

*"Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."*

*Matthew 25:13*

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**
**24th Sunday after Pentecost – November 8, 2026**
420 Beaver St., PO Box 411
Mars, PA 16046-0411
www.stjohnchurchmars.org
Phone: 724-625-1830 email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org
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 worshiping at St. John, 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. Envelopes are available in the pews if you prefer. Online gifts may be made using the QR code below:*

*You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates.* ***Guest information cards*** *and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.*

*As Lutherans, we believe Christ is truly present in the elements of the Lord's Supper. At the time of* ***Holy Communion****, all baptized individuals 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.*
*A* ***playroom*** *is available downstairs for children who need a break from the worship service. This room is by the elevator on the lower level. An adult must remain with the child. Children are also welcome to utilize the books and puzzles available in the Greeting Area on the top level by 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.*

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**
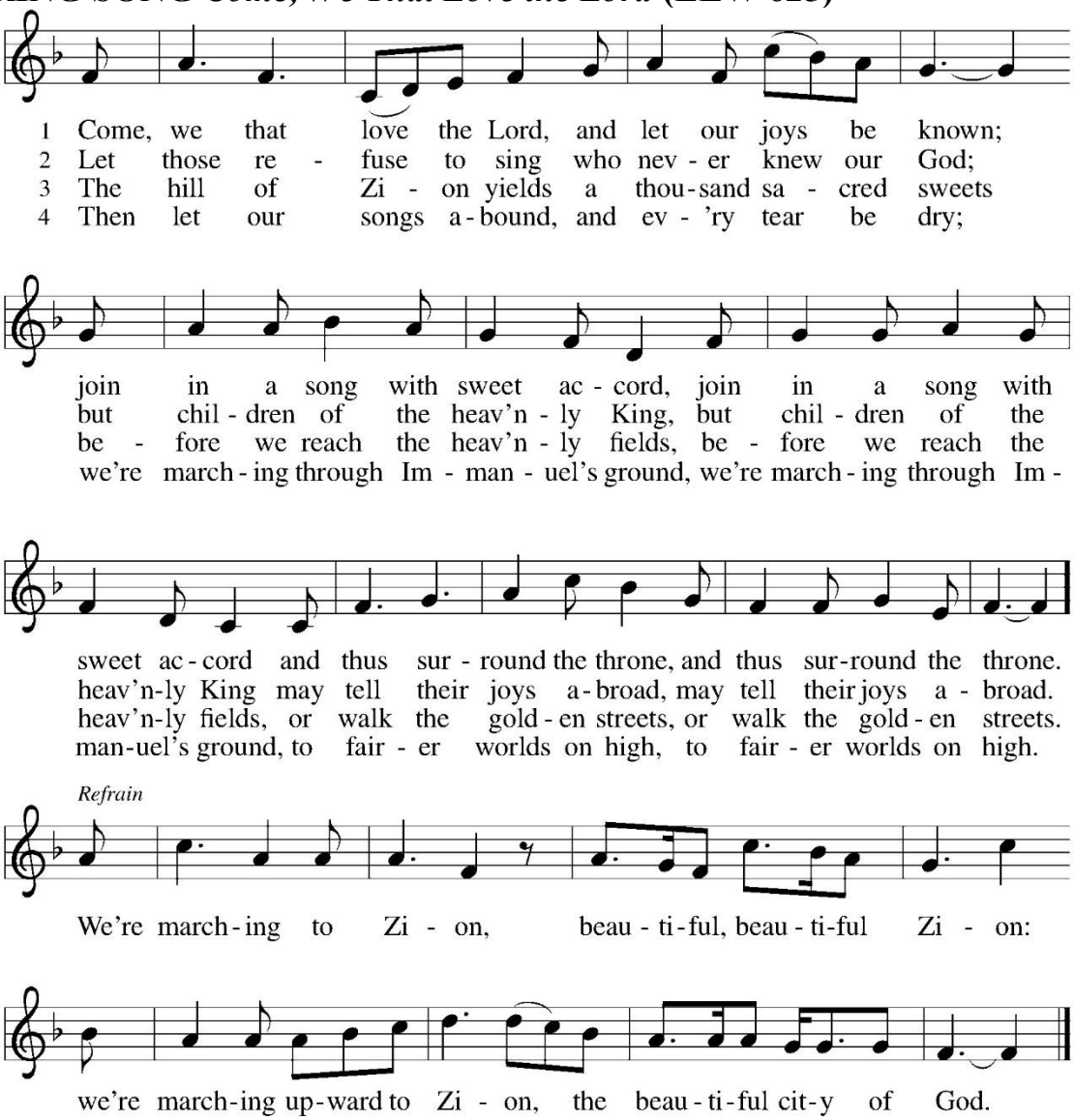
Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
our dwelling place for all generations,
whose compassion never slumbers.
**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God,
**we confess that we have trusted in our preparation**
**instead of your invitation.**
**We prioritize our piety over care for your beloved.**
**We trust the voice of our shame and fear,**
**which keeps us from entering fully**
**into relationship with you and others.**
**We are not awake to the coming of your reign.**
**Rouse us and rescue us,**
**that we may enter into your joy.**
**Amen.**

