# *Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost*

November 15, 2026



# Divine Service 9am


**St. James Lutheran Church**

1213 US Hwy 22

Phillipsburg, NJ

908.454.2864 www.strawchurch.com strawchurch@gmail.com


Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 celebrated our 275th anniversary of being God's church. We're so glad you're here! We pray you feel warmly welcomed as we gather to celebrate God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ. He who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

**If you are visiting today:** Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! Pastor Levi and the members of our church-community would be glad to help you out. Please sign the guest book and complete the "Please Stay In Touch Card" for any inquiries.

**To those with young children:** We are very happy you are here today. Relax and enjoy your time here. Jesus knows that children tend to wiggle and squawk a bit, so please don't be embarrassed by it! Encourage your kids to sing and pray with us and be sure to sing and pray your parts as an example to them.

**Following along in the bulletin:** *indicates the congregation stands. In our liturgical worship, **bold words** are spoken by the congregation. LBW refers to content found in the green hymnbook *Lutheran Book of Worship*. WOV refers to content found in the blue hymnbook *With One Voice*.

| | |
|---|---|
| Presiding Minister | The Rev. Levi Q. Powers |
| Assisting Minister | Dan Gulick |
| Musician | Dave Miller |

# I. GATHERING

### *CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

*The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

In the name of the Father,
and of the ☩ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
**Amen.**
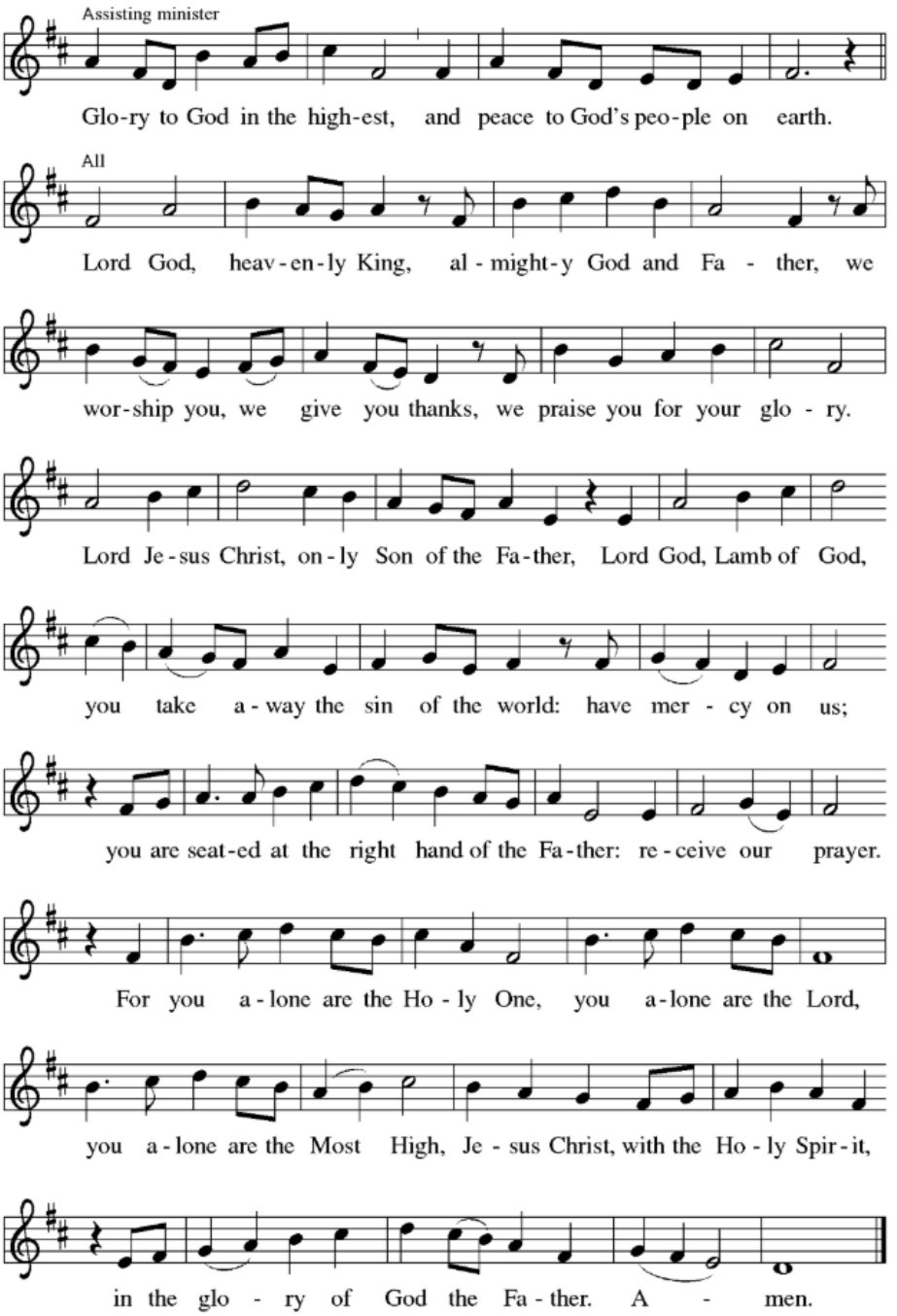
God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
**Amen.**
Most merciful God,
**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.**
In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of the church of Christ, and by Christ's authority alone, I forgive you the entirety of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
**Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN: LBW 320 - O God, Our Help in Ages Past**

