



SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 20, 2026

The author of the gospel according to Matthew narrates one of Jesus of Nazareth's controversial parables in which Jesus says the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet, God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In Holy Baptism, we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

Prelude

Elegiac Prelude

Gerald Bales
(1919-2002)

ENTRANCE RITE

Entrance Hymn

Lord of Light



1 Lord of light, your name out - shin - ing all the stars and
2 By the toil of faith - ful work - ers in some far out -
3 Grant that knowl - edge, still in - creas - ing, at your feet may
4 By the prayers of faith - ful watch - ers, nev - er si - lent



suns of space, use our tal - ents in your king - dom
ly - ing field, by the cour - age where the ra - diance
low - ly kneel; with your grace our tri - umphs hal - low,
day or night; by the cross of Je - sus, bring - ing



as the ser - vants of your grace; use us to ful -
of the cross is still re - vealed, by the vic - to -
with your char - i - ty our zeal; lift the na - tions
peace to all and heal - ing light; by the love that



fill your pur - pose in the gift of Christ your Son.
ries of meek - ness, through re - proach and suf - f'ring won:
from the shad - ows to the glad - ness of the sun:
pass - es knowl - edge, mak - ing all your chil - dren one:

Refrain



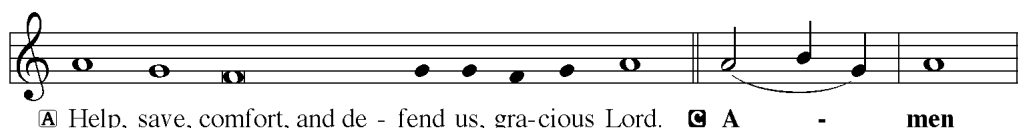
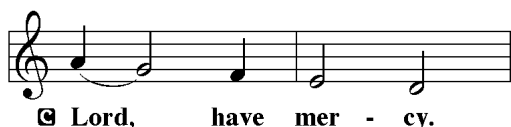
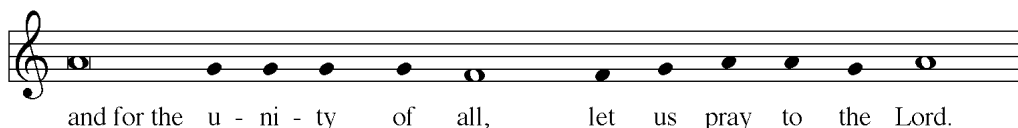
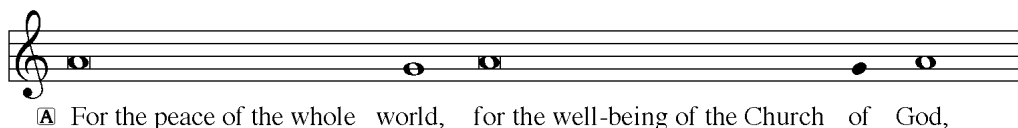
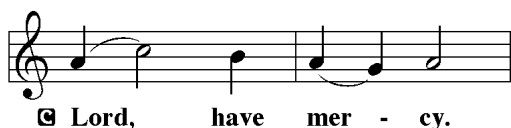
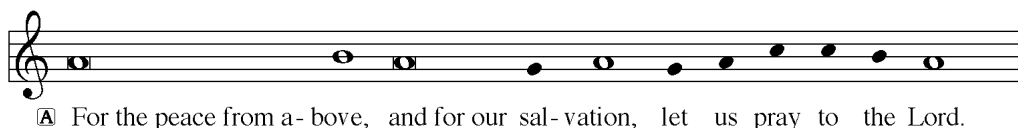
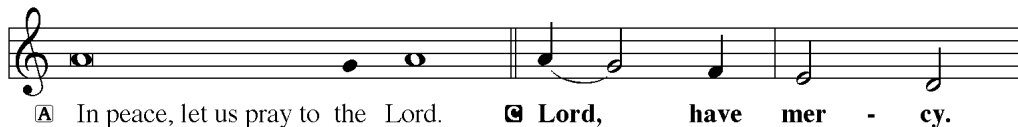
Fa - ther, as in high - est heav - en, so on earth your will be done.

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Kyrie



Hymn of Praise



A This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



B Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.