Inherit the riches of God's grace.
☩ Jesus, the good shepherd, feeds you with his mercy.
You are forgiven.
Blessed are you.
**Amen.**
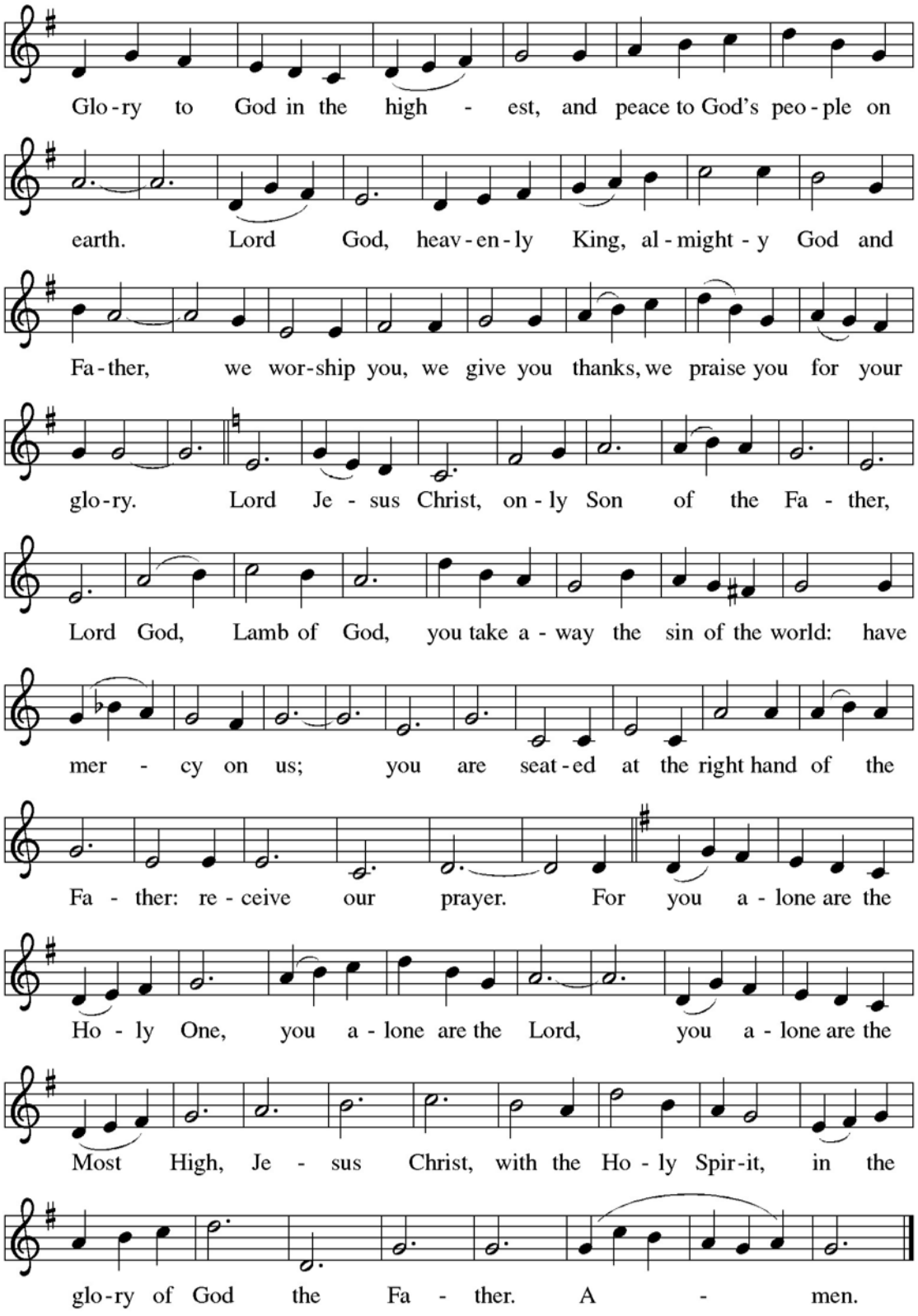
***GATHERING SONG *Come, We That Love the Lord* (ELW 625)**




***GREETING**

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

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE Glory to God (ELW 163)**



***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. **O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**
**Amen.**

## WORD

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

**FIRST READING: Amos 5:18-24**

*In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.*

A reading from Amos.
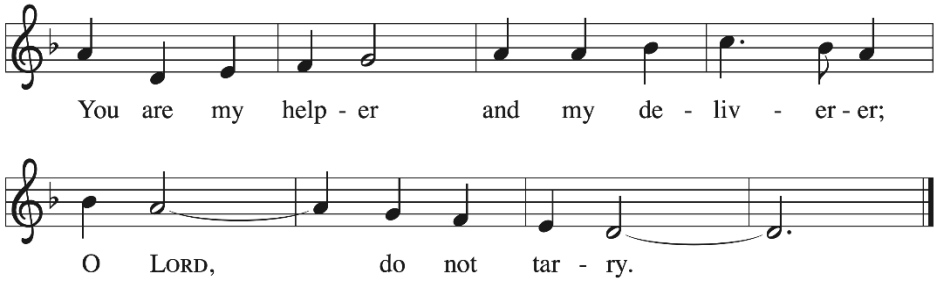
18 Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD!
Why do you want the day of the LORD?
It is darkness, not light,
19 as if someone fled from a lion
and was met by a bear
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall
and was bitten by a snake.
20 Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?

