

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5:3

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

MATTHEW 5:4

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

MATTHEW 5:5

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

MATTHEW 5:6

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

MATTHEW 5:7

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

MATTHEW 5:8

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

MATTHEW 5:9

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5:10

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you because of me.

MATTHEW 5:11

February 1, 2026
Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PRAYER
8001 Panorama Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93306
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Wonder Window Children's Center
661/871-7051

Our Mission Statement
Lutheran Church of Prayer walks with others and teaches the
Word of God through relationships and personal example.

Welcome Friends & Guests!

We pray you will be blessed by our worship today. A welcome packet can be found at the Welcome Center Desk in our lobby. Please pick one up. Each family is asked to fill out an attendance card. Place the completed card in the offering plate. If you have a prayer request to be included in the service, please write your requests on the blue Prayer Requests sheet found in the pew rack and hand it directly to an Usher before worship begins.

A Time for Quiet Meditation

As you enter the sanctuary for worship you are encouraged to use this time for prayer and meditation to prepare your hearts to worship our Lord and to look over the worship bulletin. Visiting with friends can be done in the narthex area so others will not be disturbed. Thank you.

Offering

The offering is an act of worship for members and friends of Lutheran Church of Prayer, moved by God's love, to support the mission of the church. We do not want guests to feel obligated to participate. We want you to feel welcome and we truly wish to serve you! God bless you!

Standing

If at any time during the service it becomes uncomfortable for you to stand, please feel free to sit down, even if others are standing. God knows our strengths and understands our weaknesses too.

**Organist, David Collins • Choir Director, David Ortiz
Pianist, David Collins • Handbell Director, Judy Houston
Praise Band Director, Tammy Poynor**

Serving Us Today

Pastor	Pastor Dwayne Hendricks
Elder	Tim Hartnett & Richard Kuhn
Ushers	Frank Cressy & Matt Kraley
Reader	Bryant Arnold
Greeters	Carolyn Schaefer & Betty Jordin
Altar Circle	Carolyn Schaefer & Betty Jordin

As We Gather

Many of the words that we use on a regular basis in our worship have a rich and meaningful history that is often not well known. The word *blessed* or *blessing* used in the liturgy and hymns of the church is derived from the Old English word *bloedsian*, “to make something sacred.” This word, traced further back to an ancient Germanic dialect, originally meant “to make sacred in marking with blood.” That meaningful linkage is well reflected in the eighteenth-century hymn text by English clergyman Joseph Humphreys, which begins: “Blest the children of our God, They are bought with Christ’s own blood; They are ransomed from the grave, Life eternal they will have” (*LW* 370:1). In his poetic text, Humphreys echoes 1 John, where we read: “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1:7). We are blessed though the blood of Jesus to be the children of God! As we pray with hymnwriter Humphreys: “With them numbered may we be here and in eternity!” (*LW* 370:1).

Call to Worship

Chimes

Prelude:

“St. George’s Windsor”

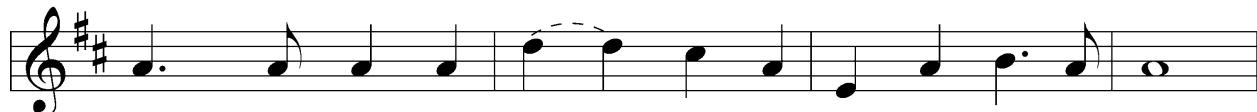
Welcome

Confession and Absolution

Hymn of Invocation: 507 Holy, Holy, Holy



1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
2 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! All the saints a - dore Thee,
3 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though the dark - ness hide Thee,
4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!



Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to Thee;
Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
Though the eye of sin - ful man Thy glo - ry may not see,
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!
Cher - u - bim and ser - a-phim fall - ing down be - fore Thee,
On - ly Thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side Thee,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!



God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
Which wert and art and ev - er - more shalt be.
Per - fect in pow'r, in love, and pu - ri - ty.
God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783-1826

Tune: John B. Dykes, 1823-76

Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

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

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

P I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;
C with my mouth I will make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

P For I said, “Steadfast love will be built up forever; in the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness.”

C Let the heavens praise Your wonders, O Lord, Your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!

P O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as You are, O Lord, with Your faithfulness all around You?

C Blessed be the Lord forever! Amen and Amen. Come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Confession and Absolution

P Let us now make confession of our sins to God, our gracious heavenly Father.

