





THE HOLY EUCHARIST: TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SUNDAY AFTER ALL SAINTS' NOVEMBER 2, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Welcome to those who have joined us this morning. If you are unfamiliar with the ritual customs of The Episcopal Church, simply relax and let the congregation carry you in worship. Please be mindful of others near you who want to pray or sit in silence before the service begins.



The Feast of All Saints' (November 1) is celebrated today. It is one of the seven major feasts in the church year. It is the day when we remember, celebrate, and give thanks for the lives of "all saints," known and unknown. The saints are our spiritual ancestors. They have gone before us and now pray for, encourage, and guide us in our journey. They are an affirmation of the resurrection. To deny the saints and their work is, at some level, a denial of the resurrection. The saints are our spiritual guides and mentors. We build on the gift of their legacy and one day we will entrust that gift to others—those who come after us. Saints bear witness through their life, actions, and writings to the presence of Christ. It should encourage us to remember that the saints, like us, are first and foremost redeemed sinners in whom the risen Christ's words to St. Paul come to fulfillment, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Please Pray For:

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of the Province of West Africa

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: For All Saints, Carmel, All Saints, Palo Alto, and All Saints/Cristo Rey, Watsonville;

Holy Family, San Jose.

Healing: Barbara Monks, Kirk Miller, Jenna Baker, Jane Lawson

On-going Prayers for Healing: The Rev. Roger Barney, Dede Bene, Tim Gee, Gray Judge, Michele Bluhm,

Nancy Keane, Virginia Slagle, Marge Faucher

Our Homebound: Ed Jacklitch

For those who have died: Elaine Leavy, Bren Gila (uncle of Joshua Gila)

Other Prayers: The wars in Ukraine and the Middle East

Ministers of the Liturgy today: Presider: The Rev. Maly Carswell Hughes; Associate Priest: The Rev. Joel Martinez; Assisting Priest: The Rev. Roger Barney; Director of Music/Organist: Michael Burroughs; MC: Randy Simmons; Lectors: Elizabeth Morris, Diane Lovelace; Eucharistic Ministers: Barbara Silverstein, Elizabeth Harrell, Hugh Wright, Sharon Boyce-Bender; Order of St. Luke: Diane Lovelace; Bread Baker: Pam Lougheed Drysdale; Acolyte: Andrew Fitzpatrick; Altar Guild: Marlene Sleek, Betty Toepher, Susi Van Wickle, Ann Wright; Lead Usher: Laura Biche; Ushers: Jane Bradley, Joe Lawson, Matt Cameron; Greeters: Anne Cameron, Barbara Gagner; Flowers: Lindsay Catterton; Fellowship Cafe: Joe Lawson, Beth Hopf, Leslie Butlar; Video Team: Lauren Fitzpatrick, Logan Fitzpatrick.

Vestry: Jeff Harrell-Sr. Warden, Chris Bracher-Jr. Warden, Phil Boyce, Bill Brooks, Alex Church, Mary Ann Gee, Gray Judge, Dianne Kavanagh, Kate Van Wickle Maher, Janet McAlpine, Kathleen Shull, Randy Simmons, Andrew Stearns, Dottie Barney-Vestry Clerk, Marcel Provencher-Treasurer

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Upcoming Memorial Services

Marian Abbott Sat., Nov 8th, 2pm Reception in the Center Howard Nelson Mon., Nov 10th, 4pm Reception in the Narthex Angelin Dukes Sat., Nov 22nd, 2pm Reception in the Center Elaine Leavy Sun., Dec 7th, 3pm Reception in the Center Reception in the Center

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

THE WELCOME AND GATHERING PRAYER

Let us pray: Gracious God, we gather now to offer our whole selves to you in worship; we lay before you our prayers and our praise, our sitting and our standing, our listening and our singing, all for your glory. Remind us that this sacred time is also offered on behalf of those who are not here: people who hurt, suffer, are ill, or feel lost and alone. Align our hearts, minds, and will so close to yours that we might be truly present in this moment, so that when we go out into the world, we may be like salt that enhances and preserves, and light that shines for your glory. Amen.

