



EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 27, 2026

Jesus of Nazareth's parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel, the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair; God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ Jesus as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

Prelude

O Holy Spirit, Enter In

arr. Jaap Dragt
(1930-2003)

ENTRANCE RITE

Entrance Hymn

O Holy Spirit, Enter In



1 O Ho - ly Spir - it, en - ter in, and in our hearts your
2 Left to our - selves, we sure - ly stray; oh, lead us on the
3 O might - y Rock, O Source of life, let your good Word in



work be - gin, and make our hearts your dwell - ing. Sun of the soul,
nar - row way, with wis - est coun - sel guide us; and give us stead -
doubt and strife be in us strong - ly burn - ing, that we be faith -



O Light di - vine, a - round and in us bright - ly shine, your strength
fast - ness, that we may fol - low you for - ev - er free, no mat -
ful un - to death and live in love and ho - ly faith, from you



in us up - well - ing. In your ra - diance life from heav - en now is
ter who de - rides us. Gent - ly heal those hearts now bro - ken; give some
true wis - dom learn - ing. Lord, your mer - cy on us show - er; by your



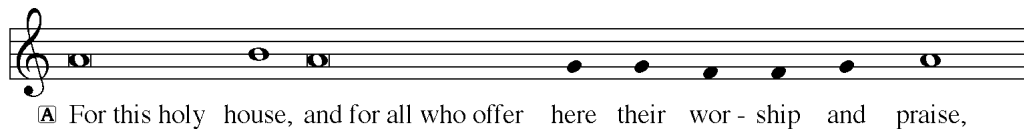
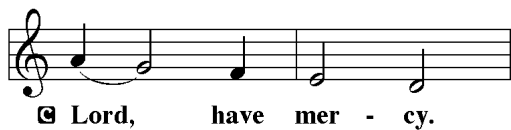
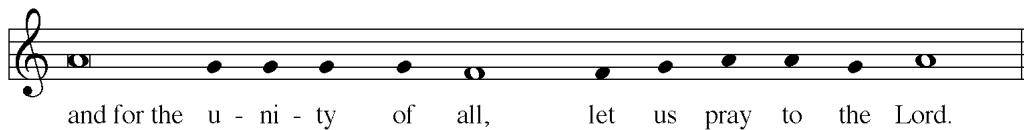
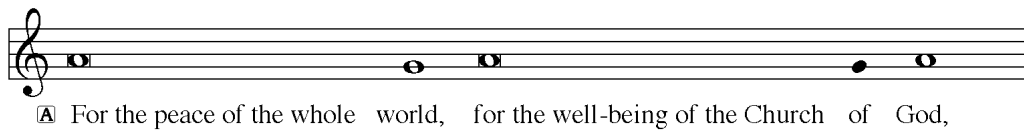
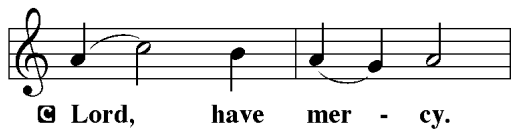
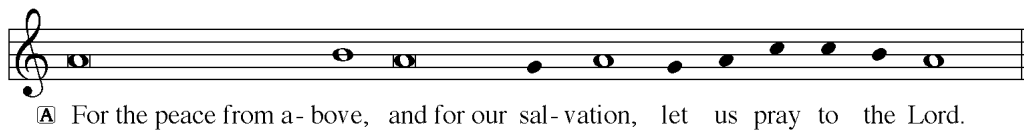
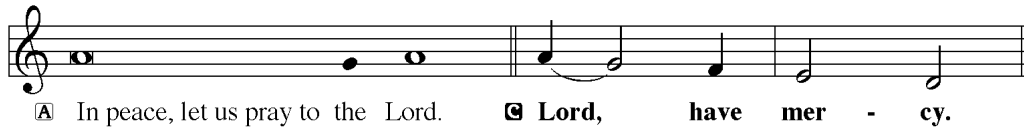
giv - en o - ver - flow - ing, gift of gifts be - yond all know - ing.
to - ken you are near us, whom we trust to light and cheer us.
pow - er Christ con - fess - ing, we will cher - ish all your bless - ing.

Apostolic 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.

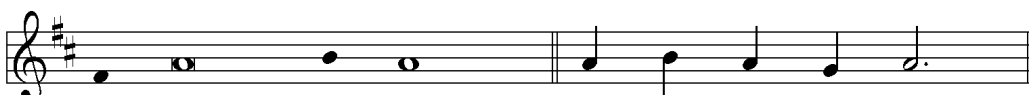


This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



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.

