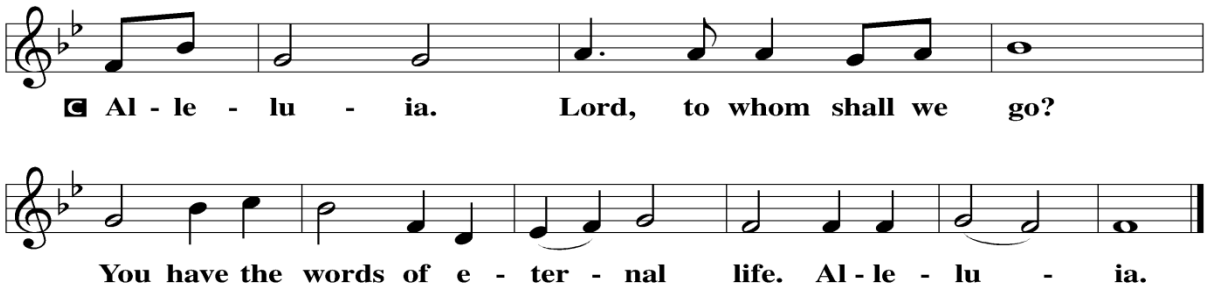
Second Reading: Acts 10:34-43

34 Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. 36 You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. 37 That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. 39 We are witnesses to all that he and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, 40 but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, 41 not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. 43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."did both in Judea

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

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Please Stand)

P: Please stand for the reading of the Holy Gospel.



GOSPEL

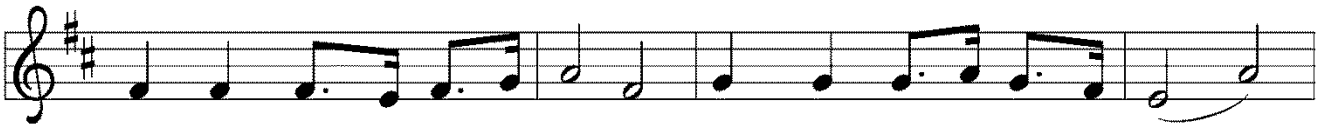
P: The Holy Gospel according to: **Matthew 3:13-17**

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

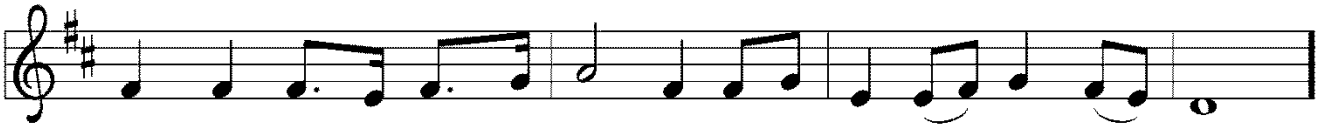
Gospel:
13 Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by
him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized
by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be
so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness."
Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he
came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him
and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on
him. 17 And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Be-
loved, with whom I am well pleased."
The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY – "SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER"
TFF 179

Shall We Gather at the River

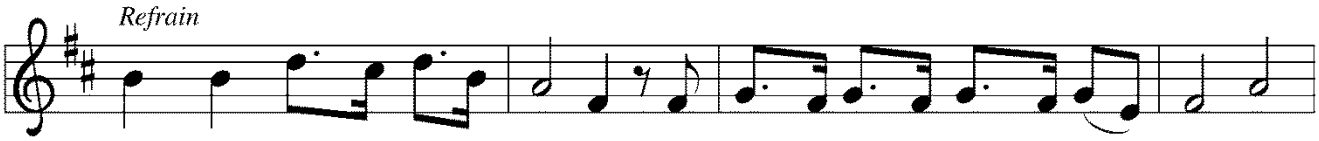


1 Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have trod,
2 On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,
3 Ere we reach the shin-ing riv - er, lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;
4 Soon we'll reach the shin-ing riv - er, soon our pil-grim-age will cease;

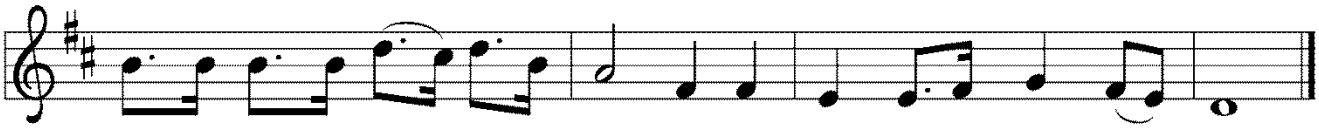


with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow-ing by the throne of God?
we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the hap - py gold - en day.
grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro-vide a robe and crown.
soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the mel - o - dy of peace.

