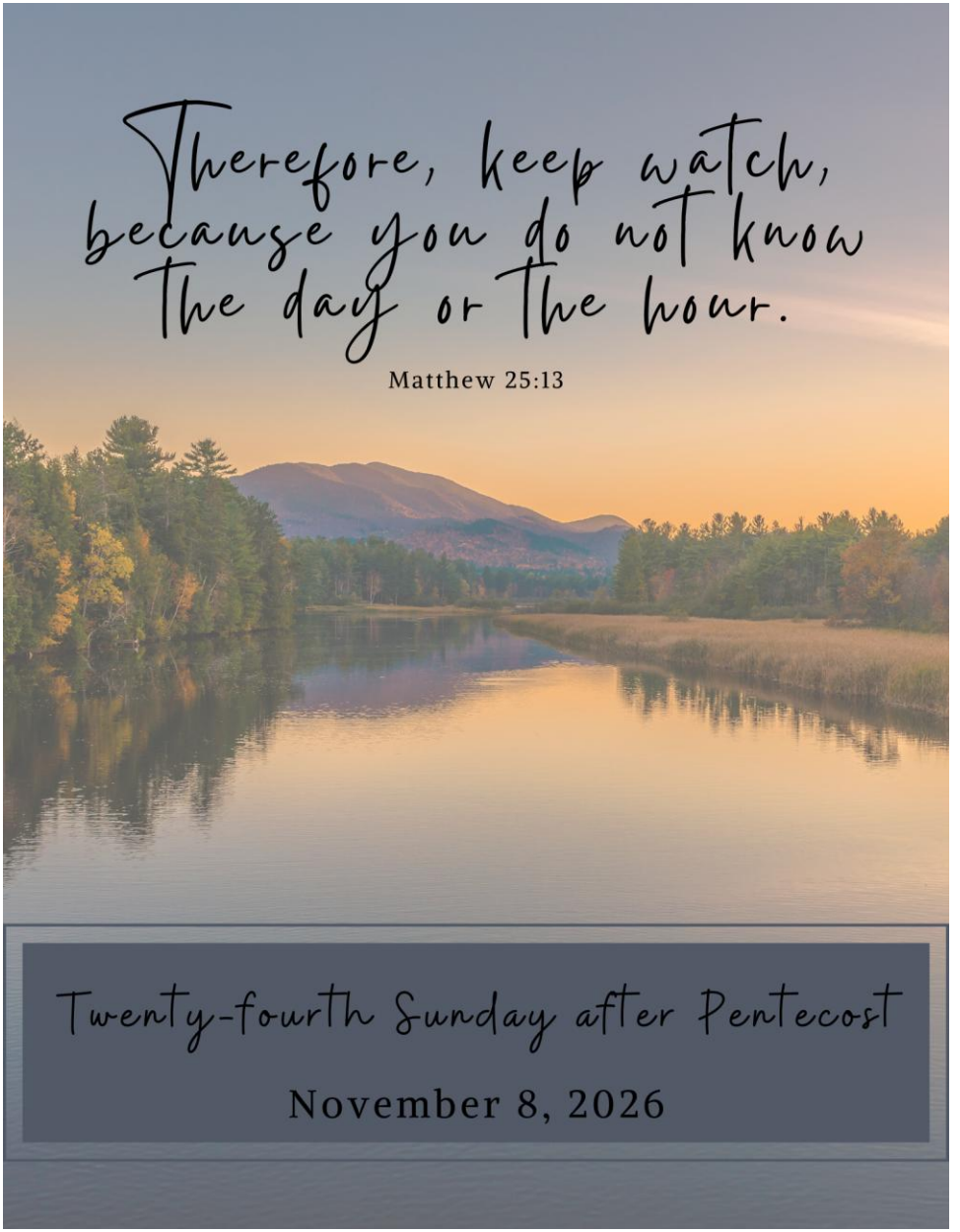
FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH AND SCHOOL



Welcome

FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Worship Series: The Beginning of the End

November 8, 2026

The cartoon character holds a sign saying, "The End Is Near." For Christians, this is not a message of fear. Instead, it is a message of watchful hope. Scripture teaches that the End Times began with Christ's first coming, especially his death and resurrection. Christ will come again on judgment day. Now we live in that in-between time, when salvation has been won, but full glory is still to come. It's the beginning of the end.