G And al-so with you.

P: Let us pray.

ALL: God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Lesson - Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot turn from their wicked ways. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, "The way of the LORD is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the LORD is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25:1-8

(sung in unison)

This psalm is a prayer for forgiveness and guidance and an expression of trust in the Lord.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my [|] trust in you;*
let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph [|] over me.
²Let none who look to you be [|] put to shame;*
let the treacherous be disappointed [|] in their schemes.
³Show me your [|] ways, O LORD,*
and teach [|] me your paths.
⁴Lead me in your [|] truth and teach me,*
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all [|] the day long.
⁵Remember, O LORD, your compas- [|] sion and love,*
for they are from [|] everlasting.
⁶Remember not the sins of my youth and [|] my transgressions;*
remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your good- [|] ness, O LORD.
⁷Gracious and upright [|] is the LORD;*
therefore he teaches sinners [|] in his way.
⁸He guides the humble in [|] doing right*
and teaches his way [|] to the lowly.

Second Lesson - Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the humility of Christ Jesus in his obedient death on the cross. The Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

L: The word of the Lord.

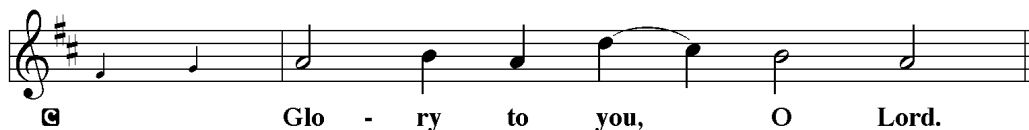
C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia Verse



Holy Gospel - Matthew 21:23-32

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

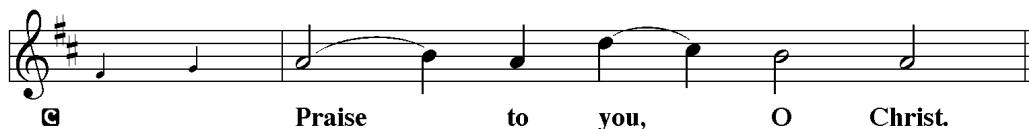


After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus of Nazareth begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

²³When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.



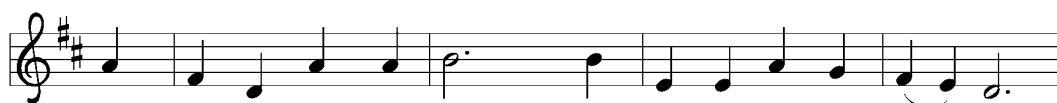
Sermon

Pastor Roberts

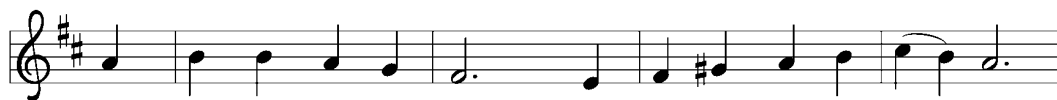
silence for reflection

Hymn of the Day

O God, My Faithful God



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,
2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing
3 Keep me from say - ing words that lat - er need re - call - ing;
4 When dan-gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth - ing is, all per - fect gifts be - stow - ing:
what - ev - er you com - mand, my call - ing here ful - fill - ing—
guard me, lest i - dle speech may from my lips be fall - ing;
help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer - less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in
to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless
but when, with - in my place, I must and ought to speak,
help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con - science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.
what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.
then to my words give grace, lest I of - fend the weak.
and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: WAS FRAG ICH NACH DER WELT, Ahasuerus Fritsch, 1629–1701

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, we put our trust in you as we pray for the Church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government, the military, and other positions of authority. Give them humble and willing hearts, looking to the needs of others. We pray also for our enemies. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way. Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Be at work in us and unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We give thanks for all the saints who died secure in the knowledge of salvation. Keep us fearless in our faith and certain of your resurrection. 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

O Ye That Love the Lord

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor
(1875-1912)

