

# Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, January 29, 2023 •

## Fourth Sunday After Epiphany



### WELCOME/GATHERING

**PRELUDE:** *Introductory Voluntary*

Linley

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism,  
as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who makes all things new, whose mercy endures forever.

**C Amen.**

P Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Holy One, source of our renewal,

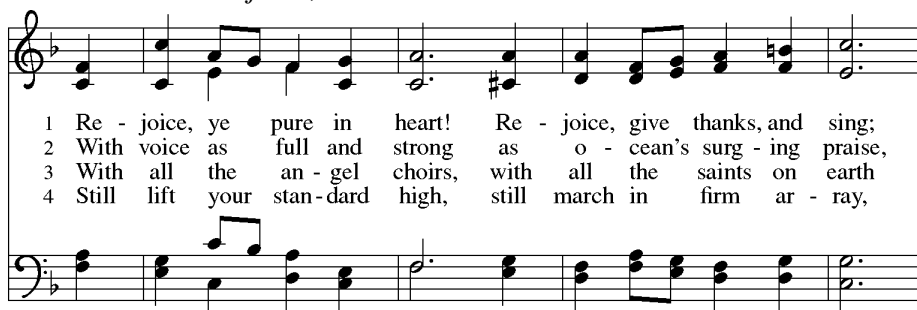
**C we confess that we are wrapped up in sin, and cannot free ourselves. We have not practiced your righteousness. Our hearts have turned away from you. For the sake of the world you so love, forgive us, that we may be reconciled to one another for the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P Thus says our God: "The former things have come to pass and new things I now declare." God's mercy makes us new. We are forgiven in the name of ☩ Christ our Savior. Amen.

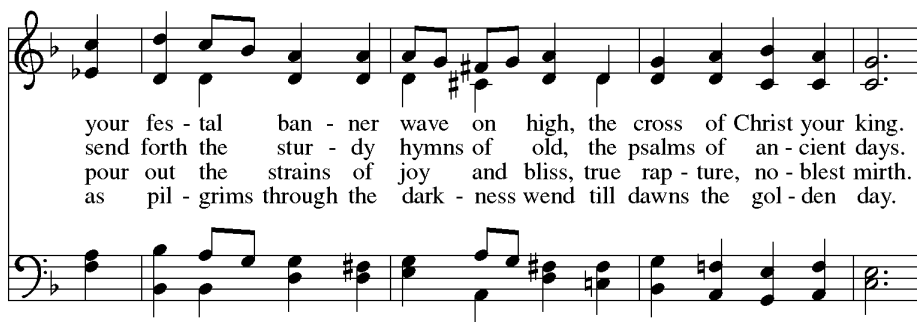
**C Amen.**

# GATHERING SONG: *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart*

*All Stand & Sing*



1 Re - joice, ye pure in heart! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing;  
 2 With voice as full and strong as o - cean's surg - ing praise,  
 3 With all the an - gel choirs, with all the saints on earth  
 4 Still lift your stan - dard high, still march in firm ar - ray,



your fes - tal ban - ner wave on high, the cross of Christ your king.  
 send forth the stur - dy hymns of old, the psalms of an - cient days.  
 pour out the strains of joy and bliss, true rap - ture, no - blest mirth.  
 as pil - grims through the dark - ness wend till dawns the gol - den day.

*Refrain*



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!  
 Re - joice! Re - joice!

5 At last the march shall end;  
 the wearied ones shall rest;  
 the pilgrims find their home at last,  
 Jerusalem the blest. *Refrain*

6 Praise God who reigns on high,  
 the Lord whom we adore:  
 the Father, Son, and Spirit blest,  
 one God forevermore. *Refrain*

Text: Edward H. Plumptre, 1821–1891, alt.  
 Music: MARION, Arthur H. Messiter, 1834–1916

## 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

*All Sing*

*P*



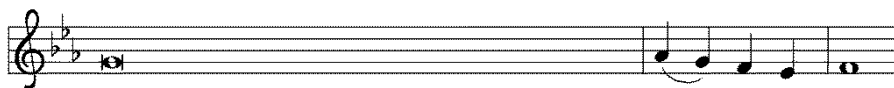
In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

*C*



Lord, have mer - cy.

