

*“They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”*

*Mark 1:27*

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany – January 28, 2024  
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Mars, PA 16046-0411  
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Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister  
Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!  
Know that you are welcome here just as you are.*

*If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time visiting us, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.*

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an \* and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**.*

*All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.*

*During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.*

*At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift. You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates. Visitor information cards and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.*

*At the time of **Holy Communion**, all are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor (gluten free wafers are available), then pre-filled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

*If you need a restroom, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.*

*As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.*

## PRELUDE

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### \*GATHERING SONG *Son of God, Eternal Savior* (ELW 655)



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,  
2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.  
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;  
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,  
Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.  
hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.  
Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:  
Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;  
By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,  
by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.  
we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.  
quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.  
grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

## **\*THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.  
We give you thanks, O God,  
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world,  
calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,  
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit,  
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

# \*THIS IS THE FEAST

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia.



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be



peo-ple of God. Pow-er, rich-es, wis-dom, and strength, and



*Refrain*  
hon-or, bless-ing, and glo-ry are his. This is the feast of



vic-t'ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has be-gun his reign. Al-



le-lu-ia. 2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God, and



join in the hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing, hon-or,



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

*Final refrain*



This is the feast of vic-t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia.

## **\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray,

**Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

### **FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

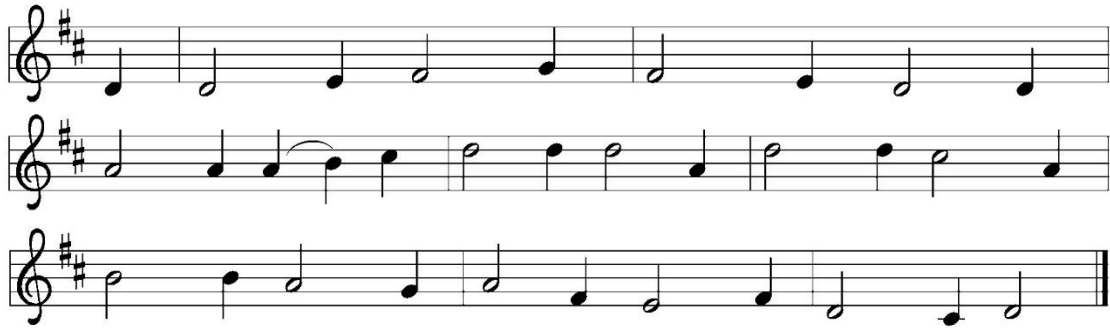
A reading from Deuteronomy

[Moses said:] <sup>15</sup>The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. <sup>16</sup>This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” <sup>17</sup>Then the LORD replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. <sup>20</sup>But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM



**1. Hallelujah! Among the just  
My heart will give God thanks and praise;  
Your works are great and learned by all  
Who take delight to know your ways.**

**2. Your work is full of majesty,  
Enduring splendor, righteousness;  
And gracious Lord, we well recall  
Your works for they are marvelous.**

**4. Your hands work justice, faithfulness,  
And your commandments all are sure;  
For they are done in equity  
And truth, and they will long endure.**

**5. Redemption and eternal law  
You sent us; holy is your Name;  
With fear of God wisdom begins,  
Whose praise endures, always the same**

## SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

A reading from 1 Corinthians

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; <sup>3</sup>but anyone who loves God is known by him.

<sup>4</sup>Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” <sup>5</sup>Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

<sup>7</sup>It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup>“Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup>But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup>So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. <sup>12</sup>But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## \*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## \*GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:21-28

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup>They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup>Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>24</sup>and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” <sup>25</sup>But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” <sup>26</sup>And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup>They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” <sup>28</sup>At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

## CHILDREN’S SERMON

## SERMON



**\*HYMN OF THE DAY *There Is a Balm in Gilead* (ELW 614)**

*(Blue prayer cards are collected during the song.)*



There is a balm in Gil-e - ad to make the wound-ed whole;



there is a balm in Gil-e - ad to heal the sin - sick soul.



- 1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
- 2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,
- 3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.  
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."  
and if you lack for knowl - edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

*Refrain*

**\*APOSTLES' CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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.**

## **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, we pray for creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer especially Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Roy, Ellen, Ruth, Sally, Katie, Debi, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember in our hearts. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives. We trust that all who have died rest in your loving care. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who hears our cries, we lift before you the prayers we do not yet know how to speak and those we lift before you now (*received prayer cards are read*). Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer this prayer in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

## **\*SHARING THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Let us share God's peace with one another

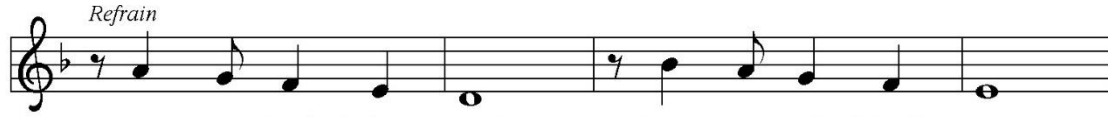
# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## OFFERING

### OFFERTORY HYMN *Have You Thanked the Lord* (ELW 829)

*Please remain seated for entire hymn*



Have you thanked the Lord? Have you praised God's name?



Don't you know that no to-mor-row is quite the same?



Have you thanked the Lord? Have you knelt in prayer,



and re-joiced that, rain or sun-shine, our God is there?



