St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Santa Clarita
The Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost — Proper 27
10:30 AM — November 8, 2026

The Altar flowers are given to the glory of God.

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.

Jesus says that throughout our lives there will always be two roads which we can take: the easy one which takes us through a wide gate, and the hard one which takes us through the narrow gate. It is this second road, although hard, which ultimately leads to life. Jesus is holding out for us a choice. You must choose! Br. Geoffrey Tristram, SSJE

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-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 *Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)* William Walker, Chris Tomlin & Louie Giglio

-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 #61 "Sleepers, wake!" *Wachet auf*



-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.**

Priest and People:
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

-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.

O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

The First Reading Wisdom 6:12—16

Reader: Marianne Zinkewicz

A Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon.

Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her, and is found by those who seek her. She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her. One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty, for she will be found sitting at the gate. To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding, and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care, because she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and she graciously appears to them in their paths, and meets them in every thought.

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 70

Reader: Ken Higginbotham

1 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; *
O Lord, make haste to help me.
2 Let those who seek my life be ashamed
and altogether dismayed; *
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune
draw back and be disgraced.
3 Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me turn back, *
because they are ashamed.
4 Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; *
let those who love your salvation say for ever,
"Great is the Lord!"
5 But as for me, I am poor and needy; *
come to me speedily, O God.
6 You are my helper and my deliverer; *
O Lord, do not tarry.

The Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Reader: Ken Higginbotham

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

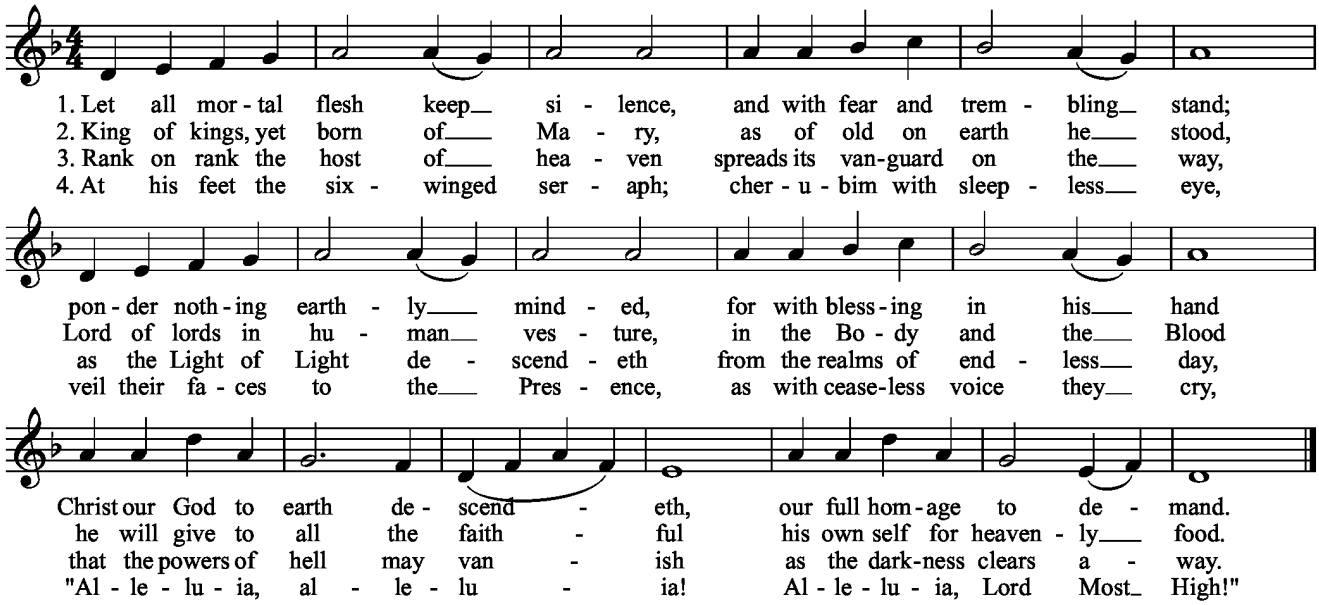
We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

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 #324 "Let all mortal flesh keep silence" (vs. 1-3) *Picardy*



-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 25:1-13

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People: Glory to you, O Christ.

Jesus said, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

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.

-The Nicene Creed is the statement of what we believe. It is one of the most ancient and corporate confession of our faith, having been adopted by the first ecumenical council in the year 325. When we recite this creed we are joining a great heritage of the holy universal Church through the centuries.