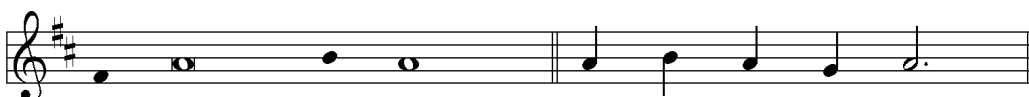


This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

Salutation and Prayer of the Day



P The Lord be with you.

A And al-so with you.

P: Let us pray.

ALL: Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Lesson - Jonah 3:10 — 4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city.

Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but should not I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites who do not know the difference between their right and left hands?

¹⁰When God saw what the people of Ninevah did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. ¹But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The Lord GOD appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalms 145:1-8

(sung in unison)

This psalm is a hymn of praise to the Lord, mighty in deeds, yet tender and compassionate.

**I will exalt you, O | God my king,*
and bless your name forev- | er and ever.**

**²Every day | will I bless you*
and praise your name forev- | er and ever.**

**³Great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised;*
there is no end | to his greatness.**

**⁴One generation shall praise your works | to another*
and shall de- | clare your power.**

**⁵I will ponder the glorious splendor | of your majesty*
and all your | marvelous works.**

**⁶They shall speak of the might of your | wondrous acts,*
and I will tell | of your greatness.**

**⁷They shall publish the remembrance of | your great goodness;*
they shall sing of your | righteous deeds.**

**⁸The LORD is gracious and full | of compassion,*
slow to anger and | of great kindness.**

Second Lesson - Philippians 1:21–30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well — ³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

L: The word of the Lord.

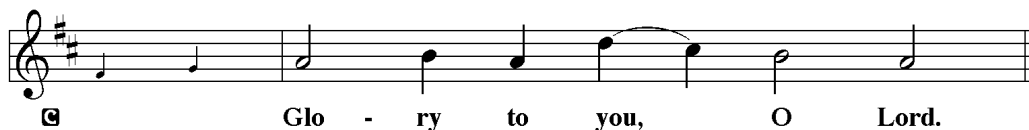
C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia Verse



Holy Gospel - Matthew 20:1-16

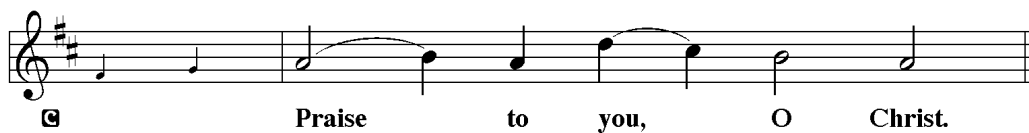
P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twentieth chapter.



Jesus of Nazareth tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.



Sermon

Pastor Roberts

silence for reflection

Hymn of the Day

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



- 1 There's a wide-ness
- 2 There is wel-come
- 3 For the love of
- 4 'Tis not all we



in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der -
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy



lib - er - ty. There is no place where earth's sor - rows
in his blood. There is grace e - nough for thou - sands
ful - ly kind. But we make this love too nar - row
through the fall. Make our love, O God, more faith - ful;



are more felt than up in heav'n. There is no place
of new worlds as great as this; there is room for
by false lim - its of our own; and we mag - ni -
let us take you at your word, and our lives will



where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
be thanks-giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Apostles' Creed

P: Using the words of our ancestors in the faith as expressed in the Apostles' Creed, we proclaim the triune God whom we believe:

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

The Prayers

A: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

A: God who is gracious and merciful, teach your Church to invite and welcome all. Lead us to be grateful for the blessing of community. Challenge your Church to choose equity and compassion over judgment. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God who sends the wind and the sun, you know every worm and bush by name. Help us remember that even the humblest parts of creation are precious to you. Show us how best to care for the earth and its creatures. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God who is ready to relent from punishing, impart your compassionate wisdom to legislators, judges, members of the military, and law enforcement. Give them courage to serve their communities in times of uncertainty, stress, or exhaustion. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God who saves, direct your people who are tempted by evil ways. Protect your children from calamity and disaster. Strengthen all who are incarcerated. Encourage all who are in despair or pain of any kind. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God who is slow to anger, may we boast about the goodness of Jesus the Christ with the confidence of Paul in prison. Inspire us to find abundance in whatever vocation we are called to in the world and in service to our congregation. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God who abounds in steadfast love, we give thanks for the saints called to the kingdom of heaven. United with them in spirit, hold us firm as we labor in this life and look to the life to come. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen

LITURGY OF THE MEAL

The Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offering

Offertory Anthem

Bless the Lord, O My Soul

Mikail Ippolitof-Ivanof
(1859-1935)

*Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Bless the Lord and forget not all His benefits.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name.
He is full of compassion and mercy, long suffering and great in goodness.
He will not always be chiding, nor keepeth He His wrath forever.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name.
O blessed art Thou, O Lord.*

(from the Russian Orthodox Liturgy)

Offertory



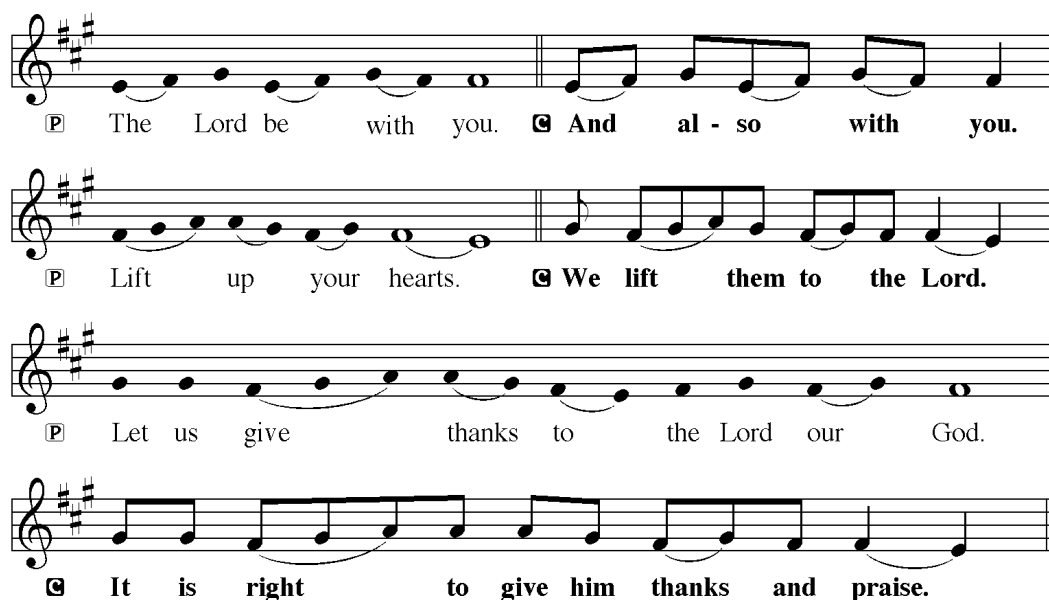
Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offertory Prayer

A: Let us pray. Merciful Father,

C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us - ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Great Thanksgiving



P The Lord be with you. **A** And al - so with you.

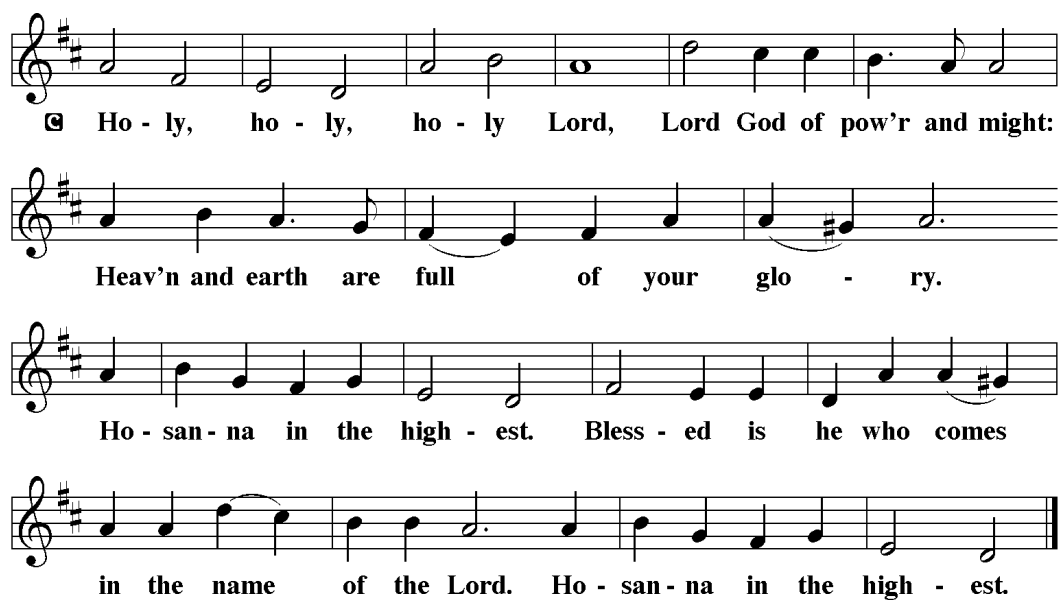
P Lift up your hearts. **A** We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