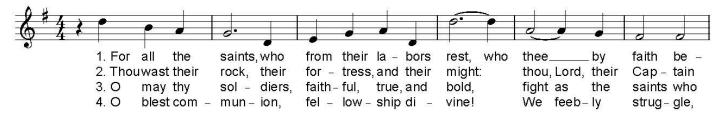
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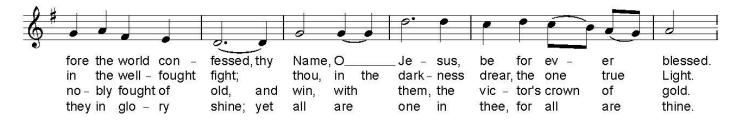
In remembrance

text by Claire Horner (d.1977) music by Eleanore Daley

Text: Do not stand at my grave and weep. I am not there, I do not sleep. I am a thousand winds that blow, I am the diamond glint on snow. I am the sunlight on ripened grain. I am the gentle morning rain. And when you wake in the morning's hush, I am the sweet uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight. I am the soft stars that shine at night. Do not stand at my grave and cry. I am not there, I did not die.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN







Text: William Walsham How Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams Copyright: Oxford University Press SINE NOMINE H287

THE WORD OF GOD

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Presider There is one Body and one Spirit;

People There is one hope in God's call to us;

Presider One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

People One God and Father of all.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Presider Let us pray

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

THE LESSONS All may be seated

FIRST READING - Daniel 7:1-3,15-18

During Israel's exile in Babylon, Daniel has a troubling dream full of visionary symbols.

In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream: I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me, and the visions of my head terrified me. I approached one of the attendants to ask him the truth concerning all this. So he said that he would disclose to me the interpretation of the matter: "As for these four great beasts, four kings shall arise out of the earth. But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever—for ever and ever."

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

PSALM 149 (Read responsively)

A joyful song in which the faithful praise the Lord and anticipate the victory of justice.

1 Hallelujah!

Sing to the Lord a new song; *

sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.

2 Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; *

let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his Name in the dance; *

let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.

4 For the Lord takes pleasure in his people * and adorns the poor with victory.

5 Let the faithful rejoice in triumph; * let them be joyful on their beds.

6 Let the praises of God be in their throat * and a two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To wreak vengeance on the nations * and punishment on the peoples;

8 To bind their kings in chains * and their nobles with links of iron;

9 To inflict on them the judgment decreed; * this is glory for all his faithful people. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING - Ephesians 1:11-23

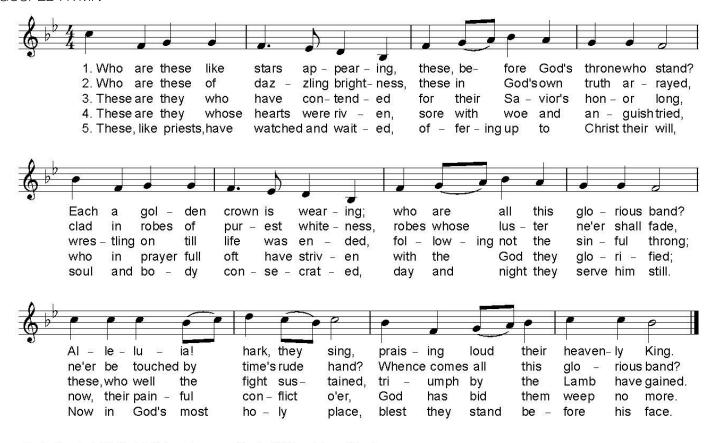
God has marked those who follow Christ for the divine purpose and has sealed them with the promised Holy Spirit.

In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he

raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL HYMN



Text: Theobald Heinrich Schenck ZEUCH MICH, ZEUCH MICH

Music: William Henry Monk

Copyright: Church Pension Fund, 1985

THE GOSPEL – Luke 6:20-31 All standing, as able

In our gospel passage Jesus pronounces blessing and woes, words of comfort and challenge, showing that the values of the reign of God are quite different from worldly standards.

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets." "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. "Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. "Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. "Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets. "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS All standing, as able

Presider Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his

death, and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you, therefore, to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all

his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in God's holy Catholic Church.

Presider Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People I do.

Presider Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Presider Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People 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 to the dead. 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.

Presider Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People 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.

Presider Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in

the prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to

the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every

human being?

People I will, with God's help.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

Presider The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

At the following words, the Presider touches the water

Presider Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

ASPERGES OF THE CONGREGATION

Presider May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Remain standing, as able

Prayers written in the Book of Biddings will be prayed throughout the week by the Koinon Intercessory Prayer Group.

Leader As we prepare to bring our gifts to the altar, let us raise our voices in prayer and praise, thanking God for the opportunity to tell out our souls in joy.