21 I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them,
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
24 But let justice roll down like water
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

The word of the Lord.
**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 70**

*The psalm is chanted. The refrain is sung once through by all who wish. Then the tone by which the verses are chanted is first played by the music director, who will sing the lightly printed verses. The congregation will chant the verses printed in bold following the same chanted tone as the music director. The vertical line indicates the change in tone. The refrain is sung again by all as indicated with "**R**".*




[1] Be pleased, O God, to de- | liver me;
O Lord, make | haste to help me.
[2] **Let those who seek my life be put to shame | and confounded;**
**let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and | be disgraced. R**
[3] Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat | over me
turn back because | of their shame.
[4] **Let all who seek you rejoice and be | glad in you;**
**let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great | is the Lord!"**
[5] But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quick- | ly, O God.
You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, | do not tarry. **R**

**SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**
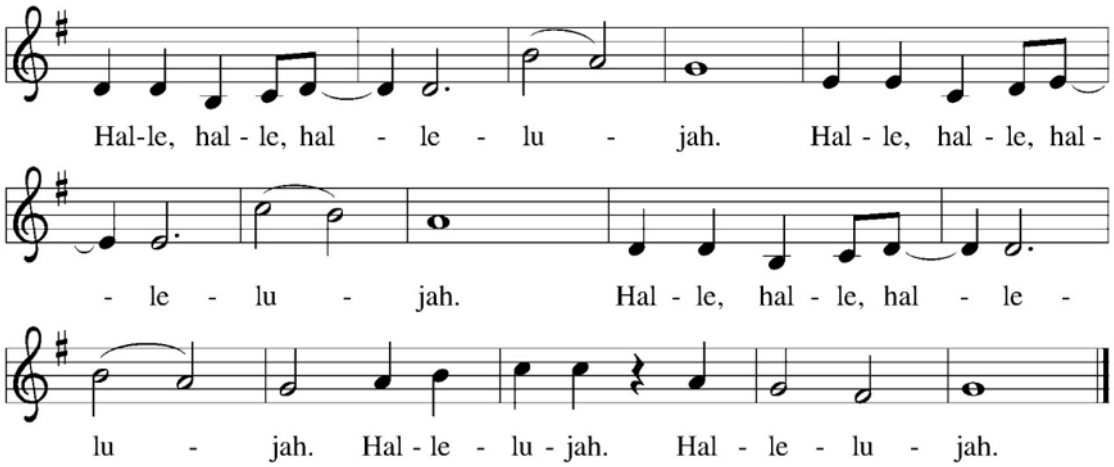
*Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.*

A reading from 1 Thessalonians

[13] 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. [14] For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. [15] 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. [16] 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. [17] 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. [18] Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**




***GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:1-13**

*Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] [1] "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. [2] Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. [3] When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, [4] but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. [5] As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. [6] But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' [7] Then all those young women got up and trimmed their lamps. [8] The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' [9] 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.' [10] 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. [11] Later the other young women came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' [12] But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' [13] Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."
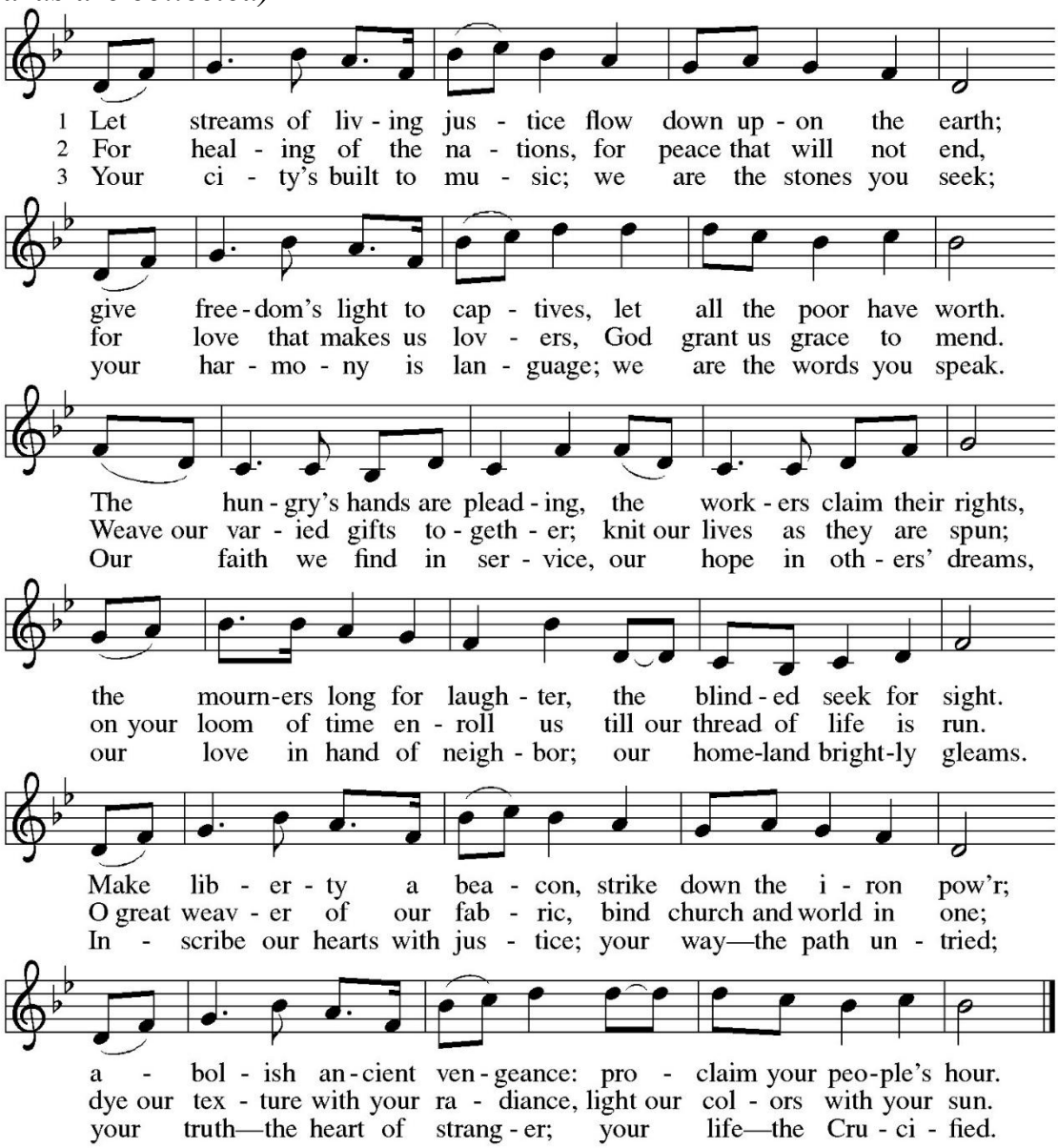
The gospel of the Lord.
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**SERMON**