C Eternal God, we confess that by nature we are sinful people. We are given to sinful thoughts, sinful words, and sinful deeds. We have transgressed Your law in many ways, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have often been heedless of our calling to follow in Your ways. Because of our sins and our sinfulness, we deserve Your punishment now and for eternity.

Gracious God, in Your mercy, forgive our sin and restore us to a full and joyful relationship with You through the merits of Jesus, our Lord. Direct our days by Your Holy Spirit that we may joyfully follow Your will and gladly obey Your commandments as Your redeemed people, bringing the brightness of Your light to the darkened world.

P In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Be at peace.

C **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Service of the Word

Introit

For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Blessèd is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields
its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers.

The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Kyrie

LSB 186



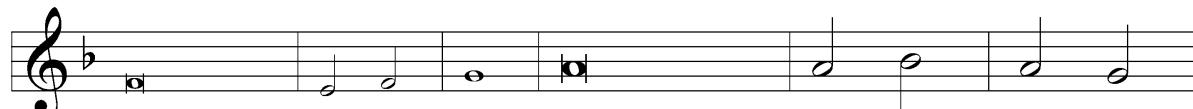
C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



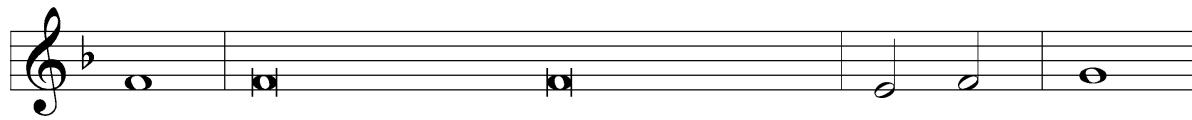
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Gloria in Excelsis

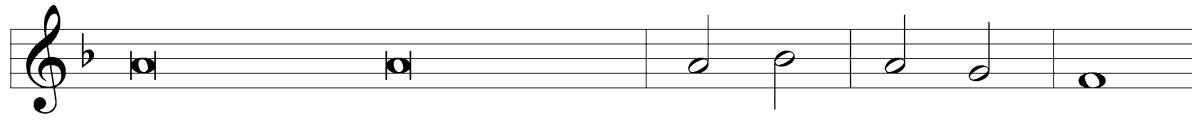
LSB 187



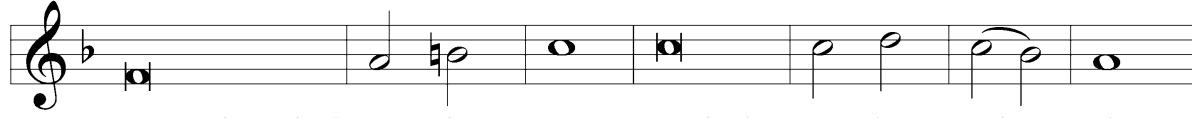
P Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward



men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



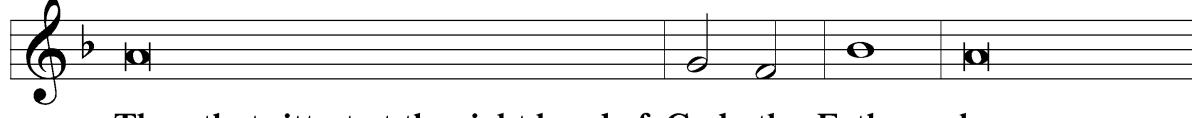
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.



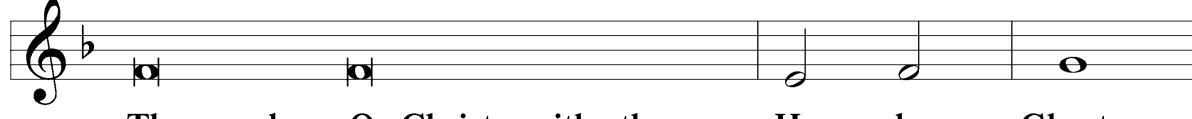
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re - ceive our prayer.



Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up -



on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on - ly art the Lord.



Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,



art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day: Epiphany 4

P The Lord be with you.

A musical staff in G clef and common time. It consists of six notes: a quarter note, three eighth notes, a quarter note, and a half note. Below the staff, the text 'C And with thy spir - it.' is written, with 'spir' underlined and a dash between 'it.' and the next line.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

A musical staff in G clef and common time. It consists of five notes: a quarter note, three eighth notes, and a half note. Below the staff, the text 'C A - men.' is written, with 'A' underlined and a dash between 'men.' and the next line.