***GREETING**

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

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE: Glory to God**


Assisting minister
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.
All
Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we
wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.
Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;
you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.
For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,
you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,
in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**
Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

## II. WORD

**FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18**
*A reading from Zephaniah.*

7 Be silent before the Lord GOD,
for the day of the LORD is at hand!
The LORD has prepared a sacrifice;
he has consecrated his guests.
12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who settle like dregs in wine,
those who say in their hearts,
"The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm."
13 Their wealth shall be plundered
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.
14 The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter;
the warrior cries aloud there.
15 That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

17 I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust
and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed,
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

*The word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

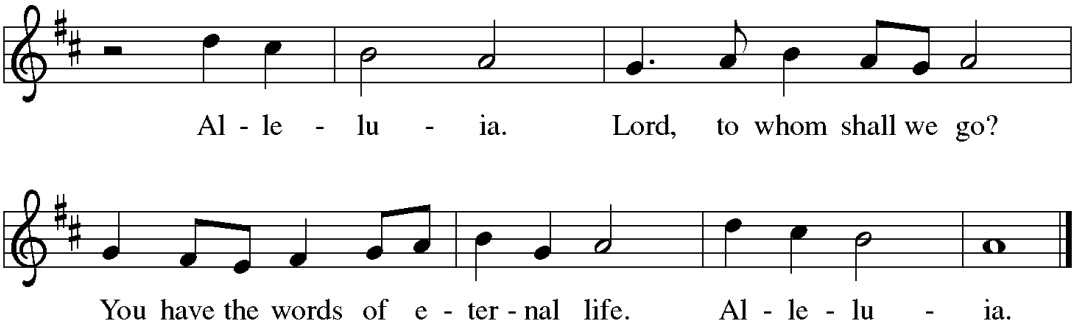
**PSALM: Psalm 90:1-12**

1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.
**2 Before the mountains were brought forth**
**or ever you had formed the earth and the world,**
**from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**
3 You turn us back to dust
and say, "Turn back, you children of Adam."
**4 For a thousand years in your sight**
**are like yesterday when it is past**
**or like a watch in the night.**
5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
**6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;**
**in the evening it fades and withers.**
7 For we are consumed by your anger;
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.
**8 You have set our iniquities before you,**
**our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**
9 For all our days pass away under your wrath;
our years come to an end like a sigh.

**10 The days of our life are seventy years**
**or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;**
**even then their span is only toil and trouble;**
**they are soon gone, and we fly away.**
11 Who considers the power of your anger?
Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.
**12 So teach us to count our days**
**that we may gain a wise heart.**

**SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**
*A reading from 1 Thessalonians.*
1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need
to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of
the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 When they say, “There is peace and
security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a
pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are
not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5 for you are all children of
light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6 So, then, let us
not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober, 7 for those who
sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we
belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and
for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has destined us not for wrath but for
obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that
whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one
another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.
*The word of the Lord.*
**Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**




**GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:14-30**

*The holy gospel according to St. Matthew*.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once
16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26 But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with

interest. [28] So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.
[29] For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance,
but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. [30] As for
this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping
and gnashing of teeth.' "
*The gospel of the Lord.*
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW 355 - Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow**

**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 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 catholic church,**
**the communion of saints,**
**the forgiveness of sins,**
**the resurrection of the body,**
**and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**
Each petition ends: "…Hear us O God, **your mercy is great."**
Prayers conclude: **Amen.**