Leader I ask your prayers for the Church, God's greatest gift to us. For all who worship and serve this day. For the wisdom and teaching of our bishops, priests, deacons, and laypeople. Tell Out my Soul, **The Greatness of our House of Prayer.**

Leader I bid your prayers for our Nation and for all nations; for all refugees, for an end to terror and war, for a spirit of Goodwill. We pray for our national institutions that they will work together in justice. Tell Out my Soul, **The Greatness of the Promise of Liberty.**

Leader I ask your prayers for our neighbors, for the mission of our church and the ways we change the world with our gifts. Tell Out my Soul, **The Greatness of our Love.**

Leader	Please	pray for	those	on our p	arish p	rayer list	, especial	ly for I	Roger,	Barbara,	Jenna,	Dede,
Tim, Nancy	y, Gray,	Michele	, Kirk,	Virginia,	Marge	, Jane, a	and those	who v	ve nam	ie now ei	ther sile	ently or
aloud (paus	se)	Tell	Out m	ny Soul, ¹	The Gr	eatness	of our Co	ompas	ssion.			

Leader I ask your prayers for the dead and the dying, especially Elaine Leavy, Bren Gila, uncle of Joshua Gila, for those who mourn and those we name now with our voices or in our hearts (pause). Tell Out my Soul, **The Greatness of our stories.**

Leader I invite your celebrations, remembrances, and the naming of our many blessings, innumerable and filled with grace (pause) _____. May we be inspired to share our wealth, works, and wisdom with our neighbors and Saint Andrew's as we Tell out our Soul, **The Greatness of the Lord.**

Celebrant Hear the prayers of your people, O God, and inspire us with gratitude and abundance as we share our many gifts with You and the world You made. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

You may greet those around you in the name of Christ.

WELCOME. ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENT

BIRTHDAY PRAYER

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servant(s) as he/she/they begins another year. Grant that he/she/they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen his/her/their trust in your goodness all the days of his/her/their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Everyone is invited to make an offering as an expression of gratitude for God's generosity. The ushers will pass the plate. You may also give using the QR code.



OFFERTORY

I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare.

-- C.S. Lewis

ANTHEM

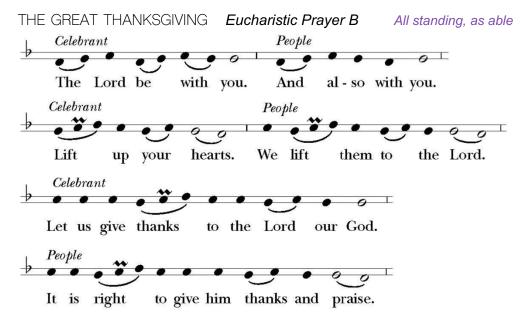
The Beatitudes, Matthew 12:3-12

setting by Philip Stopford

PRESENTATION HYMN All standing as the gifts are presented



Robert Allen Kunitz Marlene Girardi Bottomly Robert Earl Eggers Michael Edwin Dale Sylvia Ann Moore Elaine Leavy Carol Joann Blaisdell Suzanne Currie Tomkins Noble Frank Ronald Mason Albert B. Evans, Jr James Francis Regan Susan Krause Biester Bryan David McClelland Barbara Conant Howard Gustave Nelson Marian Abbott



It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For in the multitude of your saints, you have surrounded us with a great cloud of witnesses, that we might rejoice in their fellowship, and run with endurance the race that is set before us; and, together with them, receive the crown of glory that never fades away. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS



The congregation stands, as able, or kneel.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Blessed Andrew and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.



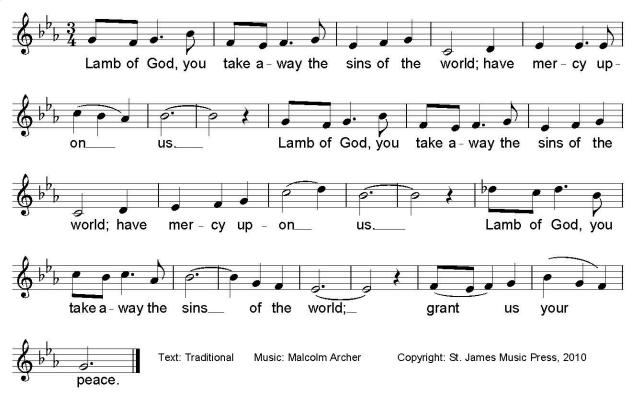
THE LORD'S PRAYER

Presider And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

AGNUS DEI



THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Presider The Gifts of God for the People of God.