Some people may choose to bow their heads at the verse, For us and for our salvation…and was made man. This gesture marks the mystery of the Incarnation as the central Christian message of God's love for the world.-

Please stand as you are able.

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. 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: Kelsey Raub

Take heart dear friends, Christ will come again! In hope let us make our prayer, "You are our help and our deliverance; Come quickly, O God."

Open wide your doors to us, O God. Accept us into your Eternal Realm, give your Church endurance that we might keep our eyes open and fixed on you.
Silence

Intercessor: You are our help and our deliverance;
People: Come quickly, O God.

Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Drown the evil of our times in a flood of mercy. Refresh the needy with the abundance of your love.
Silence
Intercessor: You are our help and our deliverance;
People: Come quickly, O God.

God of the harvest, inspire our hearts to care deeply for your creation. Help us to live and work in harmony with all you have made.
Silence
Intercessor: You are our help and our deliverance;
People: Come quickly, O God.

God, raise up leaders in our community. Bless them with wisdom. Give us hope and a future.
The congregation may add their own thanksgivings.
Silence
Intercessor: You are our help and our deliverance;
People: Come quickly, O God.

Be pleased, O God, to deliver those in need. Make haste to help the troubled. You are a great God and with you is health and salvation. We trust our loved ones to you. 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 Jeff, Laura, family and friends of Dolfin Cabuya, Noeli, and James.
The congregation may add their own petitions.
Silence
Intercessor: You are our help and our deliverance;
People: Come quickly, O God.

Through the death and resurrection of your Son, you give us new and unending life. We trust our dead to you, Merciful God.
Silence
Intercessor: You are our help and our deliverance;
People: Come quickly, O God.

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

Let us confess our sins to God.

God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us

through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all your sins through the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **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 — Hallie Browne

We are pleased to celebrate the following birthdays: Bob Raub on Nov. 8th, Joanie Stanzione on Nov. 9th, Ryan Hubbard on Nov. 11th, Tayson Bernabe & John Noonan on Nov. 12th, Colleen Gibbons on Nov. 13th, and Greg Dilger on Nov. 14th. We also celebrate the anniversaries of Kimberly & James Torres on Nov. 8th and Erick Long & Christopher Montella on Nov. 10th.

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 — *Keep Your Lamps* — Andre Thomas

St. Stephen's Parish Choir

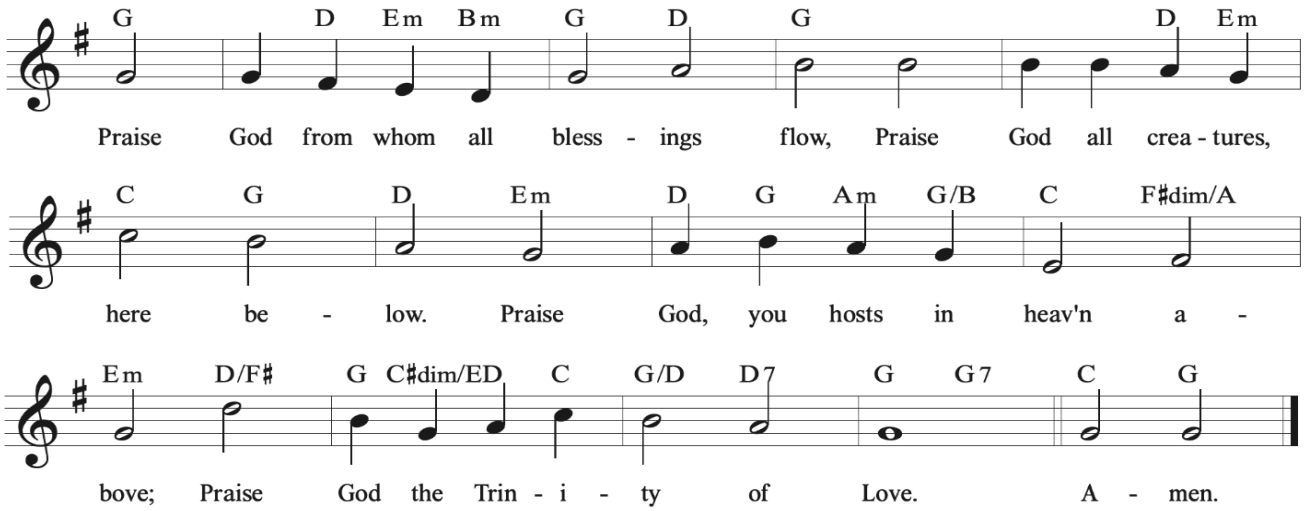
-A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself. For Anglicans there are two great sacraments: Eucharist and Baptism.