***Peace**
The peace of Christ be with you full and free.
**And also with you.**
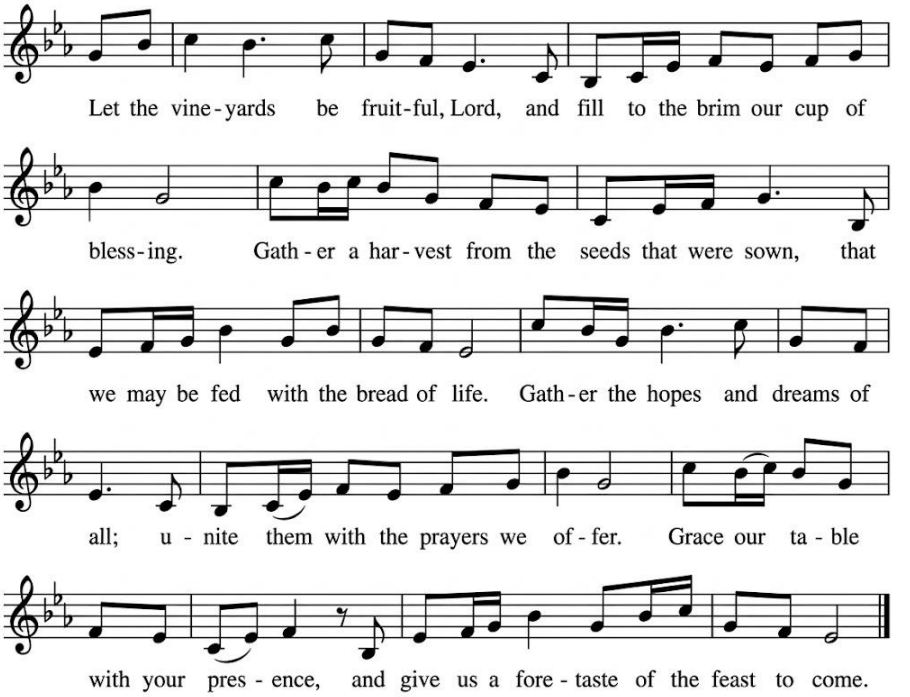
*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.*
*The assembly is seated.*

# III. THE LORD'S SUPPER

## OFFERTORY

*Scan the QR Code to give electronically. An offering plate is in the back of the sanctuary if you wish to give check or cash. You are welcome to give to the ministry of St. James Lutheran Church freely and spontaneously. There is no guilt or shame. If you do give, give with a cheerful heart.*