A It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus



A Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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

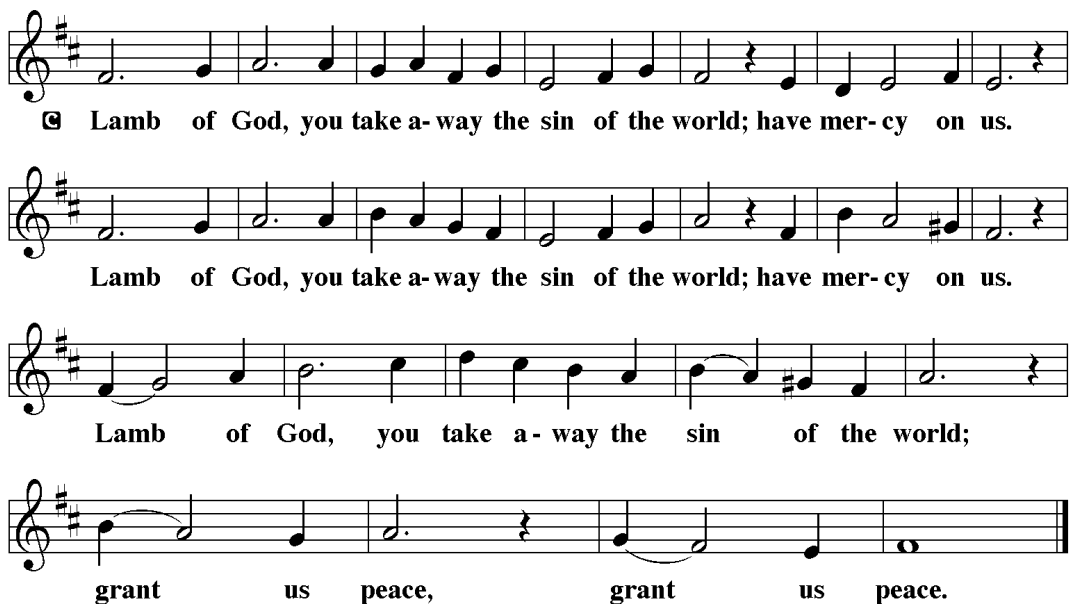
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Eucharistic Prayer

Lord's Prayer

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

Communion with our Risen Lord



☐ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.