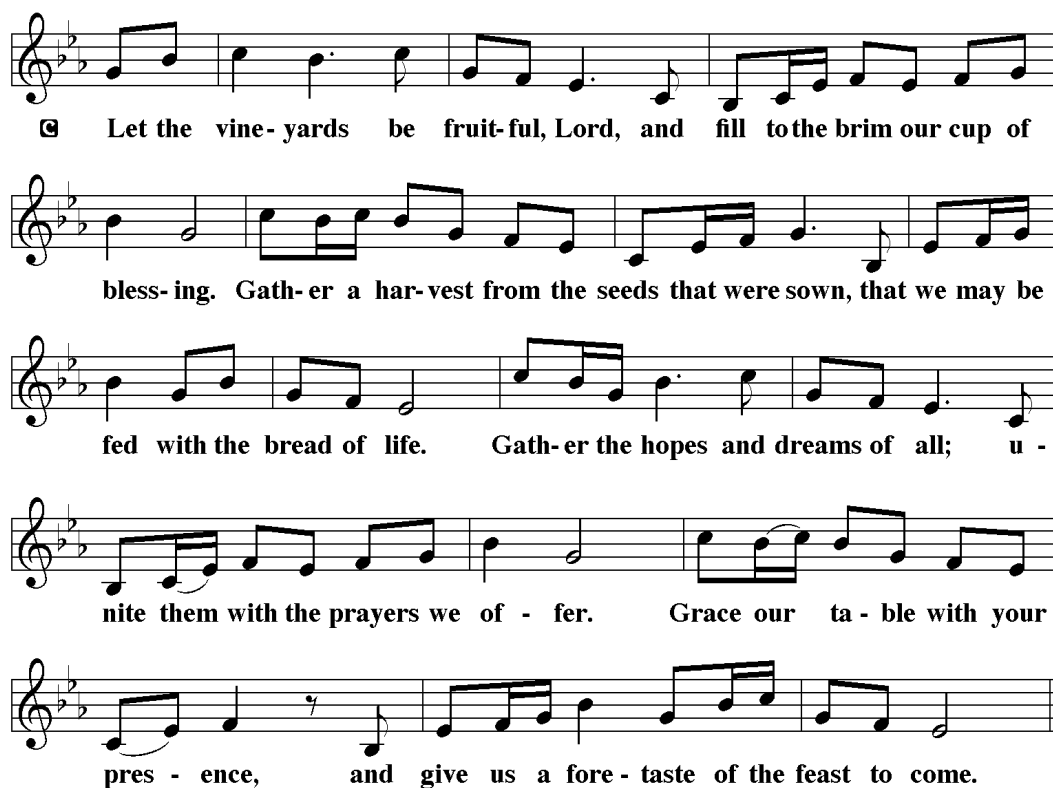
O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil.

The Lord preserveth the souls of his saints;

he shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.

(Psalm 97:10)

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

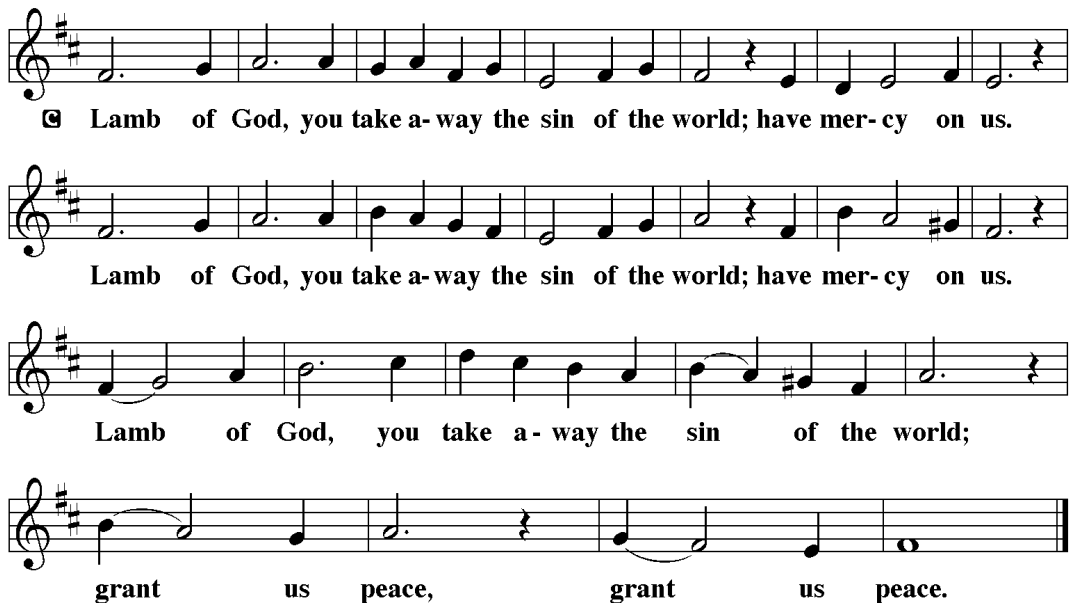
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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



Four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. grant us peace, grant us peace.