***HYMN OF THE DAY *Let Streams of Living Justice* (ELW 710)**

*(Blue prayer cards are collected)*




***APOSTLES CREED**

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed

**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**
United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation. *(A brief silence for reflection)*

You illumine the church with the hope of your new day. Prepare our hearts and minds for the inbreaking of your kingdom, that we might awaken to your transforming love at work all around us. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You create and sustain the earth's natural rhythms so that all life might thrive. Show us the wisdom and wonder of nature's balance; make us careful stewards of our common home. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You make justice roll down in all places and among all nations. Encourage all who protect vulnerable communities and help rebuild in the aftermath of conflict. Uphold veterans and those who care for them. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You hasten to heal our wounds and make whole what is broken. Comfort individuals facing a difficult diagnosis, receiving palliative care, or facing uncertain treatment options. We pray especially for Cherry, Henry, Harry, Sally, Debi, Karen, Nan, Beverly, Reed, Buzz, those on our prayer list, all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts and all who suffer in any way. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You give rest to weary hearts and bodies. As the days grow shorter in the north, help us to move more slowly and intentionally through our days, honoring the need for quiet and stillness. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You welcome those who have come before us in faith into the joys of heaven. Sustain us by your grace. Guide us in the promise of everlasting life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all, we pray that you guide us in your will as we lift these prayers to you. We pray for the joys and concerns on the hearts of your people gathered together this morning, especially we pray for (*blue prayer cards are read*). God of mercy, trusting in your promise of life, we entrust those we have named, what we have forgotten in this time, and whatever else you see that we need into your keeping. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE**
The peace of Christ be with you always.
**And also with you.**
Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

*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 welcome to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.*