Jesus himself makes clear that no one knows the day or hour of his return. This uncertainty is not meant to trouble us, but to keep us spiritually awake. Each day becomes an opportunity to live in repentance and faith, turning from sin and trusting fully in Christ's finished work for us. Our preparation for the end is not about trying to predict signs or earn God's favor. Instead, it is about remaining rooted in Jesus: hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments, and trusting the promises of forgiveness. These are God's ways of keeping us ready.
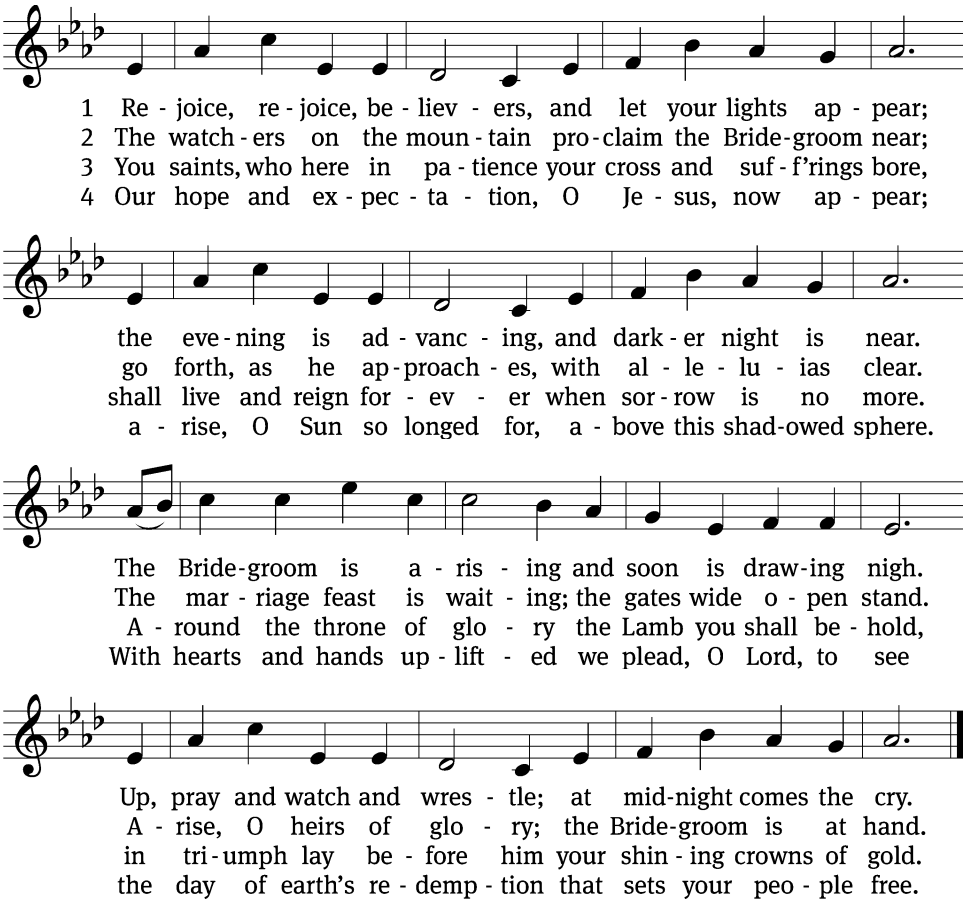
"The Beginning of the End" reminds us that history is moving toward our own death and toward Christ's return. For believers, that end is truly a beginning.