## *OFFERING VERSE: ELW 184 – Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

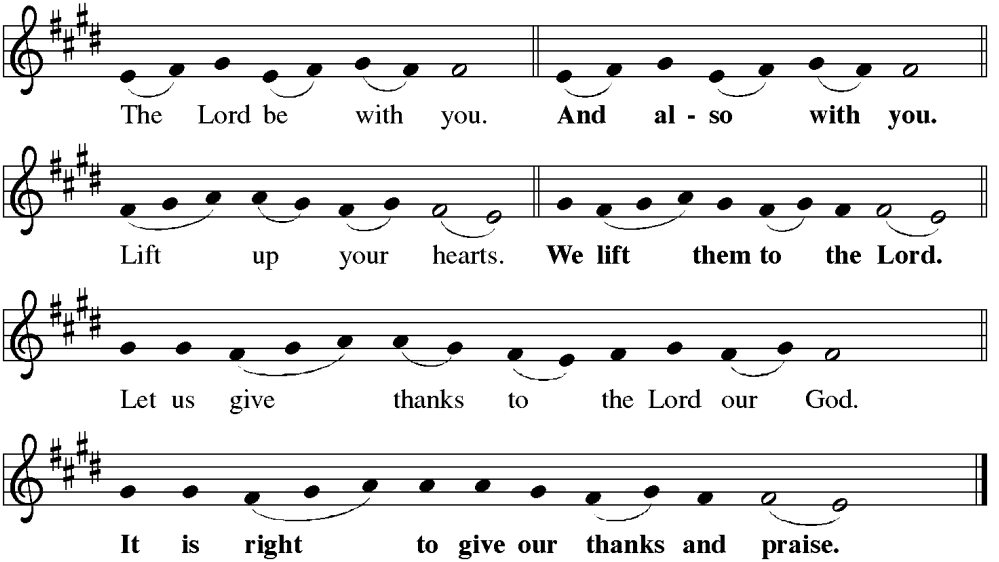



## *OFFERING PRAYER

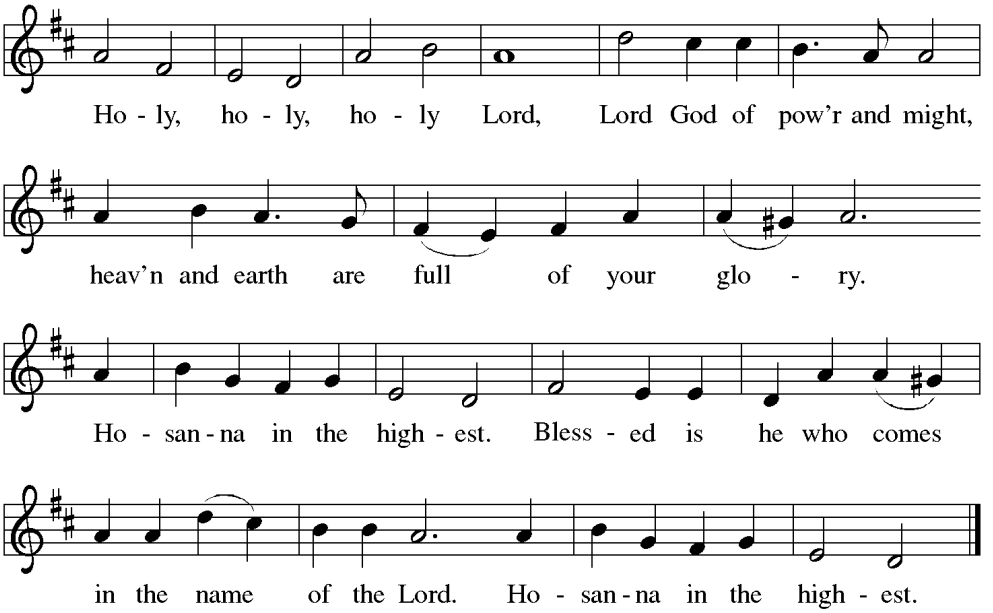
Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

## *THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*Together with the bread and the cup we receive the true body and true blood of Christ. All who are baptized into Christ are welcome to join us at the altar. We commune in tables of 10-15 people. Pastor will distribute the wafer for you to eat. An assistant will hand you a cup to drink from. The first chalice has grape juice. The second chalice has wine. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know. Adults and children not yet communing are welcome to come forward with their arms crossed for a blessing.*




It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise…Here the minister continues with the preface for the day, concluding: …we praise your name and join their unending hymn:




***THE WORDS OF GIFT**

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 testament in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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**

**COMMUNION**

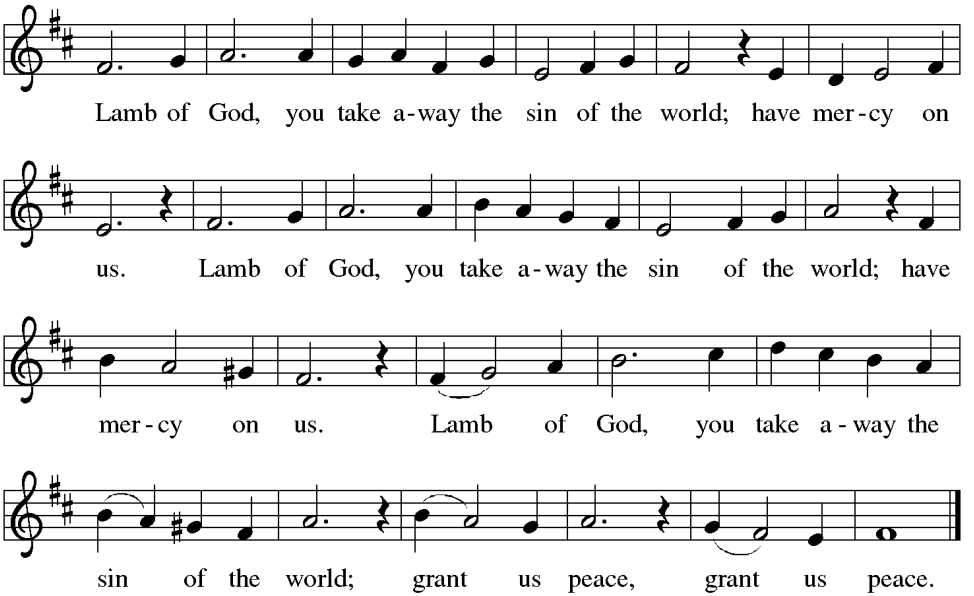
*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