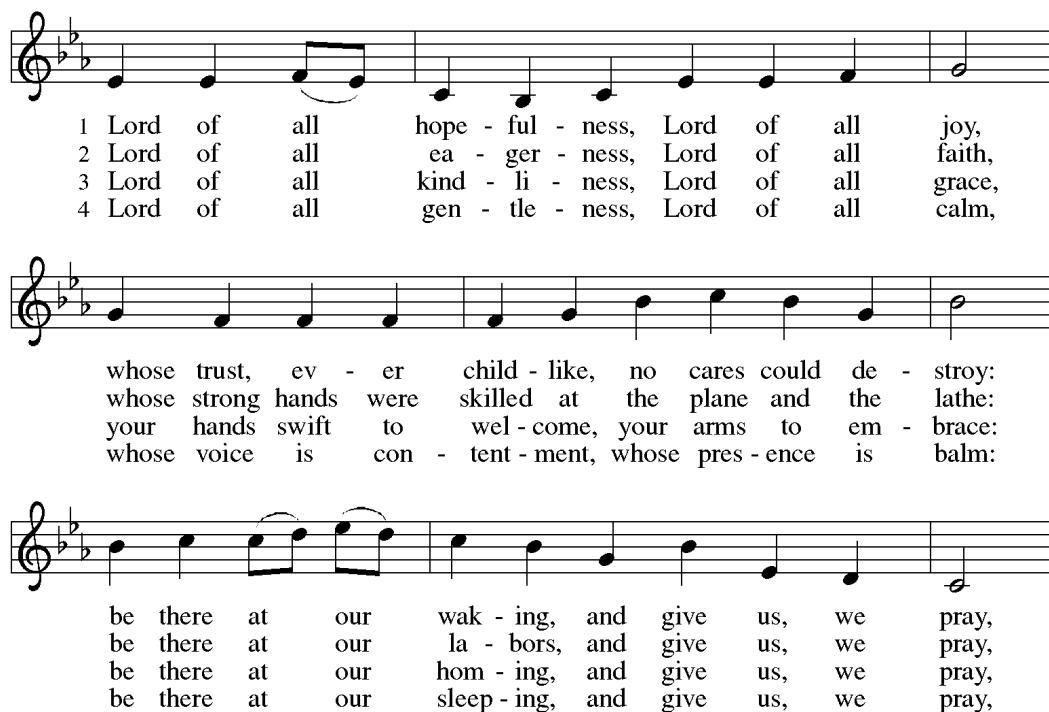
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;

grant us peace, grant us peace.

Hymns

Lord of All Hopefulness



1 Lord of all hope - ful - ness, Lord of all joy,
2 Lord of all ea - ger - ness, Lord of all faith,
3 Lord of all kind - li - ness, Lord of all grace,
4 Lord of all gen - tle - ness, Lord of all calm,

whose trust, ev - er child - like, no cares could de - stroy:
whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
your hands swift to wel - come, your arms to em - brace:
whose voice is con - tent - ment, whose pres - ence is balm:

be there at our wak - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our la - bors, and give us, we pray,
be there at our hom - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our sleep - ing, and give us, we pray,

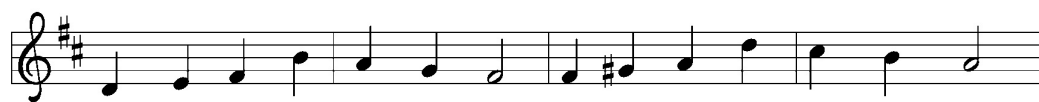


your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
 your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
 your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
 your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Text: Jan Struther, 1901–1953
 Music: SLANE, Irish traditional
 Text © Oxford University Press 1931.

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Take My Life, That I May Be



1 Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;
 2 Take my hands and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love;
 3 Take my voice and let me sing al - ways, on - ly, for my King;
 4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, not a mite would I with - hold;



take my mo - ments and my days; let them flow in cease - less praise.
 take my feet and let them be swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.
 take my lips and let them be filled with mes - sag - es from thee.
 take my in - tel - lect, and use ev - 'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine;
 it shall be no longer mine.
 Take my heart, it is thine own;
 it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour
 at thy feet its treasure store;
 take myself, and I will be
 ever, only, all for thee.