- 1 Hal - le - lu - jah! Thank the Lord for sun, sand, and sea,
- 2 Hal - le - lu - jah! Par - a - dise we taste where we are;
- 3 Hal - le - lu - jah! Joy and peace the Sav - ior will bring.



ev - 'ry star at night that shines for you and me.  
sum-mer breez - es, win - ter warmth are nev - er far.  
Grace a - maz - ing! So we lift our voice and sing,



Bless - ings so man - y come our way:  
God's love is ev - er on dis - play:  
grate - ful when clouds are bright or gray:



have you thanked the Lord to - day?  
have you thanked the Lord to - day?  
have you thanked the Lord to - day?

## STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

### \*OFFERTORY HYMN *Let the Vineyards be Fruitful* (ELW 182)



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 the dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

### \*OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, Holy One,  
for all good things come from you.  
In bread and cup you open heaven to us.  
Meet us at this table,  
that we receive what we seek  
and follow your Son, Jesus,  
in whose name we pray.  
**Amen.**

## \*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ,  
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 all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:  
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.  
We look with hope for his coming.  
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.  
Come among us. Bless this meal.  
May your Word take flesh in us.  
Awaken your people. Fill us with your light.  
Bring the gift of peace on earth.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,  
Holy One of Israel,  
Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High,  
one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray.

**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**

### **\*INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see!

*Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Those who do not receive the bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.*

*Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.*

### **COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God***

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, Lamb of God.

# DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

## COMMUNION HYMN *Soli Deo Gloria* (ELW 878)



1 O God of bless - ings, all praise to you! Your love sur -  
2 All praise for proph - ets, through grace in - spired to preach and  
3 All praise for mu - sic, deep gift pro - found, through hands and  
4 All praise for Je - sus, best gift di - vine through word and  
5 A bil - lion voic - es in one great song, now soft and



rounds us our whole life through. You are the  
wit - ness with hearts on fire. Your Spir - it  
voic - es in ho - ly sound; the psalms of  
wit - ness, in bread and wine; in - car - nate  
gen - tle, now deep and strong, in ev - 'ry



free - dom of those op - pressed; you are the com - fort of all dis -  
choos - es the weak and small to sing the new reign where might - y  
Da - vid, and Mar - y's praise, in word - less splen - dor and lyr - ic  
love song of bound - less grace, priest, teach - er, proph - et in time and  
cul - ture and style and key, from hill and val - ley, with sky and



tressed. Come now, O ho - ly and wel - come guest:  
fall; with them may we live your gos - pel call:  
phrase, with all cre - a - tion one song we raise:  
space, your stead - fast kind - ness with hu - man face:  
sea, with Christ we praise you e - ter - nal - ly:



So - li De - o glo - ri - a! So - li De - o glo - ri - a!

### \*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**



## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### \*BLESSING

God who names you,  
Christ who claims you,  
and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,  
✠ bless you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

### \*SENDING SONG *Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer* (ELW 618)



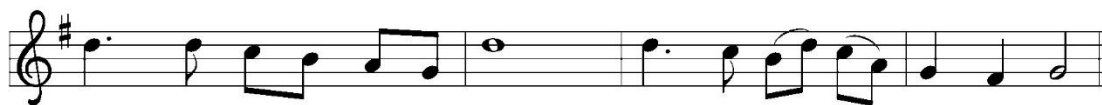
1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this  
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing  
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me  
wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,  
safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es



feed me now and ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
shield me with your might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.  
I will raise for - ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

### \*DISMISSAL

“May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus . . . May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. (*Romans 15:5, 13*)

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE

## **Assisting in worship today:**

**Assisting Minister: Denise H**

**Acolyte: Anna K**

**Greeter: Ruth Ann T**

**Ushers: Todd N**

**Offering: Jules K and Abigail C**

**Attendance last week: 56 + 5 zoom**

## **Notes for the day's texts:**

The Gospel of Mark describes Jesus as speaking with divine authority; his words have the power to replace the reign of evil with the kingdom of God. This excerpt lays out central questions of Mark's gospel: who is Jesus, and from where comes his authority? Mark tells the Christian community that even though crucified, Jesus is the Holy One of God, and although Jesus is a hidden messiah, the powers of evil recognize his power.

## **Today's Music**

*Son of God, Eternal Savior.* Text: Somerset C. Lowry, 1855-1932, Music: Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen, 1855-1932. Public Domain.

*Psalm 111.* Text: *The New Metrical Psalter*, Christopher L. Webber, © 2008. Music: *PUER NOBIS*. European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621, Public Domain.

*There Is a Balm in Gilead.* Text: African American spiritual, Music: African American spiritual. Public Domain.

*Have You Thanked the Lord.* Text: Bill LaMotta, 1919-1980, Music: Bill LaMotta. Joyce A. Lamotta / Augsburg Fortress.

*Let the Vineyards be Fruitful.* Music: Richard W. Hillert, 1923-2010. Augsburg Fortress / Lutheran Book of Worship.

*Soli Deo Gloria.* Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950, Music: Marty Haugen. GIA Publications, Inc..

*Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer.* Text: William Williams, 1717-1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722-1796, alt.. Music: John Hughes, 1873-1932. Public Domain.

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## **Next Week's Readings**

Isaiah 40:21-31 *The creator of all cares for the powerless*

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c *The Lord heals the brokenhearted*

1 Corinthians 9:16-23 *A servant for the sake of the gospel*

Mark 1:29-39 *The healing of Peter's mother-in-law*