When receiving communion you may drink from the common cup (no intincting is offered). If you desire to only receive the bread you are receiving the full communion. Prayer cards may be placed in the bowl when you receive communion.

Healing Prayers are offered during communion and until the end of the service. Members of the Order of St. Luke will be in the Ladd Chapel (on the right side of the chancel) to pray with you for yourself and others.



COMMUNION MUSIC

Soul of Christ/Anima Christe

14th c prayer set by Philip Stopford

Text: Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Today you shall be with me in paradise. Blood of Christ, refresh me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. Today you shall be with me in Paradise. O Good Jesus, hear me. Within your wounds, hide me; Let me never be separated from you; from the darkness, defend me. Today you shall be with me in Paradise. In the hour of my death, call me and bid me come to you that with your saints I may praise you forever and forever. Today you shall be with me in Paradise. Amen.

BLESSING OF PRAYER CARDS

Presider Gracious God, you know what is in our hearts better than we do. We bring here before you some of our private prayers of intention, need, sorrow, and thanksgiving. Bless these prayers and fulfill them according to your compassionate will. **Amen**.

Let us pray

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SENDING OUT OF THE EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Presider In the name of this congregation we send you forth bearing these holy gifts to ______, that he/she/they may share with us in the Communion of Christ's body and blood. We, who are many, are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup. Amen.

FINAL HYMN (Next page)

THE BLESSING

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of angels bring us all. **Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

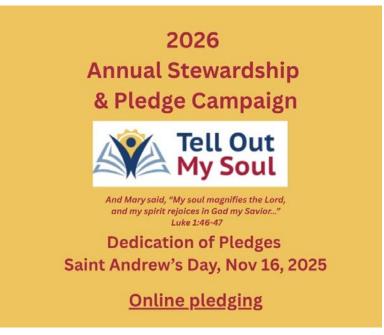
Priest Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

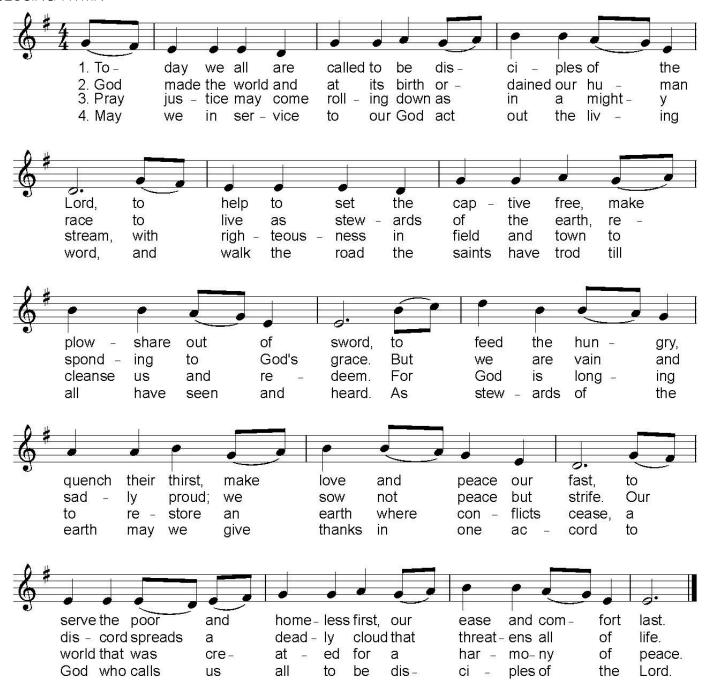
People Thanks be to God.

THE POSTLUDE

Variations on "Lasst uns Erfreuen," III.

Denis Bedard





Text: H. Kenn Carmichael Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams Copyright: Carmichael, 1989 KINSFOLD GtG757

The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God in loving memory of Mary London James Carswell & Matthew Jackson Carswell; William Graham James Carswell; Rhoda Silver Hughes & James Bernard Hughes, II; and Joan Rhoda Hughes by Maly and Allan Hughes.

Please join us after the service for refreshments in the Fellowship Café.