Today's Focus:
It's Time to: Watch for the Final Events

Imagine you are planning to take the family out to dinner. You all have to wait for someone to get ready. Minute after minute passes. What can happen in that situation? It's easy to focus on something else and even forget the original goal. Perhaps as you wait, you even fall asleep.

As we wait for Christ to return, as day after day passes, it can be easy to get distracted, to lose vigilance, to become spiritually drowsy. It's the beginning of the end. Why does it have to take so long? God forbid that Christ should return and find us spiritually asleep. Today we are reminded that the time between Christ's first and second coming is a time for watchfulness.

Opening Hymn — 493 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722, abr.; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907, alt.
Tune: Swedish
Text and tune: Public domain

In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Confession

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.
Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.
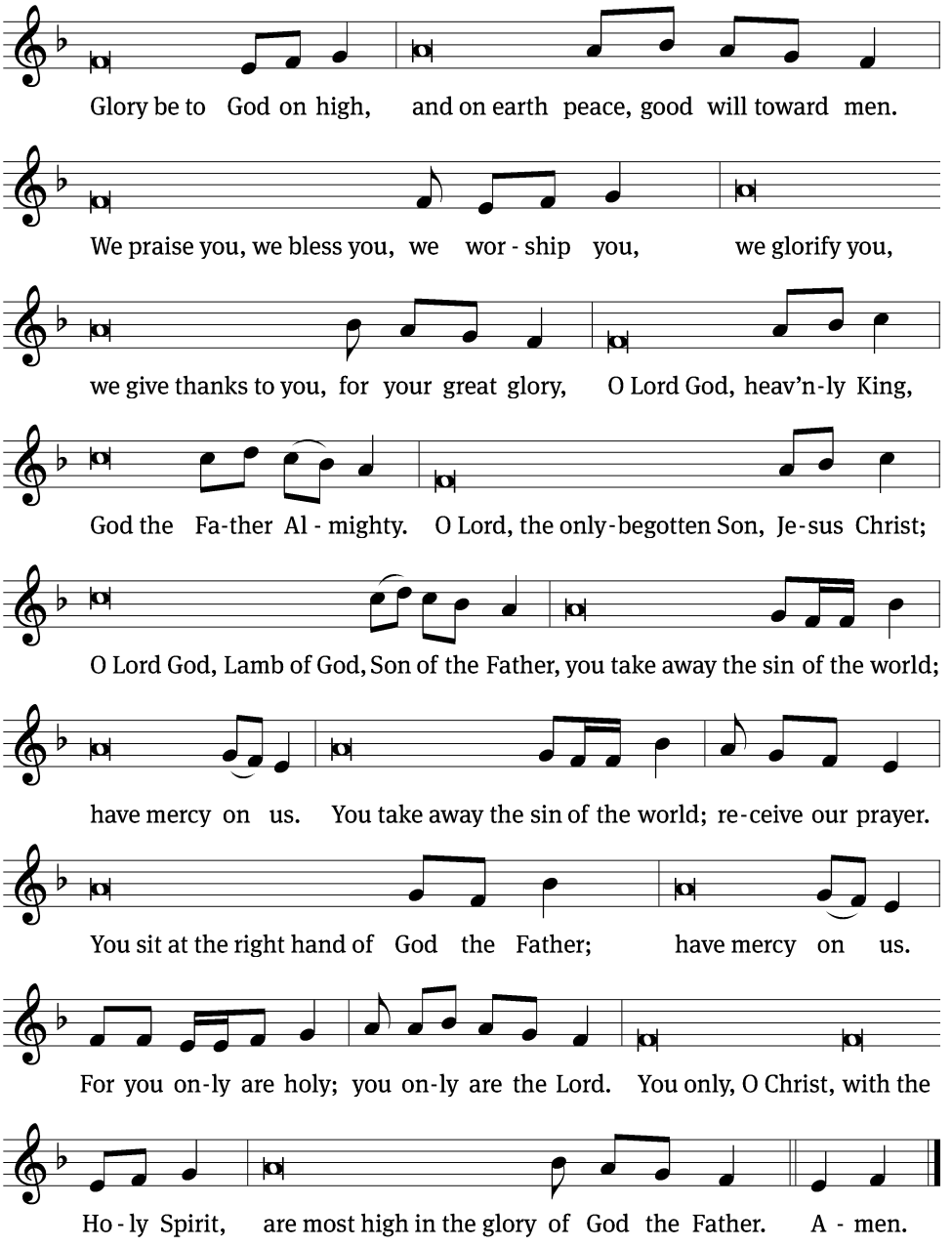
For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
Amen.