Refrain



Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, the beau-ti-ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er;



gath - er with the saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826–1899
Music: HANSON PLACE, Robert Lowry

SERMON **Pastor Brian Sanders**

Notes...

APOSTLES CREED (Please Stand)

C: 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 into hell.* 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 Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Or, "he descended to the dead," another translation of this text in widespread use.
From sundaysandseasons.com.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Please sit, stand or kneel)

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

Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs (*local water sources may be named*). Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Sustain international aid workers and peacemakers. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Provide safety and support for those seeking asylum or in need of shelter. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill (*especially*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

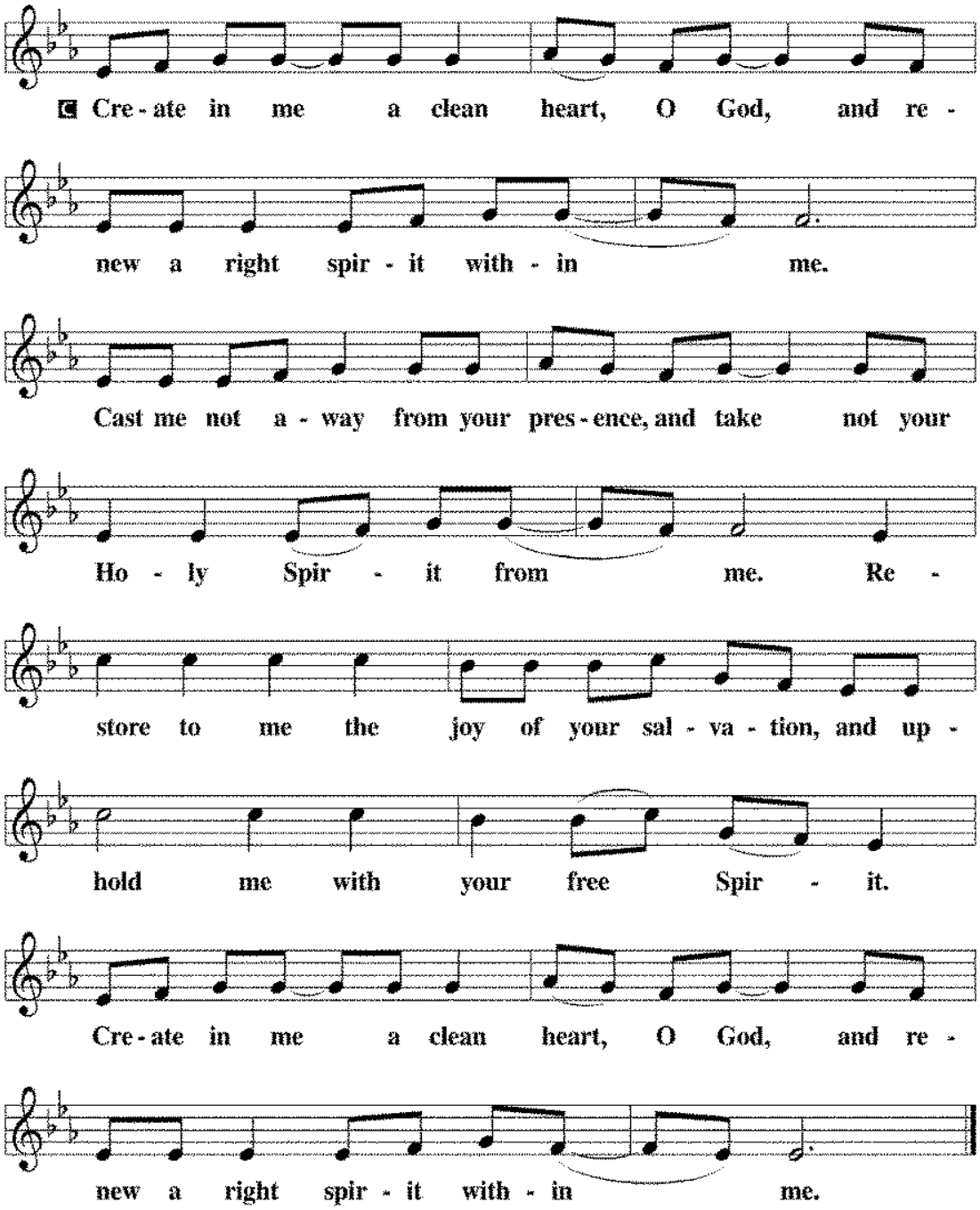
PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always

C: And also with you. Please share a sign of Christ's peace.