Old Testament Reading:

Micah 6:1–8

¹Hear what the LORD says:

Arise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

²Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the LORD has an indictment against his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³“O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,
and I sent before you Moses,

Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵O my people, remember what Balak king of Moab
devised,

and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

⁶“With what shall I come before the LORD,

and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

⁸He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Psalm:

Psalm 15; antiphon: Psalm 16:1

¹O LORD, who shall sojourn in your tent?
Who shall dwell on your holy hill?
²He who walks blamelessly and does what is right
and speaks truth in his heart;
³who does not slander with his tongue
and does no evil to his neighbor,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;
⁴in whose eyes a vile person is despised,
but who honors those who fear the LORD;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
⁵who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things shall never be moved.

Epistle:

1 Corinthians 1:18–31

¹⁸The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,
“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption. ³¹Therefore, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Choir Anthem:

“This is My Word”
Words & Music by Pepper Choplín

Alleluia

LSB 190



Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel:

Matthew 5:1–12

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.



Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;

**who for us men and for our salvation came
down from heaven**

**and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the
virgin Mary**

and was made man;

**and was crucified also for us under Pontius
Pilate.**

He suffered and was buried.

**And the third day He rose again according to
the Scriptures**

and ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of the Father.

**And He will come again with glory to judge
both the living and the dead,**

whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord and giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

**who with the Father and the Son together is
worshiped and glorified,**

who spoke by the prophets.

**And I believe in one holy Christian and
apostolic Church,**

**I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of
sins,**

**and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life \dagger of the world to come. Amen.**

Hymn of the Day: 394 Songs of Thankfulness and Praise

V 1-5



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 Pal - sied limbs and faint - ing soul;
4 Sun and moon shall dark-ened be, Stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;
5 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;
Christ will then like light - ning shine, All will see His glo-rious sign;
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;
All will then the trum - pet hear, All will see the Judge ap - pear;
That we might be - come like Thee At Thy great e - piph - a - ny



An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
Thou by all wilt be con-fessed, God in man made man - i - fest.
And may praise Thee, ev - er blest, God in man made man - i - fest.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807-85, alt.

Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816-93

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon: “Blessed are You” Matthew 5

Offering: “Larghetto” from Concerto Grosso No. 12 By George Frederick Handel

Offertory

LSB 192



The musical notation consists of five lines of music in G clef, B-flat key signature, and common time. The lyrics are integrated into the music, with the first line starting with 'C Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -' and ending with 'new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -'. The second line continues with 'way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it'. The third line continues with 'from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -'. The fourth line continues with 'tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.' The fifth line ends with a final Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord, You have called us to good work in our various vocations. Give us courage that we might never be ashamed of Christ and Him crucified, but be free to boast in the Lord within our callings. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P God of all wisdom, You tell us plainly that the Word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but it is Your power to all who are being saved.

Strengthen the faith of pastors and congregations, that they would not turn to man-made wisdom but boldly proclaim Christ and Him crucified. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son as the Savior of the world, that all the families of the nations might worship before You. Bless the families of this congregation with Your grace and protection, that they might remember You in both joy and trouble and worship before You forevermore. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O Lord of lords, You rescued Your people from Egypt and confounded Balak, king of Moab, for their protection. Guide the decisions and actions of all earthly authorities, that Your people may live in peace and quietness. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty God, when Christ returns in His glory You promise to wipe away every tear from every eye. Comfort those who mourn. Heal and deliver, according to Your good and gracious will, those troubled by sickness and affliction *[including _____]*. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P God of all righteousness, You command us to be holy as You are holy, and You sanctify us with Your Son's body and blood. Prepare the hearts of all who partake of the Sacrament today, that they might repent of their sin, trust in Your promises and find their righteousness in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Holy Father, You know the way of the righteous. Preserve Your people from walking in the counsel of the wicked, from standing in the way of sinners and from sitting in the seat of scoffers. By Your grace, cause them to delight in Your Holy Word. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

C **Amen.**

Service of the Sacrament

Our Belief Concerning the Lord's Supper
(*Communion Confession spoken together*)

C In celebrating the Lord's Supper we recognize the Biblical teaching that this is not merely a representation of Christ, but the real presence of His Body, and His Blood in the bread and the wine. We also recognize that in the Supper we receive forgiveness of sins, strength and unity with fellow confessing and communing Christians.

