

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Santa Clarita
The Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost — Proper 25
10:30 AM — October 25, 2026

*The Altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Colleen Gibbons
in memory of her beloved husband, Jeffrey Stephen Gibbons.*

*Upon being seated we ask that you extend a respectful courtesy
to others by speaking quietly and silencing all cell phones.*

Before the service begins, we encourage you to use the following for meditation.

Smiling authentically, spontaneously, feels amazing. It's a gift to everyone that works in two directions: it "gives alms" to others outwardly even as it causes joy inwardly. Maybe the feeling it brings is a bit like what Jesus had in mind when he said, "Give for alms those things that are within; and see, everything will be clean for you." Br. Keith Nelson, SSJE

-Generally, we stand to give praise, sit to listen (to scripture and sermon), and stand or kneel to pray. These postures help us stay focused on the worship, but there are no strict rules and you should take whatever posture is appropriate to your needs.-

Prelude

Migratory V

Adam Guettel

-Processions have long been an important part of liturgical worship. At the beginning of the service they signify an intention to move toward the altar and into direct relationship to worship God. Those who wish to may bow in reverence as the cross passes to acknowledge Christ's sacrifice upon it.-

Entrance Hymn #680

"O God our help in ages past"

St. Anne



1. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2. Un - der the sha - dow of thy throne thy saints have dwelt se - cure;
3. Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or earth re - ceived her frame,
4. A thou - sand a - ges in thy sight are like an eve - ning gone;
5. Time, like an ev - er - roll - ing stream bears all our years a - way;



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home.
suf - fi - cient is thine arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
from ev - er - last - ing thou art God, to end - less years the same.
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.
they fly, for - got - ten, as a dream dies at the o - pening day.

6. O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guide while life shall last,
and our eternal home.

-The liturgy is God's community gathered to actively share the Word and the Eucharist. We invite and encourage your participation in this community. Please join in the spoken responses and hymns shown in the service bulletin.-

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

-The opening acclamation is the greeting of the people by the presider and their response, which begins the service. Its purpose is to bring the congregation corporately into dialogue with the presider and set a tone for the celebration.-

Priest: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.
People: Glory to God for ever and ever.

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Gloria #S 236

Rutter

1. Glo - ry to you, Lord God of our fa- thers; you are
wor- thy of praise; glo- ry to you. 2. Glo - ry to you for the ra - di-
ance of your ho- ly Name; we will praise you and high- ly ex - alt you for ev - er.
3. Glo - ry to you in the splen- dor of your tem- ple; on the throne of your
ma - jes- ty, glo- ry to you. 4. Glo - ry to you, seat- ed be - tween the
Cher - u - bim; we will praise you and high- ly ex - alt you for ev - er.
5. Glo - ry to you, be - hold- ing the depths; in the high vault of hea- ven,
glo- ry to you. 6. Glo - ry to you, Fa- ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spi- rit;
we will praise you and high- ly ex - alt you for ev - er.

-A Collect is a short prayer with a specific structure. Its purpose is to gather into one the individual prayers of the People. The Collect of the Day is a specific prayer that reflects upon the lectionary readings for the given day of the liturgical year.-

The Collect of the Day

Priest: God be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

The First Reading Leviticus 19:1-2,15-18

Reader: Dave Warburton

A Reading from the Book of Leviticus.

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the Lord. You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

-The Book of Common Prayer has always placed great importance on the Psalms in worship. They are sung or said in every service of the church, and their words make up the petitions and language of our liturgy. -

Psalm 1

Reader: Dave Morrow

- 1 Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, *
nor lingered in the way of sinners,
nor sat in the seats of the scornful!
- 2 Their delight is in the law of the Lord, *
and they meditate on his law day and night.
- 3 They are like trees planted by streams of water,
bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; *
everything they do shall prosper.
- 4 It is not so with the wicked; *
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.
- 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, *
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.
- 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, *
but the way of the wicked is doomed.

The Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Reader: Dave Morrow

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from

deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

-The Gospel procession moves into the congregation as a liturgical reminder that Jesus walked among us.-

Please stand as you are able.