**IMPACT STORY**

## MEAL

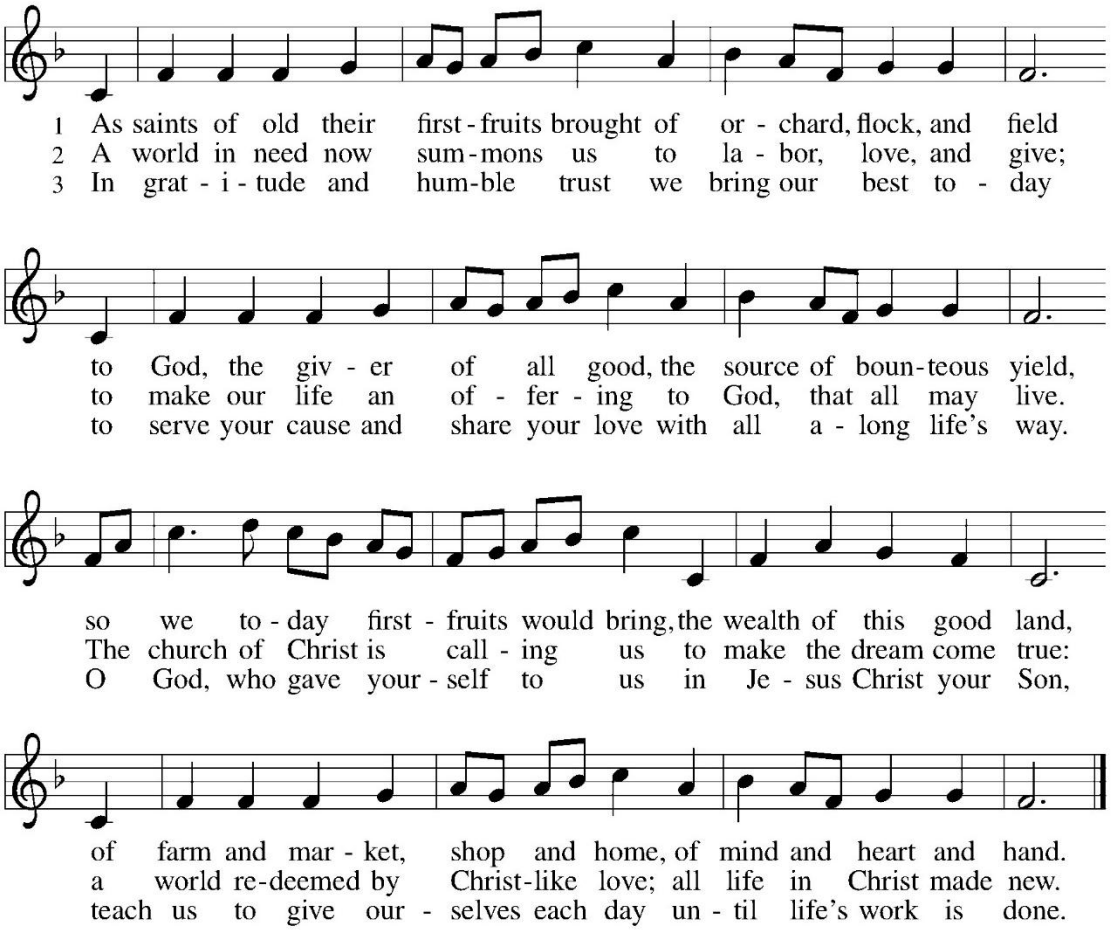
*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

## COLLECTION OF THE OFFERING

*You are invited to support the ministries of this congregation through gifts and prayers at this time. Ongoing prayer requests, connection cards, communion records, and financial gifts are collected in the plates as we remember that we offer all of ourselves to God.*