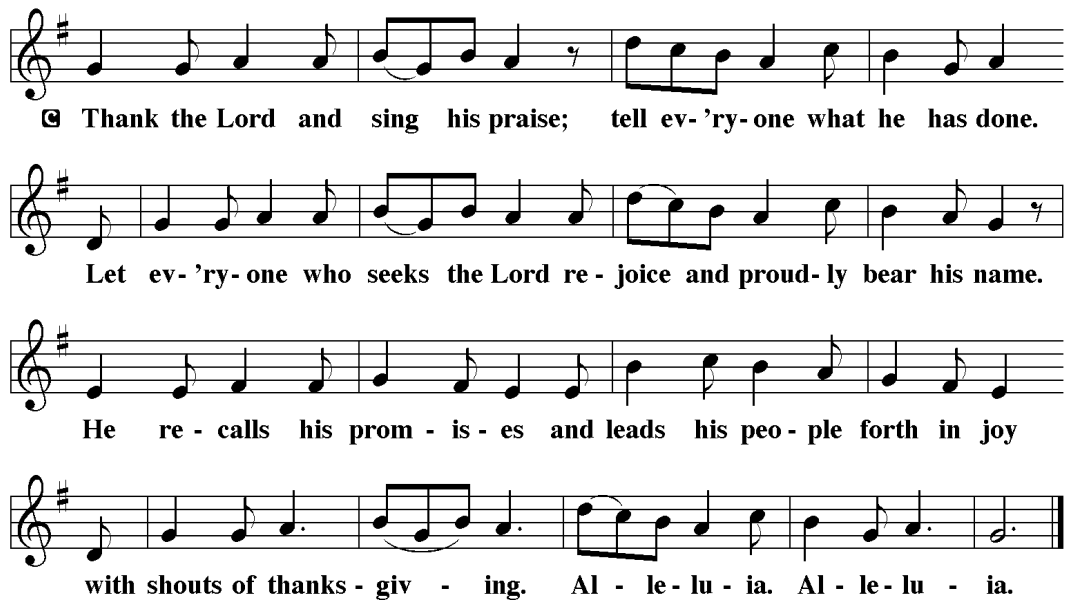
Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
 Music: PATMOS, William H. Havergal, 1793–1870

Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **Amen**

Post-Communion Canticle



C Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.
Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.
He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy
with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

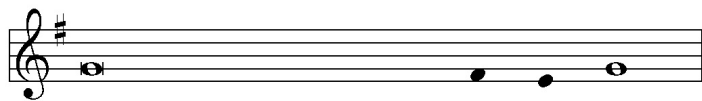
Post-Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray.

Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen**

Benediction



P Almighty God, Father, † Son,
and Holy Spirit, bless you now and for - ever.



C A - men

Hymn

Rise Up, O Saints of God!



- 1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;
- 2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulf's earth's frame;
- 3 Rise up, O saints of God! His king - dom's task em - brace;
- 4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;
- 5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod



Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, his word of hope pro - claim.
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.
and quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

Text: Norman O. Forness, b. 1936

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893

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Dismissal

A: Our service now begins. Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Sortie Brève

Gerald Bales



The altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Mae Derrick.

The candles are given to the glory of God by Barbara Hatin
in honor of the 100th birthday of her father, Herman Hertkorn.

THIS WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY

Sunday, September 20	8:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Church School
	10:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion with Livestream via YouTube
	12:30 p.m.	Holy Trinity Youth (grades three - twelve; Putt Putt Fun Center)
	5:00 p.m.	Thomas Mass
	6:00 p.m.	Third Sunday Program - <i>From Poplar Forest to Florida</i>
Monday, September 21	9:00 a.m.	Strength and Balance Exercise Class
	9:30 a.m.	Chair Yoga Class
	7:00 p.m.	Bible Study - <i>Connecting with God</i> (via Zoom)
Tuesday, September 22	1:00 p.m.	Bible Study - <i>Together by Grace: Psalms</i>
	5:40 p.m.	Handbell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 p.m.	Table Talk - <i>Reformation Roots</i>
Wednesday, September 23	12:10 p.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	6:00 p.m.	Special Worship Service
	7:00 p.m.	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, September 24	9:00 a.m.	Parish Nurse in office (until 10:00 a.m.)
	11:00 a.m.	Discussion Group - <i>First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom of God</i>
Friday, September 25	9:00 a.m.	Strength and Balance Exercise Class
	9:30 a.m.	Chair Yoga Class
	11:00 a.m.	Book Discussion Group - <i>Separation of Church and Hate</i>
	5:30 p.m.	Happy Hour Organ Recital - J. William Greene
Sunday, September 27	8:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Church School
	10:30 a.m.	Service of Holy Communion with Livestream via YouTube
	2:00 p.m.	Pastor's Information Class
	4:00 p.m.	Holy Trinity Junior Youth (grades three - eight)
	6:00 p.m.	Confirmation Class (grades six and above)

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Our Mission: "To care actively in the name of Jesus Christ."

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
1000 Langhorne Road
Lynchburg, Virginia 24503**

Ministers: The People of Holy Trinity

President: Deb Serio
Organist-Choirmaster: J. William Greene
Parish Administrator: Ellie Quillen
Parish Nurse: Gail Midkiff

Pastor: Dennis S. Roberts
Director of Youth and Campus Ministries:
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