Gradual Hymn #517

"How lovely is thy dwelling place"

Brother James' Air

1. How love - ly is thy dwell - ing - place, O Lord of hosts, to me!
 2. Be - side thine al - tars, gra-cious Lord, the swal-lows find a nest;
 3. They who go through the des - ert vale will find it filled with springs,
 4. One day with - in thy courts ex - cels a thou-sand spent a - way;
 My thirst - y soul de - sires and longs with - in thy courts to be;
 how hap - py they who dwell with thee and praise thee with - out rest,
 and they shall climb from height to height till Zi - on's tem - ple rings
 how hap - py they who keep thy laws nor from thy pre - cepts stray,
 my ve - ry heart and flesh cry out, O liv - ing God, for thee.
 and hap - py they whose hearts are set up - on the pil - grim's quest.
 with praise to thee, in glo - ry throned, Lord God, great King of kings.
 for thou shalt sure - ly bless all those who live the words they pray.

-The Gospel is comprised primarily of the words Christ himself spoke, and so we stand out of reverence for the good news that has been brought for us and all people.

Those who wish, make the sign of the cross with the right-thumb on the forehead, the lips, and the heart when the Gospel is announced, praying silently, God be in my head and in my thinking. God be in my lips and in my speaking. God be in my heart and my departing.-

The Gospel Reading Matthew 22:34-46

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, O Christ.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." He said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put

your enemies under your feet”? If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Priest: The Gospel of the Savior.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

-The Sermon or Homily helps us apply the words of the early prophets and Christ in our lives.-

The Sermon

The Very Rev. Christopher Montella
Rector

A period of silent reflection follows the sermon.

Please stand as you are able.

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, the love that holds the world together;
We believe in Love, known to us in Jesus;
We believe in Jesus, who fed the multitudes,
Who taught God’s kingdom of justice and peace,
Who breathed God’s very spirit upon his friends;
We believe in God’s Spirit, who moves in the world
To lead us, teach us, and empower us
To do the work of love today.
There are no barriers to love.
There is always more than enough love.
Love makes us, love heals us, love makes us grow.
God’s love comes to us on its way to someone else.
We believe in God, who creates us in the image of Love.
Since God loves us so much,
We ought also to love one another. Amen.

-Prayer is offered for the Universal Church, the Nation and all in authority, the welfare of the world, concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or who are in any trouble, and for the departed.-

The Prayers of the People

Reader: Cheryl Sena

Friends, God has been our refuge from one generation to another. Let us pray to our God, saying, “Show your servants your works, O God, and be gracious to us.”

We pray for the leaders of the Church. Give bishops, priests, deacons, and lay leaders gentle and loving hearts. Empower us to share the gospel and ourselves with those in need.

Silence

Intercessor: Show your servants your works, O God,

People: And be gracious to us.

We pray for all humankind. Prosper the work of our hands. May all those who work earn a fair wage. May those without work find strength and encouragement in your love. Give us hearts to respect the dignity of every human being.

Silence

Intercessor: Show your servants your works, O God,

People: And be gracious to us.

We pray for all creation. You brought forth the mountains. You gave birth to the land and the earth. Give us the desire and will to care for all you have made.

Silence

Intercessor: Show your servants your works, O God,

People: And be gracious to us.

We pray for the area in which we live, O God, we want to obey what you command. Help us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Silence

Intercessor: Show your servants your works, O God,

People: And be gracious to us.

We pray for the afflicted, the suffering and those who weep and mourn. Nurse them back to health as a mother tenderly nurses her children. We lift up to you all those struggling due to the threat of violence, starvation and the devastation of war at home and throughout the world. We pray for all those on the prayer list, especially Rick, Rebecca, Malcolm and George.

The congregation may add their own petitions and thanksgivings.

Silence

Intercessor: Show your servants your works, O God,

People: And be gracious to us.

We pray for those who have died, especially Carlos Gonzales. Though we are swept away like a dream in this mortal life, you promise to raise us to life immortal through your Son. May your graciousness, O God, be upon us.

Silence

Intercessor: Show your servants your works, O God,

People: And be gracious to us.

Priest:

O Gracious God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, the one, holy and undivided Trinity; God, Son & Spirit now and for ever. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

Priest: We reflect on the difficult times of this week and seek the strength to become our most compassionate selves.

Silence for reflection.

Priest: We have wounded your love.

People: O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world, transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

**Eternal Spirit, living God, in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,**

to the very secret of our hearts and all that rises to trouble us.

Living flame burn into us; cleansing wind, blow through us;

fountain of water, well up within us,

that we may love and praise in deed and in truth. Amen.

Priest: God's grace is for you; you are loved and forgiven. **Amen.**

-The Peace is an extension of Christian greeting and teaching to love our neighbor as ourselves. It symbolizes our intent to forgive as we are forgiven, to live in peace with all people. Members are encouraged to greet one another with a sign of God's peace with the clasping of hands, a reverential bow, a hug, or a peace sign.-

The Peace

Priest: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Members of the congregation who are joining us via livestream are encouraged to post "Peace be with you" in the comments or to use the "like" or "love" reaction button to take part in the virtual exchange of God's peace with the rest of the congregation at this time.