## OFFERTORY HYMN *As Saints of Old* (ELW 695)

**rise on 3rd verse*
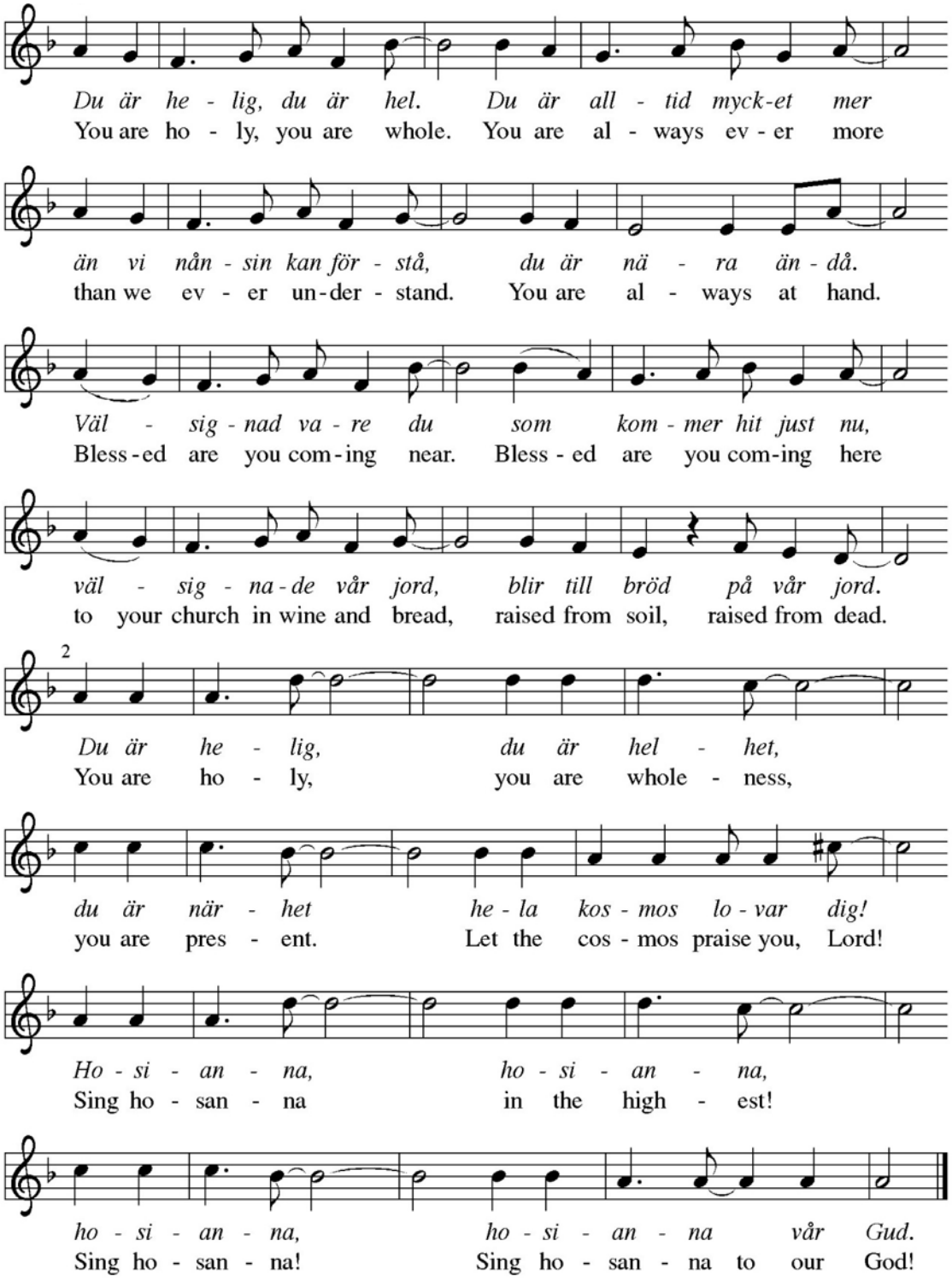



## *OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us and called us your own. In your grace, we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**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:


Du är he - lig, du är hel. Du är all - tid myck-et mer
You are ho - ly, you are whole. You are al - ways ev - er more
än vi nån - sin kan för - stå, du är nä - ra än - då.
than we ev - er un-der - stand. You are al - ways at hand.
Väl - sig - nad va - re du som kom - mer hit just nu,
Bless-ed are you com-ing near. Bless - ed are you com-ing here
väl - sig - na-de vår jord, blir till bröd på vår jord.
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.
2
Du är he - lig, du är hel - het,
You are ho - ly, you are whole - ness,
du är när - het he - la kos - mos lo - var dig!
you are pres - ent. Let the cos - mos praise you, Lord!
Ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na,
Sing ho - san - na in the high - est!
ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na vår Gud.
Sing ho - san - na! Sing ho - san - na to our God!

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.
You are most holy,
and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,
and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought but as we are able;
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

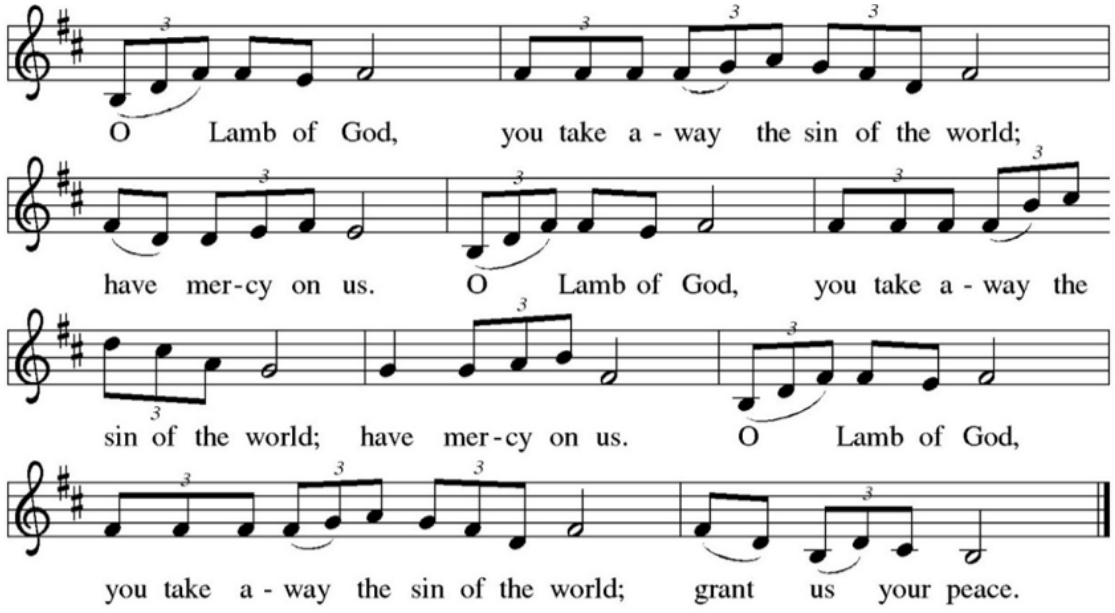
To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to 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**
Taste and see that the Lord is good, come, for all is now ready.
**Thanks be to God.**

**DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**
*Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all baptized individuals 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* (ELW 198)**