Preface

LSB 194

P The Lord be with you.

Music notation for the Preface response. It consists of a single line of music in G clef, common time, with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: quarter note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, quarter note. Below the music, the text 'C And with thy spir - it.' is written, with 'C' in a box.

P Lift up your hearts.

Music notation for the Preface response. It consists of a single line of music in G clef, common time, with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: quarter note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, quarter note. Below the music, the text 'C We lift them up un - to the Lord.' is written, with 'C' in a box.

P Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

Music notation for the Preface response. It consists of a single line of music in G clef, common time, with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: quarter note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, quarter note. Below the music, the text 'C It is meet and right so to do.' is written, with 'C' in a box.

Proper Preface

P It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for what had been hidden from before the foundation of the world You have made known to the nations in Your Son. In Him, being found in the substance of our mortal nature, You have manifested the fullness of Your glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 195



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,
bless-ed is He, bless - ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.
Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

P 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.



C For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the



glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My \ddagger body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My \ddagger blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

LSB 197

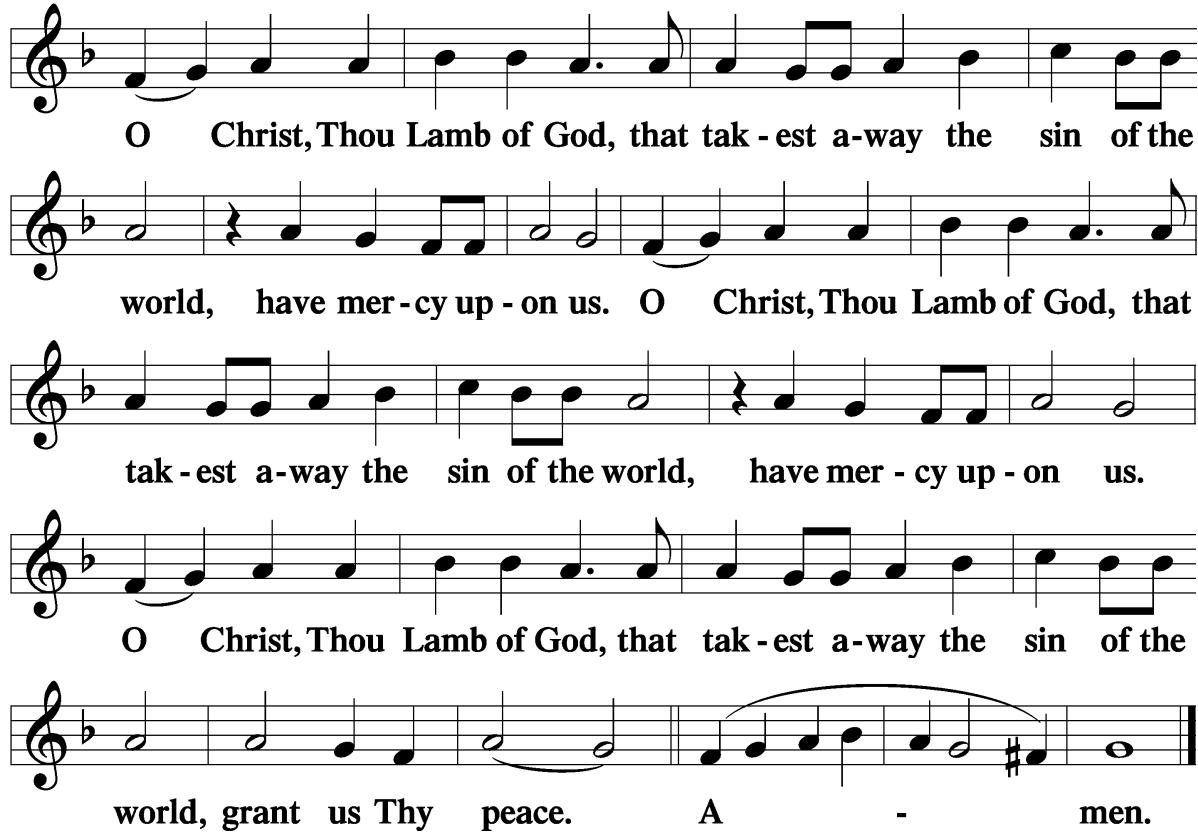
P The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