Please be seated.

Welcome and Announcements

Stewardship Reflection

Mary Jo & Ken Higginbotham

We are pleased to celebrate the following birthdays: Neville Bridgeford on Oct. 27th, and Judy Ferkel on Oct. 28th.

Offertory Prayer

The People remain seated and say together:

Loving God, you alone are the source of every good gift. Everything we have, and all that we are, comes from you. Now, help us to be grateful, accountable, and, with praise and thanksgiving, to give of ourselves generously, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Offertory

Ubi Caritas
St. Stephen's Parish Choir

Maurice Duruflé

-A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself. For Anglicans there are two great sacraments: Eucharist and Baptism.

As continuation of thousands of years of spiritual practice, talent, treasure, and oblations are offered before the altar in our response to God's care and nurture.-

Please stand as you are able.

Doxology

Old 100th

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures,
here be - low. Praise God, you hosts in heav'n a -
bove; Praise God the Trin - i - ty of Love. A - men.

Chords: G, D, Em, Bm, G, D, G, D, Em, C, G, D, Em, D, G, Am, G/B, C, F#dim/A, Em, D/F#, G, C#dim/ED, C, G/D, D7, G, G7, C, G.

-The Sursum Corda (Lift up your hearts) is a form of introduction to prayer handed down over the centuries. This dialogue is an invitation for the people joining in the Eucharistic offering, to raise minds and hearts to "things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

Priest: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to God.**

Priest: Let us give thanks.

People: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

-We praise God for the long arc of salvation history. We do not approach with petition but simply with grateful remembrance of all that God has done.-

All thanks and praise are yours at all times and in all places, our true and loving God; through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word, the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things. You laid the foundations of the world and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb; You brought forth all creatures of the earth and gave breath to humankind.

Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing, all you create is a sign of hope for our journey; And so as the morning stars sing your praises we join the heavenly beings and all creation as we shout with joy:

-The holiness of God is a strong theme in the Old Testament, present here in the Sanctus, which echoes the words of the high angels in the prophet Isaiah's vision of the dwelling place of God (Isaiah 6:1-3).

Our worshipful cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy," is coupled with the acclamation "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

Sanctus

Nettleton, arr. by T. Vozzella

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

Standing or kneeling as you are able.

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all, your Word has never been silent; you called a people to yourself, as a light to the nations, you delivered them from bondage and led them to a land of promise. Of your grace, you gave Jesus to be human, to share our life, to proclaim the coming of your holy reign and give himself for us, a fragrant offering.

Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, you have freed us from sin, brought us into your life, reconciled us to you, and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he died for us Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, gave it to his friends and said: "Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine, said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said: "Drink this, all of you: this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so, remembering all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension, longing for Christ's coming in glory, and presenting to you these gifts your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

Priest and People

Dying, you destroyed our death.

Rising, you restored our life.

Christ Jesus, come in glory!

-The epiclesis is the point at which the church, through the voice of the Celebrant, asks God to make holy, 'sanctify', 'send', 'pour', 'breathe', both the gift of bread and wine and also the gathered community.-

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us the Body and Blood of your Christ. Grant that we, burning with your Spirit's power, may be a people of hope, justice and love.

Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with blessed Stephen, and all your people, into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we worship you our God and Creator in voices of unending praise.

Priest and People

Blessed are you now and for ever. AMEN.

Now, as Jesus taught us, we pray,

Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and
come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

-The fraction (breaking of the bread) is a crucial link between what has come before and what comes after it. Christ has offered his life for us, and the breaking of the bread makes it possible for all to share in that life.-

Priest: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

-The outward and visible sign in the sacrament of the Eucharist is the bread and the wine. We eat and drink the sacramental foods. Through the inward and spiritual grace of this sacramental action we are reconstituted as Christ's body, infused with Christ's life, and empowered to be Christ's presence in the world.-

The Gifts of God for the People of God.
Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All are welcome to receive communion. The table we set belongs to God. Wherever you find yourself on your spiritual journey you are welcome to receive the Bread and Wine made holy.

The church teaches that temporal isolation cannot constrain the sacrament's ineffable power. Calling us to "massive, corporate, spiritual communion,"

The Invitation to Holy Communion

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

Priest and People say together:

In union, O Christ, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer to you praise and thanksgiving. I remember your death, O Christ; I proclaim your resurrection; I await your coming in glory. Since I cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

Please be seated.