**COMMUNION HYMN *Soul Adorn Yourself with Gladness* (ELW 489)**
(melody can be seen in the red hymnal in the pews by finding the song with the big "489" in the upper corner of the page)
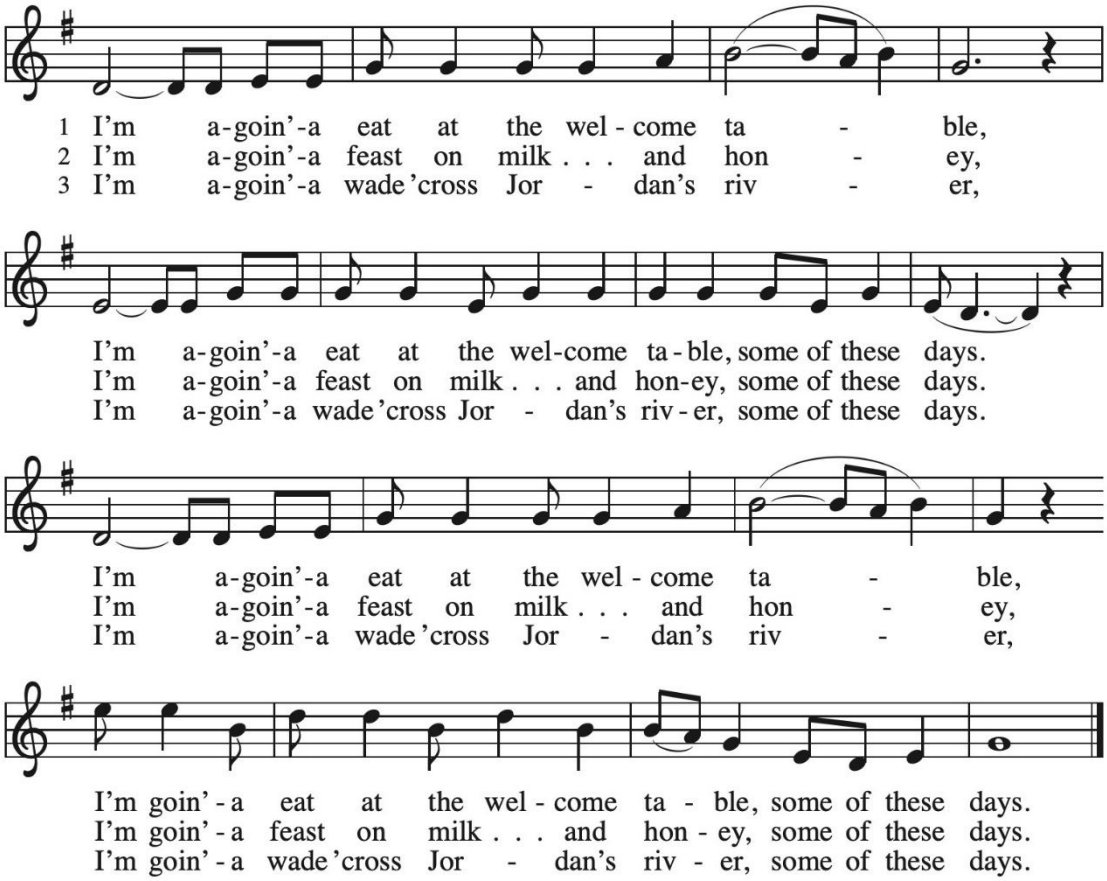
**1 Soul, adorn yourself with gladness,**
**leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,**
**come into the daylight's splendor,**
**there with joy your praises render.**
**Bless the one whose grace unbounded**
**this amazing banquet founded;**
**Christ, though heavenly, high, and holy,**
**deigns to dwell with you most lowly.**

***Refrain***
***Be thankful!***
***Soul, adorn yourself with gladness, and rejoice!***
***Bless the one whose grace unbounded is our joy.***

**2 Now in faith I humbly ponder**
**over this surpassing wonder**
**that the bread of life is boundless**
**though the souls it feeds are countless;**
**with the choicest wine of heaven**
**Christ's own blood to us is given.**
**Oh, most glorious consolation,**
**pledge and seal of my salvation.** ***Refrain***

**3 Jesus, source of lasting pleasure,**
**truest friend, and dearest treasure,**
**peace beyond all understanding,**
**joy into all life expanding:**
**humbly now, I bow before you,**
**love incarnate, I adore you;**
**worthily let me receive you,**
**and, so favored, never leave you.** ***Refrain***