Glory Be to God on High



The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God and Savior, you have set the final day and hour when we shall be delivered from this world of sin and death. Keep us ever watchful for the coming of your Son that we may sit with him and all your holy ones at the marriage feast in heaven; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

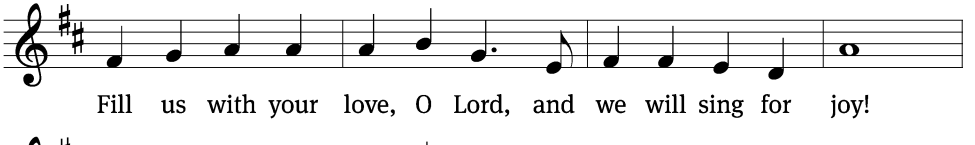
First Reading — Isaiah 52:1–6

The prophet cries "Awake!" to people sleepwalking through life.
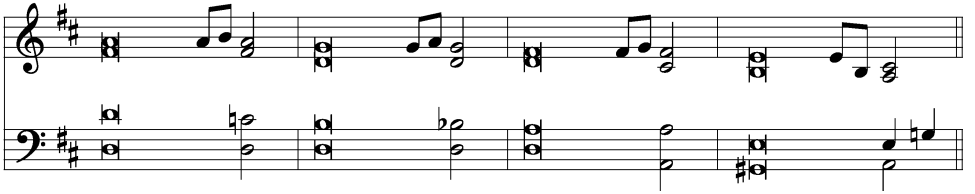
The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day **Psalm 90**

Refrain



Tone



Lord, you have been our / dwelling place
throughout all gener- / ations.
Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the / whole world,
from everlasting to everlasting / you are God.

You turn people / back to dust,
saying, "Return to dust, you / mortals."
A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has / just gone by,
or like a watch / in the night. *Refrain*

Teach us to number / our days,
that we may gain a heart of / wisdom.
May the favor of the Lord our God / rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work / of our hands.
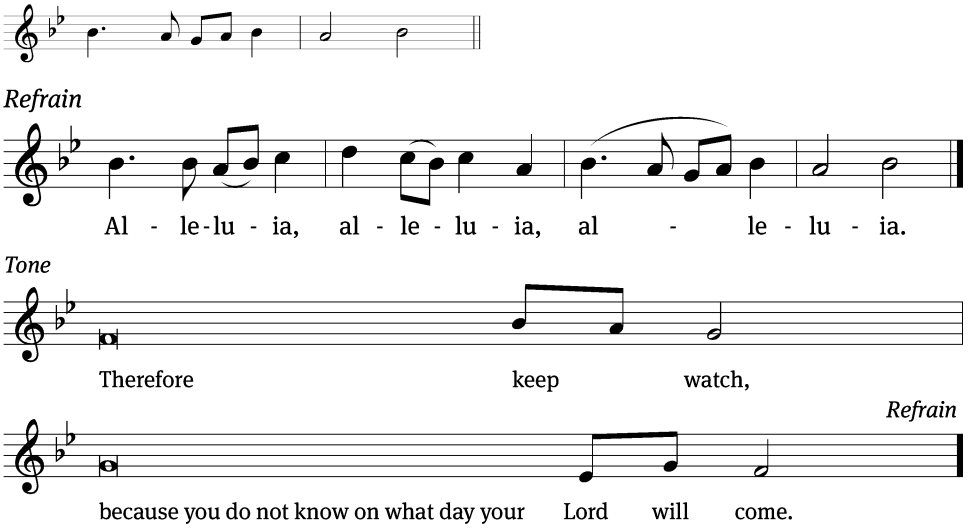
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Second Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