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



-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.-

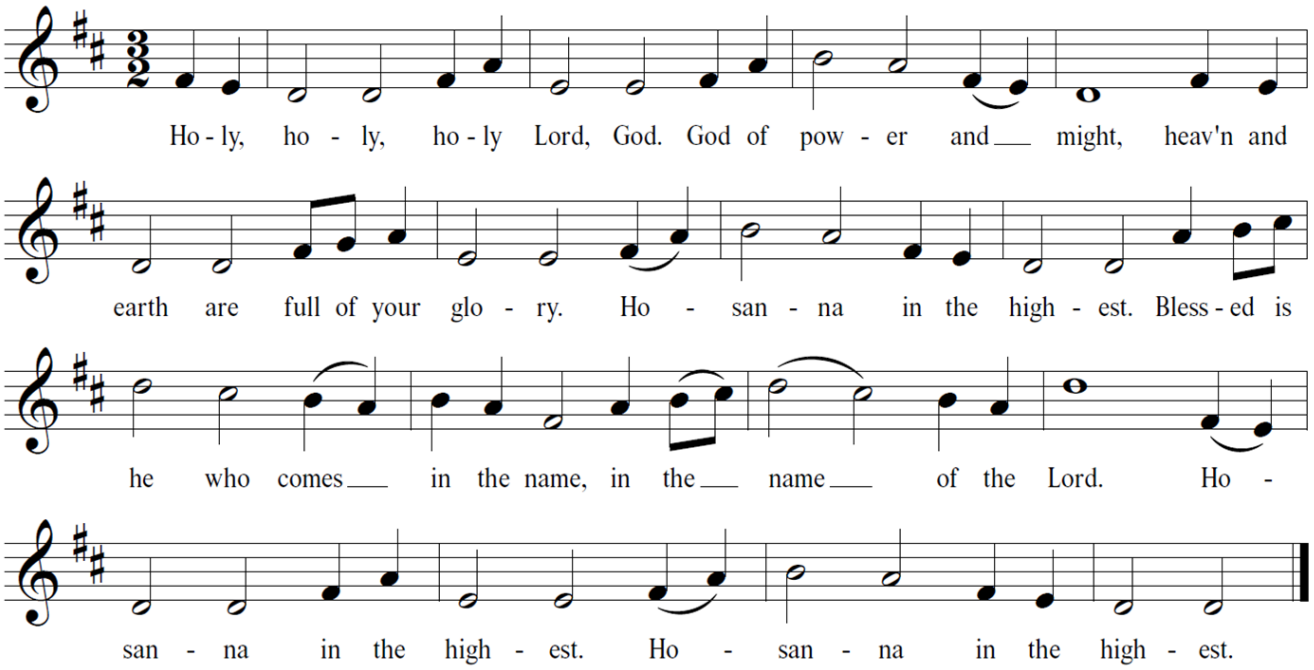
We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we say:

-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



Standing or kneeling as you are able.
Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Priest and people say together:
Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

-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.-

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with Stephen and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
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:
My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. 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.

Holy and Eternal God,
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 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 #436 "Lift up your heads" (vs. 1-4) *Truro*



-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* #61 "Sleepers, wake!", Words: Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608); tr. Carl P. Daw, Jr. (b. 1944). Music: *Wachet auf*, melody Hans Sachs (1494-1576); adapt. Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608); arr. and harm. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). #324 "Let all mortal flesh keep silence" Words: Liturgy of St. James; para. Gerard Moultrie (1829-1885) Music: *Picardy*, French carol, 17th cent.; melody from *Chansons populaires des Provinces de France*, 1800. #436 "Lift up your heads", Words: George Wissel (1590-1635); tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878) Music: *Truro*, melody from *Psalmodia Evangelica, Part II* 1789; harm. Loweell Mason (1792-1872), alt.
Doxology —Music: Old 100th, melody from *Pseumes octante trois de David*, 1551, alt.; harm. After Louis Bourgeois (1510?-1561?).
Sanctus: Tune: *Nettleton*, arr. by T. Vozzella.