Please follow usher instructions for taking communion.

Communion

-In the post communion prayer we give thanks for the sacramental signs of Christ's presence to us and we ask God to empower and accompany us into the world to witness to God's love.-

Please stand as you are able.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

Loving God,
we give you thanks
for restoring us in your image
and nourishing us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.
Now send us forth
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

-The blessing is God's promise to be with us as we leave communal worship and return to the world to serve God and God's people.-

Blessing

May God give you grace never to sell yourself short;
Grace to risk something big for something good;
Grace to remember that the world is too dangerous
for anything but truth, and too small for anything but Love.
And the blessing of God Almighty, the one, holy and
undivided Trinity be among you and
remain with you always. Amen.

-Processions have long been an important part of liturgical worship. At the conclusion of the service the retiring procession represents the carrying of the Gospel message into the world.

Those who wish to may bow in reverence as the cross passes to acknowledge Christ's sacrifice upon it.-

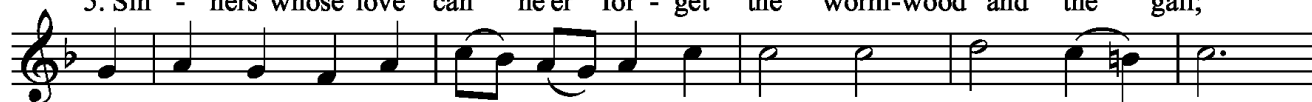
Closing Hymn #450

"All hail the power of Jesus' Name!"

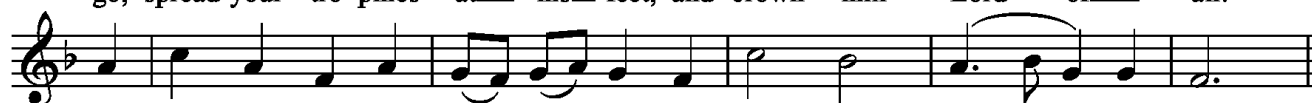
Coronation



1. All hail the power of Je - sus' Name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2. Crown him ye mar - tyrs of our God, who from his al - tar call;
3. Hail him, the Heir of Da - vid's line, whom Da - vid Lord did call,
4. Ye heirs of Is - rael's cho - sen race, ye ran - somed of the fall;
5. Sin - ners whose love can ne'er for - get the worm-wood and the gall;



bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, and crown him Lord of all!
 praise him whose way of pain ye trod, and crown him Lord of all!
 the God in - car - nate, Man di - vine, and crown him Lord of all!
 hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all!
 go, spread your tro-phies at his feet, and crown him Lord of all!



bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, and crown him Lord of all!
 praise him whose way of pain ye trod, and crown him Lord of all!
 the God in - car - nate, Man di - vine, and crown him Lord of all!
 hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all!
 go, spread your tro-phies at his feet, and crown him Lord of all!

6. Let every kindred, every tribe,
 on this terrestrial ball,
 to him all majesty ascribe,
 and crown him Lord of all!

-The dismissal asserts the relationship between worship and living. It is a call to mission, a call to live the baptismal and Eucharistic life in the world.-

The Dismissal

Priest: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
 People: Thanks be to God.

Prayers of the People taken from *Praying the Scriptures* by Jeremiah D. Williamson, ©2014 by Jeremiah D. Williamson. All Rights Reserved.
 Spiritual Communion Prayer: St. Alphonsus de Liguori, 1696-1787.
 From *The Hymnal 1982*: #450 "O God, our help in ages past"; Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748); alt.; para. of Psalm 90:1-5. Music: St. Anne melody ant. William Croft (1678-1727); alt. harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1890); #450 "All hail the power of Jesus' Name"; Words: Edward Perronet (1726-1793); alt. Music: Coronation, Oliver Holden (1765-1844); alt.; desc. Michael E. Young (b. 1939) #5 236 Canticle 13 A Song of Praise, *Benedictus es, Domine*; Setting: John Rutter (b. 1943); #517 "How lovely is thy dwelling place"; Para. Of Psalm 84; ss. 1-2 The Psalms of David in Mexico, 1650; ss. 3-4, Carl P. Daw, Jr. (b. 1944); Music: *Brother James*, Alec L.L. Macbeth Bain (1840?-1925).
 Dondology—Music: Old 100th melody from *Piemontese oratorio* of David, 1551; alt.; harm. Alter Louis Bourgeois (1510?-1561?).
 Sanctus Tune: *Widerfons*, ant. by T. Vioralla.