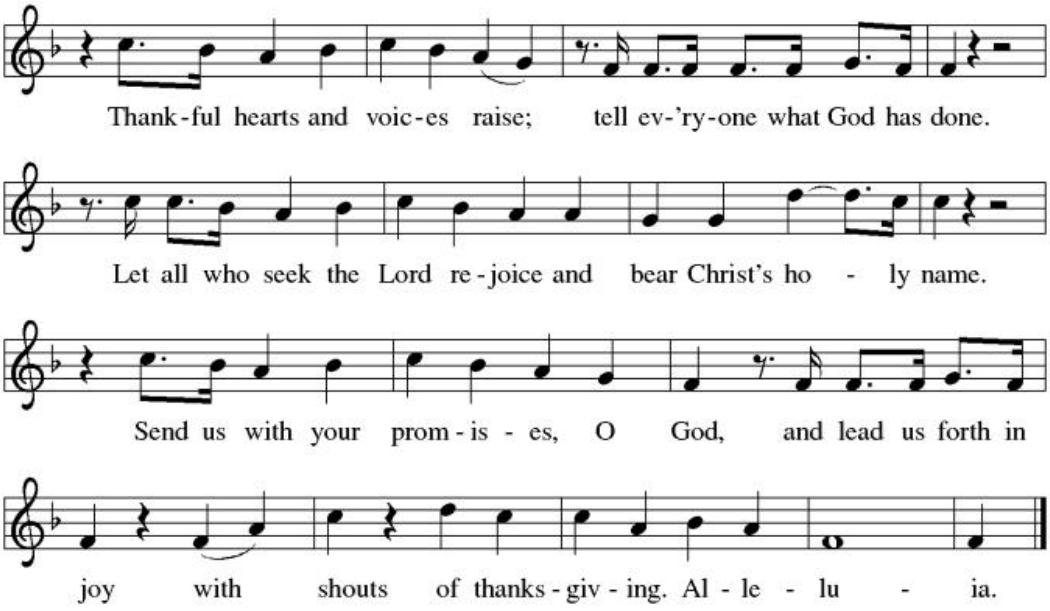
*and each person may respond*

Amen.

**LAMB OF GOD**



***POST COMMUNION SONG: ELW 205 – Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise**




***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**
Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

# IV. SENDING

***BLESSING**
Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN: WOV 778 - O Christ the Same**

***DISMISSAL**
Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
**Thanks be to God.**



This week's altar flowers are donated in loving memory of Robert M. Wismer for his birthday tomorrow. Bob, without you, a part of me is missing. I know you will be awaiting me with open arms. Until then, I miss and love you always and forever. Sandy

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Today, after church:** Coffee Fellowship in Frey Hall. Worship and Music Committee in Pastor's office.
- **Tuesday, November 17:** Church Council
- **Wednesday, November 18:** Fellowship at Sharky's 4pm-6pm
- **Social Ministry food pantry collection for November:** Season of Sharing essentials: spices and seasonings, cooking oils, honey, maple syrup, etc.
- **Social Ministry Family for Christmas: Social Ministry** is providing a local family with three children in Phillipsburg with their Wish List. A sign up sheet of the list is in Frey Hall. Please have all unwrapped gifts in by Sunday December 6th.

## UPCOMING

- **Tuesday, December 1 :** "Faith, Family, & Food," 5:30-7pm. A time for families of preschool children to grow in faith together. Eat 5:30-6. Read a book together, sing together, learn and play together at 6-7pm. Invite anyone with kiddos.
- **Advent Vespers:** Soup supper and prayer service on these Wednesdays. December 2, 9 and 16. 6:15pm soup and 7pm service.
- **Live Nativity:** Sunday, December 13 from 12p-2p.
- **Vendor Fair:** Sunday, December 13 from 12p-3p.

**THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP HELPERS(11/15)**
**Usher/Greeter: Jon Slaton**
**Lector: Harvey Walters**
**Altar Guild: Barbara & Jim Sikra**
**Tellers: Carol & Lois Steible**
**NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HELPERS(11/22)**
**Usher/Greeter: Doris Lauer**
**Lector: Jamie McRoberts**
**Altar Guild: Steve Stocker**
**Tellers: Steve Stocker**

Let us remember in prayer: The Family & Friends of Anna Giannotto, AJ, Barbara, Nancy, Jerry, Jess, Keith, Patrick, John, Sara, Gary and those unable to attend church service; Mae, Janet, Janice, Alayne, Esther and Elsie.