Be watchful for Jesus to return. Live as children of light.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation — Matthew 24:42
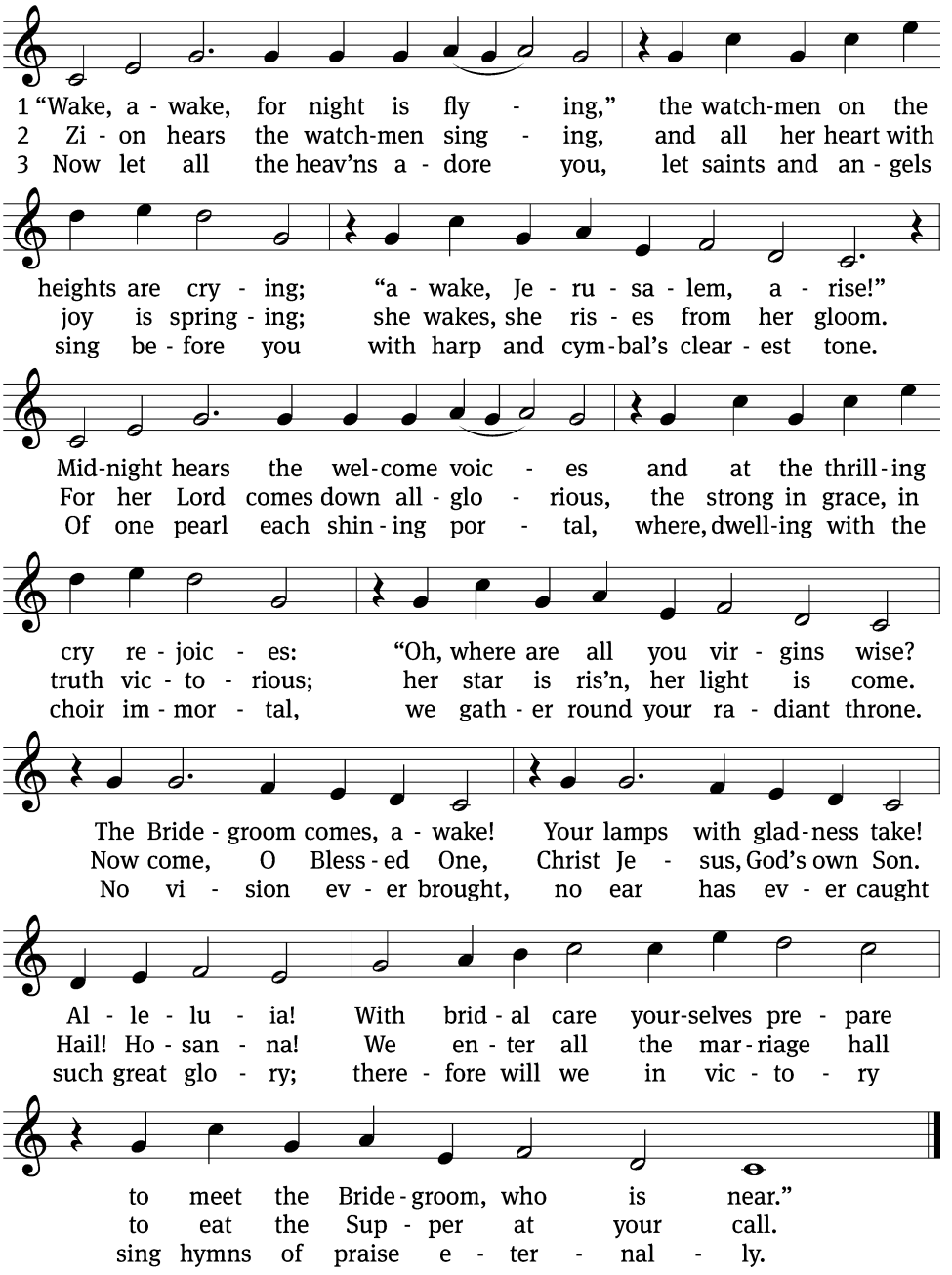


Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 712282

Gospel — Matthew 25:1–13

Those who are watching and ready for the Bridegroom will enter into the great wedding banquet.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day 486 Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying



Sermon

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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human.
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, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian 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 of the Church

Offering

The Sacrament

Preface

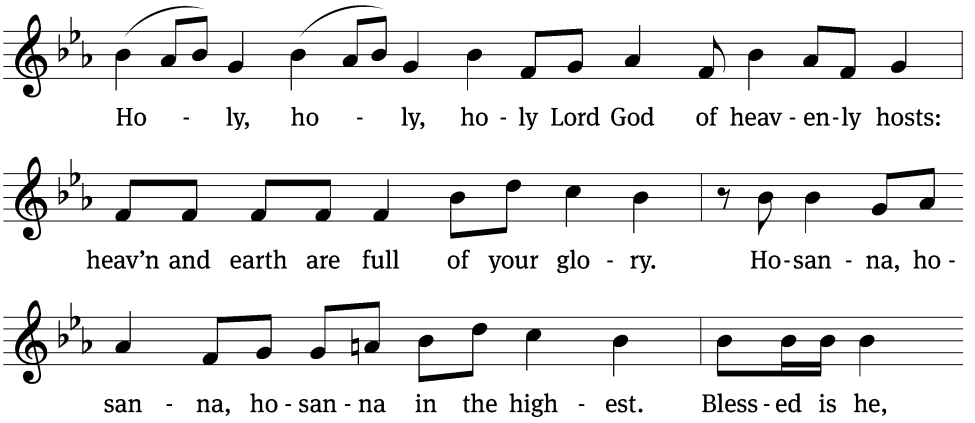
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

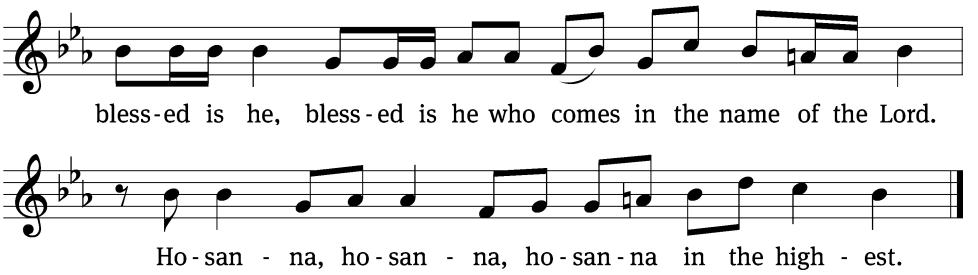
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy





Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

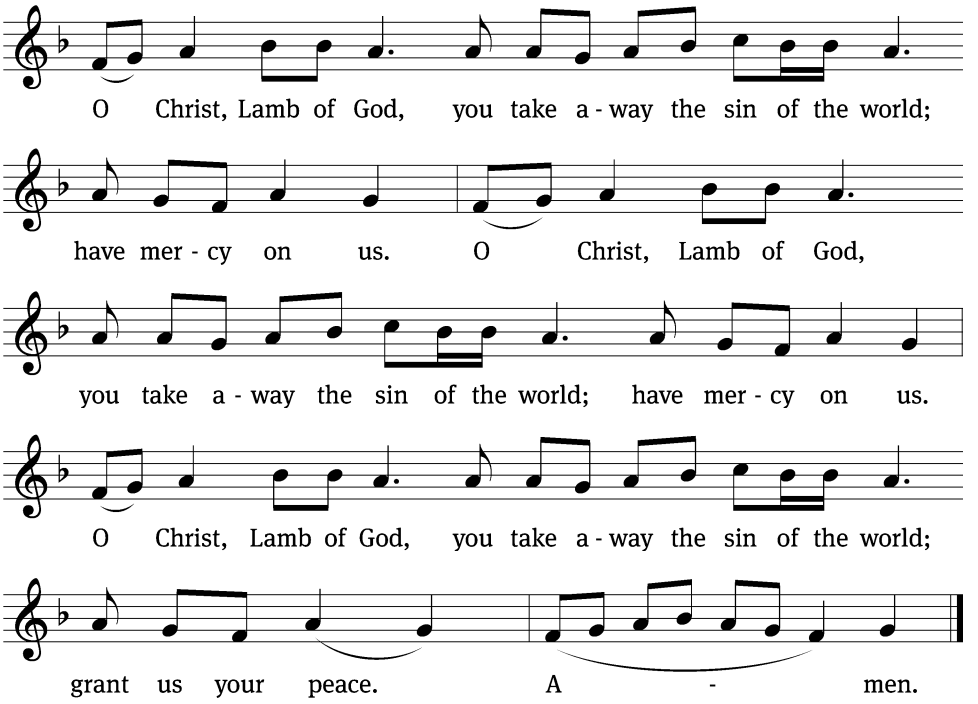
Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my ✝ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

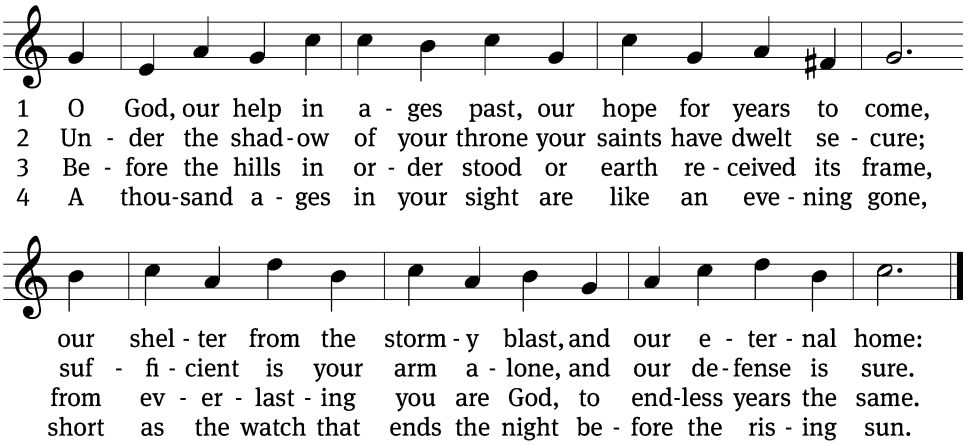
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my ✝ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God