OFFERING (God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:7, 8)

(*During the offering, the ushers will pass the offering plates moving from back to front while a musical selection is played. Then the congregation will sing the Offertory hymn printed below*.)


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.
Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me.

OFFERING PRAYER

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

PLEASE BE SEATED.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING ***All are welcome to communion***

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 our thanks and praise.

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.

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. We remember and proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us,

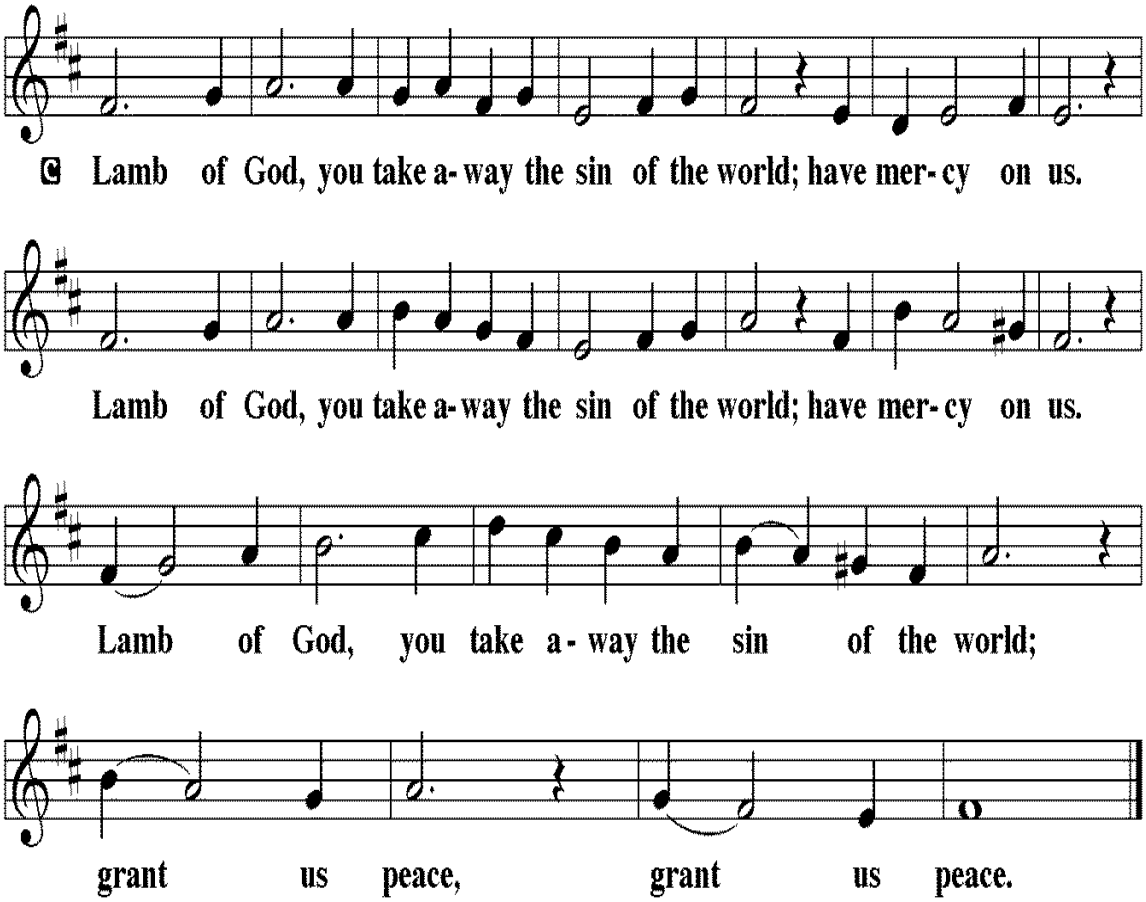
full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in Christ's death and resurrection. We look with hope for the Lord's coming and ask… **Come, Lord Jesus. Come Holy Spirit. Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered as one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:
(*Alternate/modern versions of prayer in This Far by Faith p. 3, WOV p. 39*)
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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A & **C**: Radiant God**, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us to minister to the world.