**COMMUNION HYMN *Welcome Table* (ACS 969)**




***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you in grace.
**Amen**

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Holy God,
we have received your never-ending mercy in this meal.
You continuously seek the lost,
bind the injured,
and feed your people abundantly.
Now send us out,
awake to your presence,
now and forever.
**Amen.**
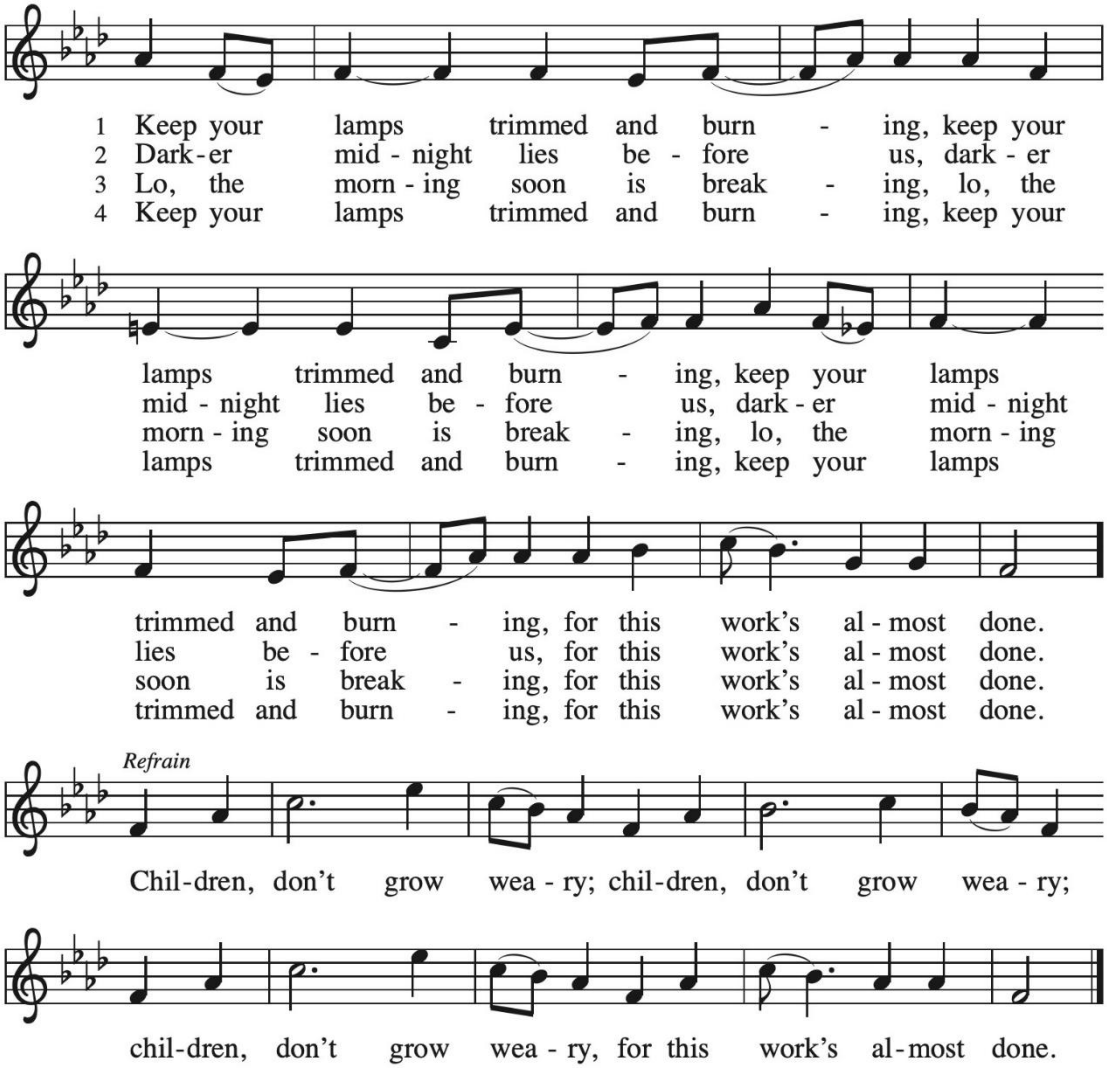
## SENDING

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

***BLESSING**

The holy Trinity,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you with wisdom to welcome the reign of God,
today and always. **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG *Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning* (ACS 949)**




***DISMISSAL**

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord say, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'
**And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'"**

*Isaiah 6:8*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

**Assisting in worship today:**

**Assisting Minister: Volunteer**
**Acolyte: Josie W**
**Young Reader: Josie W**
**Offering: Carissa M and Henry W**

## Notes for the day's texts:

Human beings are relational creatures. We are created to be in relationship with one another and with God. No one, no matter how independent or disconnected they may feel they are, functions completely outside the context of relationships. From the moment we are born we are thrust into relationship with people around us—the people who delivered us, the people who will be taking care of us in a hospital nursery, our family, and God. When we enter this world we do so forming relationships right from the start.

Relationships, healthy relationships, require a lot of work and care to continue. In particular, relationships require trust to grow and become mature. Relationships rooted in trust can bring out the best in us. Relationships rooted in anything else can bring out the worst.

Today's readings give us the chance to consider the trust required in the relationship between God and God's people. Moreover, we are invited to give thought to the consequences of replacing trust with something else: hubris stemming from trust in one's identity or work (in Amos), or hubris stemming from trust in others to sustain us rather than God (in Matthew). Paul reminds us that our relationship with God is cause for joy even in the midst of sorrow, since we believe (trust) God's promise of eternal life through the living Lord Jesus.

o have gone before us now partake and which we have yet to fully enjoy.

## Today's Music

*Come, We That Love the Lord.* Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, stanzas; Robert Lowry, 1826-1899, refrain, Music: Robert Lowry. Public Domain.
*Let Streams of Living Justice.* Text: William Whitla, b. 1934, Music: Gustav Holst, 1874-1934. William Whitla /Public Domain.
*As Saints of Old.* Text: Frank von Christierson, 1900-1996, alt., Music: English folk tune, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP) / Public Domain.
*Soul Adorn Yourself with Gladness.* Text: Johann Franck, 1618–1677, stanzas; Esther Bertieaux, b. 1944, refrain; tr. Composite, Music: Evy Lucío Cordova, b. 1934. Admin. Augsburg Fortress / PeerMusic International.
*Welcome Table.* Text: African American spiritual, Music: African American spiritual; arr. Mark Hayes, b. 1953. Augsburg Fortress.
*Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning.* Text: African American spiritual, Music: African American spiritual. Public Domain.
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## Next Week's Readings

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 *The day of the Lord*

Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12
*So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. (Ps. 90:12)*

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 *Be alert for the day of the Lord*

Matthew 25:14-30 *The story of the slaves entrusted with talents*