LSB 198



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Special Music:

“In You, O Lord”

By Ed Bolduc

Distribution Hymn

Nunc Dimittis

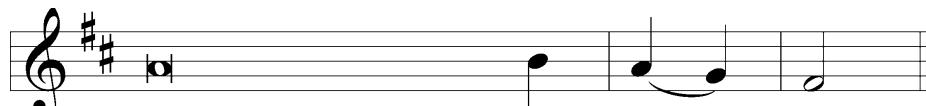
LSB 199

C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-
 cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
 which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
 a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
 peo - ple Is - ra-el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
 to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

Thanksgiving

LSB 200

A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Salutation

LSB 201

P The Lord be with you.

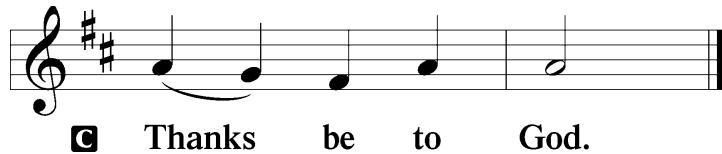


C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

LSB 202

A Bless we the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

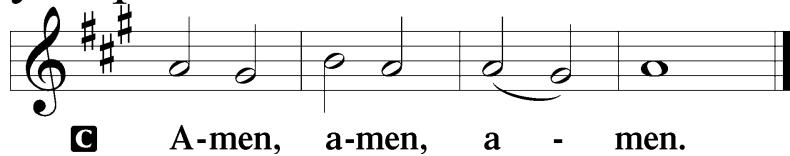
Benediction

LSB 202

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and \ddagger give you peace.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

Announcements

Hymn to Depart: Blessed Assurance

V 1-3

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

- 2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
- 3 Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby

Text: Public domain

Acknowledgments

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+ What We Believe +

God: is Triune, Father, Son, Holy Spirit; Three Persons, One Essence. He is the only true God: *Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 8:4*

Jesus: is true God, equal to the Father and Holy Spirit, the only Savior of mankind. *John 5:23; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 20:28*

Sin: all mankind is wicked; by nature the human race is spiritually blind, dead, broken in heart/mind, and in need of restoration with God and each other. God's wrath abides on all. *Genesis 8:21; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23, 7:15, 18; Mark 7:20-23; John 3:36.*

Justification: Sin and God's wrath against it has been dealt with by God through the death of God the Son on the cross. All have salvation through the blood of Jesus where our Father no longer holds our wickedness and sin against us but declares us righteous. We have peace again with God through faith in Jesus. This good news gives believers hope, peace, joy, and love to live as Christians. *Romans 5:1-10; John 3:16, 36; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 1 John 2:1-2; Corinthians 5:18-21.*

Conversion: to faith in the Savior is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God (spoken, written, and sacramental). In the message of the cross God gathers His family. *Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23; John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 12:3.*

Holy Baptism: is a gracious work of the Holy Spirit Who creates faith, washes away sins, and connects us to Jesus and His body the church. *John 3:5-6; Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:27, 1 Peter 3:21; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13.*

The Holy Spirit's Work: Converted through faith in Jesus our human nature still threatens our unity with God and each other. Reconciliation, that is repentance and faith, is the daily rhythm of believers. Guilt and sorrow are promptings of the Holy Spirit for us to speak with God confessing thoughts, words, and actions asking Him for forgiveness in Jesus' name. *Ephesians 4:30-32; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Hebrews 10:19-25.*

The Lord's Supper: or Holy Communion is Christ's True Body and Blood, where He is really present in the bread and wine to assure us of forgiveness. We gather to receive Jesus often because we daily sin much and are in constant need of His power to live the Christian life of faith, hope, and love/charity. *John 6:53-59; 15:5; Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-29; 1 Corinthians 10:16.*

Scripture: is inspired by God, without error and is our solid guide to life. *John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16.*

Creation: happened according to Genesis 1-2. Evolution is unscriptural, unscientific, and unnecessary. *Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 33:6.*

2nd Coming: of Jesus will be sudden/unexpected. *2 Peter 3:10; Mark 13:32; Matthew 24.* We are living in the New Testament era where we rule with Jesus in the activity of sharing His message of love. *1 Corinthians 15:23-26; Ephesians 2:1-7; Matthew 28:19-20; Revelation 20:4-6*