BLESSING

P: May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN– "WADE IN THE WATER" TFF 114 Please Stand

Wade in the Water

Refrain

All

Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,

wade in the wa - ter, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Leader

All

1 See that host all dressed in white,
2 See that band all dressed in red,
3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,

God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the

Leader

wa - ter.

the lead - er looks like the Is - rael - ite.
looks like the band that . . Mo - ses led.
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com - ing on me.
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream.

All

Refrain

God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: WADE IN THE WATER, African American spiritual

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy
Thanks be to God.

"Let us exit to serve"

We are called to reach up, reach in, and reach out…..

IF YOU HAVE ANYONE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THE PRAYER LIST, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE @ 302-658-5288. NAMES WILL REMAIN ON THE PRAYER LIST FOR 3 MONTHS, UNLESS YOU REQUEST LONGER. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE to MAKE ADDITIONS – (302) 658-5288.

THIS WEEK WE ASK THAT YOU KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

UNITY CHURCH PASTOR BRIAN SANDERS
PASTOR CLARENCE PETTIT
REV. LORRAINE RUTH JOE
FRAN RODRIQUEZ BONNIE FISHER
JOAN MILLER

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Birthdays, Anniversaries, Visitors

WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME ALL VISITORS TO UNITY THIS MORNING. IT IS SO GOOD TO HAVE YOU AND PLEASE COME AGAIN.

CHRISTMAS TREE & DECORATIONS will be taken down TODAY, January 11th, immediately following morning worship. Please stay to help. We sincerely appreciate it. Thank you!

PUB THEOLOGY – is held on the third Sunday of each month. We meet in the Weiser Room, have lunch and hold a lively discussion centering around everyday life. It is quite interesting and everyone is invited is invited to attend. In January, we will meet on Sunday, January 18th.

SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR/FELLOWSHIP is held in the Narthex immediately following morning worship and all are invited to attend. If anyone is interested in hosting one Sunday, please contact Rev. Lorraine @ (302) 383-9755.

PRIVATE PRAYERS – If you would like extra prayer time, you are welcome to stay at the altar after you have had communion.

WEEKLY ZUMBA CLASSES – These classes are held in Luther Hall immediately following morning worship. Please come and participant. Everyone is invited to attend for a fun, healthy activity, and there is a free-will offering.

Dementia Caregiver Support Group: 2nd Thursday of the month, 6-7:30pm. Contact Rev. Brain Sanders for more info.
Prayer: Anyone interested in 30 minutes of presenting prayer leads is invited to join our Prayer Line every Monday evening at 6:30-7:00 pm. Dial 1-240-591-0390, 315-704#.

Volunteers needed: Readers (lectors), Assisting Ministers (Worship leaders), Communion Assistants and Altar Guild. Please consider helping out in this capacity. Also, we need a volunteer liaison for the Boy Scouts to replace Bob Mazzoni. See Carol Egan for more info.

Council Vacancies: There are several open positions on Unity Church Council – volunteers needed to oversee Education, Hospitality, and Stewardship Committees; as well as anyone with accounting or bookkeeping skills to assist the Treasurer. See Rob Snowden or Pastor Sanders.

Offering/Giving: An alternative way to contribute to Unity is to set up VANCO on your mobile phone by texting (844)794-0738 and follow

directions to donate by credit card. There is a "donate now" button on our Website which is www.unitywilmington.org

Spiritual Direction/Companionship: If you'd like to talk individually about your faith life and how God shows up for you, contact Pr. Melissa. Sessions are free for Unity members (normally $50 per hour). Companions usually meet once a month.

BIBLE STUDY SURVEY – Please take a copy of the Bible Study Survey which is at the back of the church and fill it out to aid Pastor Sanders in best way to approach weekly Bible Study and fulfill the needs of those attending the Bible Study.

Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, January 14th and will be held every Wednesday evening at 7:00 via Zoom. Please access Zoom as follows:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87206052414?pwd=cWxnSnJodFE5S3hObzQrVGdMWGwwUT09
One tap mobile
+13017158592,,87206052414#.....0#,,717690# US (Wash, DC)
Meeting ID: 872 0605 2414
Passcode: 717690