Sun., Nov 30

Sun., Nov 30

Children & Family Service

The Holy Eucharist: First Sunday of Advent

The Ladd Chapel has been decorated for Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a two-day (Nov 1 and Nov 2) holiday that reunites the living and dead. From pre-Columbian times, the Day of the Dead has been celebrated throughout Mexico and Latin American countries. Today it is celebrated throughout the Americas. The Spanish classes from our school are learning about the celebration. The multi-day holiday involves family and friends gathering to pay respects and remember friends and family members who have died. Families create ofrendas (Offerings) to honor their departed family members that have died. The altars are decorated with bright vellow marigold flowers, photos of the departed, and the favorite foods and drinks of the one being honored. The offerings are believed to encourage visits from the land of the dead as the departed souls hear their prayers, smell their foods and join in the celebrations.

This is much like the intention of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day (Nov 1 and Nov 2) that we celebrate today. Take a moment to visit the chapel and see the colorful display created by the students.

9:00am

8:00am, 10:00am

Sun., Nov 2 Children & Family Service The Center 9:00am Sun., Nov 2 The Holy Eucharist: All Saints' Chapel/Church 8:00am, 10:00am Sat., Nov 8 Decorate the Church for Thanksgiving Church 9:00am Sun., Nov 9 Children & Family Service **The Center** 9:00am Sun., Nov 9 The Holy Eucharist Chapel/Church 8:00am, 10:00am Mon., Nov 10 **ECW Meeting** Room 40 10:00am Tue.. Nov 11 Finance Committee Meeting The Center 6:30pm Tue.. Nov 11 7:00pm **Vestry Meeting** The Center Sun., Nov 16 Children & Family Service The Center 9:00am Sun., Nov 16 8:00am, 10:00am The Holy Eucharist: Saint Andrew's Chapel/Church Sunday, Blessing of Pledge Cards Children & Family Service Sun., Nov 23 The Center 9:00am Sun., Nov 23 The Holy Eucharist Chapel/Church 8:00am, 10:00am Thu.. Nov 27 Thanksgiving Day All Faith Service Saratoga Federated Church 10:00am Nov 27-28 Thanksgiving Office Closed

The Center

Chapel/Church

Upcoming Events at Saint Andrew's





Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Maly Carswell Hughes, Rector
The Rev. Joel M. Martinez, Associate Priest & Assistant to the Rector
The Rev. Roger Barney, Assisting Priest
Michael Burroughs, Director of Music/Organist
Nancy Allgeier, Office Manager
Lauren Fitzpatrick, Wedding/Funeral Coordinator
Sarah Clark, Bookkeeper
Ann Wright, Parish Care

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church & School

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November 2, 2025 – All Saints' Day, tr. (C) The Nicene Creed: Week 8

To commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter, bishop of Wisconsin, has written a series of reflections on the Nicene Creed and its relevance for contemporary Episcopalians.

That doesn't leave much room for doubt.

The issue is not about doubt or judging those who struggle with this or that aspect of the Creed. I have no problem with honest struggle with the Creed – historical or otherwise. I have my share, though as I've said elsewhere, there are implications of the Creed that I struggle with more than things like the virginal conception or bodily resurrection (the Sermon on the Mount for starters). Thankfully, it is not up to us to believe this or that bit of the Creed on our own. As we sometimes pray, "regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church" (1979 Book of Common Prayer, p. 395). Sometimes others believe for us. In spite of any personal doubts, the Creed is the standard of Church teaching. At the very least, it is what Christians aspire to believe and conform their lives to – however inadequately.

Doubts, whether about orthodoxy (right belief and worship) or orthopraxy (right behavior), arise when one way of understanding how the world works and how God engages the world comes into conflict with another. But that cuts both ways. Questioning the virginal conception and the bodily resurrection, for example, is unsettling to one way of understanding things. Believing that we live in a world where such things have happened is unsettling to others.

We might also wonder why we hold doubt in such high esteem. Are we prepared to doubt everything?

Conclusion

The Nicene Creed offers the foundation of a way of understanding the nature of reality and the God at the heart of it all. It presents a powerful, provocative, and evocative vision of God, humanity, and creation. The deepest truth about reality is personal and relational. The world in which we live is not an accident, but a creation delighted in by its Creator. In spite of human rebellion, sin, and brokenness; in spite of our failure to live lives of complete love and truth; that Creator, who is merciful, has entered into the mess we have made, bringing deliverance, forgiveness, healing, and transformation. It does not answer all questions and was not meant to. But those whose imaginations have been shaped by the Creed and have sought to inhabit the world it describes have found that it opens up thrilling vistas of life and hope. It is worth celebrating.



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