Distribution Hymn 820 O God, Our Help in Ages Past

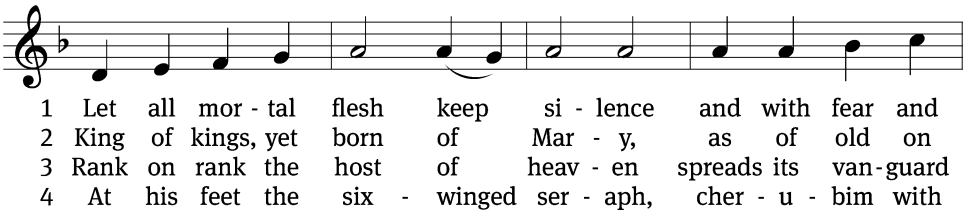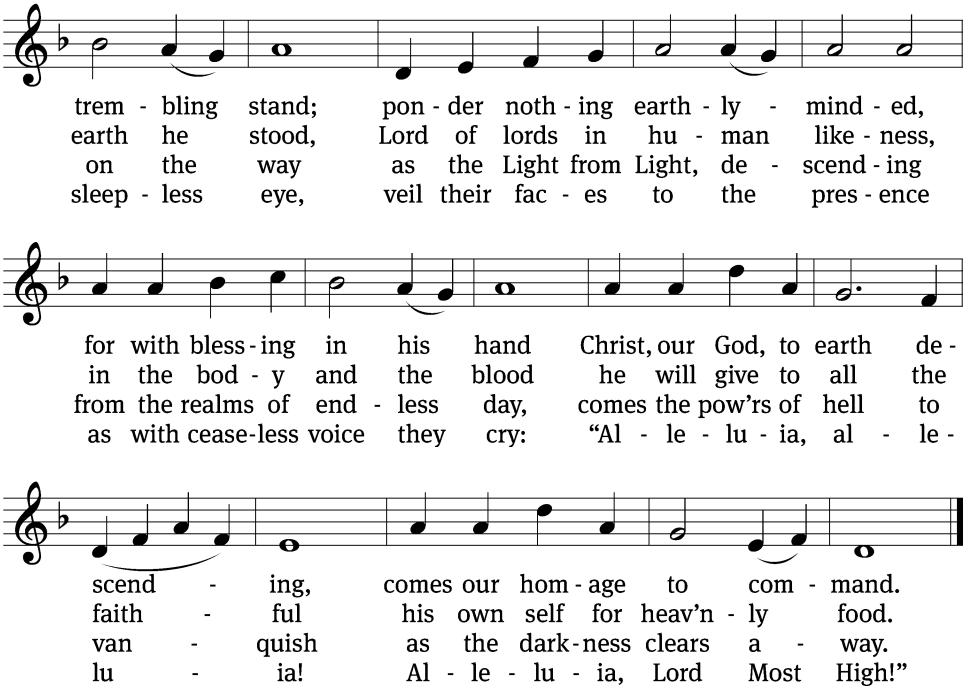


5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
soon bears us all away;
we fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
still be our guard while troubles last
and our eternal home!

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, abr., alt.
Tune: William Croft, 1678–1727
Text and tune: Public domain

Distribution Hymn 672 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence





Text: Liturgy of St. James, 5th cent.; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829–1885, alt.
Tune: French, 17th cent.
Text and tune: Public domain

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

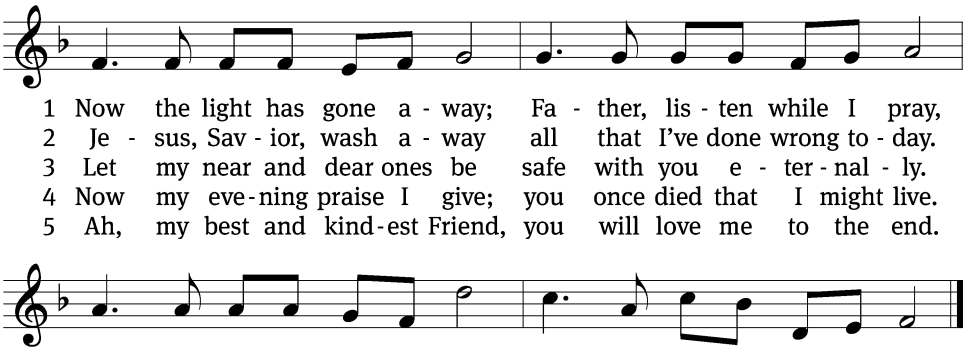
Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

Closing Hymn — 784 Now the Light Has Gone Away



Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Tune: Liederbuch für Kleinkinder-Schulen, Kaiserswerth, 1842
Text and tune: Public domain

Serving in God's House Today

Presiding Minister: Pastor Derek Bartelt | **Preaching Minister:** Pastor Kenneth Frey
Accompanist: Robert Joseph | **Elder:** Drew Sherman
Altar Guild: Gail Michnay and Kris Hills | **Projectionist:** Gail Michnay

Acknowledgments

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