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

Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun



Three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 1 A - wake, my soul, and with the sun thy 2 All praise to thee, who safe hast kept and 3 Lord, I my vows to thee re - new. Dis - 4 Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, all 5 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise dai - ly stage of du - ty run; shake off dull sloth, and hast re - freshed me while I slept. Grant, Lord, when I from perse my sins as morn - ing dew; guard my first springs of I de - sign or do or say, that all my pow'rs, with him, all crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye joy - ful rise to pay thy morn - ing sac - ri - fice. death shall wake, I may of end - less light par - take. thought and will; and with thy - self my spir - it fill. all their might, in thy sole glo - ry may u - nite. heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

1 A - wake, my soul, and with the sun thy
2 All praise to thee, who safe hast kept and
3 Lord, I my vows to thee re - new. Dis -
4 Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, all
5 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise

dai - ly stage of du - ty run; shake off dull sloth, and
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heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

Lord, whose love in humble service bore the weight of human need,
Who upon the cross, forsaken, worked your mercy's perfect deed:
We, your servants, bring the worship not of voice alone, but heart;
Consecrating to your purpose ev'ry gift which you impart.

Still your children wander homeless; still the hungry cry for bread;
Still the captives long for freedom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
As you, Lord, in deep compassion healed the sick and freed the soul,
By your Spirit send your power to our world to make it whole.

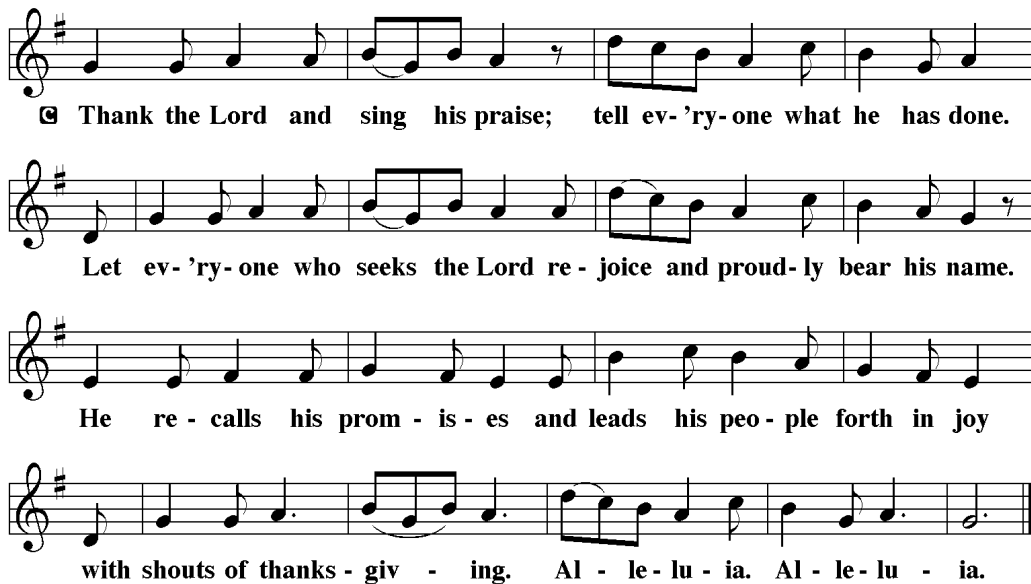
As we worship, grant us vision, till your love's revealing light
In its height and depth and greatness dawns upon our quickened sight,
Making known the needs and burdens your compassion bids us bear,
Stirring us to ardent service, your abundant life to share.

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



☞ 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.

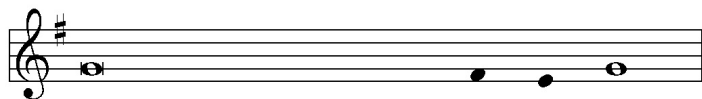
Post-Communion Prayer

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



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



A - - - men

Hymn

Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways



THIS WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY

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.	Junior Youth Group (grades three - eight)
	6:00 p.m.	Confirmation Class (grades six and above)
Monday, September 28	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 29	5:40 p.m.	Handbell Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday, September 30	12:10 p.m.	Service of Holy Communion
	7:00 p.m.	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, October 1	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, October 2	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>
Saturday, October 3	10:00 a.m.	Altar Guild
	5:30 p.m.	Blessing of the Animals
Sunday, October 4	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
	11:45 a.m.	Senior Youth Group (grades nine - twelve)
	4:00 p.m.	Oktoberfest (Garman Home)

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

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
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Lynchburg, Virginia 24503**

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

Pastor: Dennis S. Roberts
Director of Youth and Campus Ministries:
Susan H. Williams
Sextons: Linda Woody and Patricia Wiggington

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