*P*



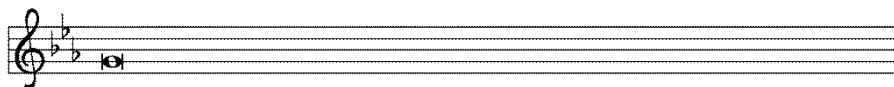
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

*C*



Lord, have mer - cy.

*P*



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



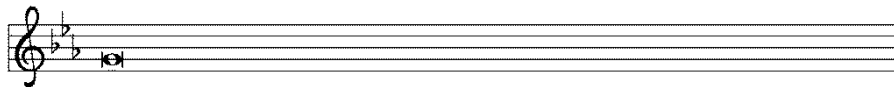
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

*C*



Lord, have mer - cy.

*P*



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

*C*



Lord, have mer - cy.

*P*

Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

*C*

A - men, a - men.

## THIS IS THE FEAST

*All Sing*

*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

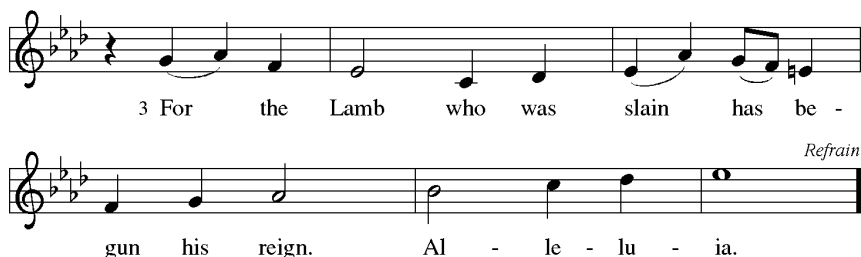
1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose  
2 Sing . . with all the peo - ple of God, and

blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.  
join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:

Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and strength, and  
Bless - ing and hon - or, glo - ry and might be to

*Refrain*

hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.  
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



## SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

*We invite children to come forward for a children's message before moving to children's church.*

## FIRST READING

**Micah 6:1-8**

A reading from the sixth chapter of Micah.

*With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.*

<sup>1</sup>Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. <sup>2</sup>Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. <sup>3</sup>"O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! <sup>4</sup>For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from

the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. <sup>5</sup>O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.” <sup>6</sup>“With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? <sup>7</sup>Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” <sup>8</sup>He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## **SECOND READING**

## **1 Corinthians 1:18-31**

A reading from First Corinthians, the first chapter.

*According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.*

<sup>18</sup>The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” <sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. <sup>26</sup>Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup>He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became

for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL VERSE

*All Stand & Sing*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Repeat alleluia*

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

## GOSPEL

**Matthew 5:1-12**

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.*

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil

against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

*The assembly is seated.*

SERMON

Pastor Micah

*Silence is Kept for Reflection.*

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Let Streams of Living Justice*

*All Stand & Sing*



1 Let streams of liv - ing jus - tice flow down up - on the earth;  
2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,  
3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;

give free - dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.  
for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.  
your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.

The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,  
Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;  
Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,

the mourn - ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.  
on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.  
our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home - land bright - ly gleams.

Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;  
O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;  
In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;





a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo - ple's hour.  
dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.  
your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: William White, 1874  
Music: TRANSLATED, Common Chord, 1874-1876  
Text © 1989 William White.  
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## 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

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Cultivate humility in your church. In gatherings of every size, teach us to boast only in the cross. Shape your church to be people of kindness, generosity, and justice. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

The foundations of the earth bear witness to your faithfulness; the mountains and hills

echo with your holiness. When we mistreat your creation, show us the error of our ways. Inspire us with reverent awe to honor all you have made. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

You make foolish the wisdom of the world. Raise up honorable leaders who seek justice, love mercy, and pursue peace. Frustrate plans that are corrupt, wicked, and self-seeking. Prosper the work of peacemakers. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Bless all whom the world rejects. Accompany those who are regarded as foolish, weak, low, and despised; reveal your power and presence at work where it is least expected. Give your life, strength, and wisdom to all in need (especially). Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

As with your people Israel, remind this congregation of your saving acts. Remind us how your faithfulness brought us through difficulties and sustained us despite our weaknesses. Establish the cross as the center of our life together. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Praise to you for your blessed saints in every time and place. Trusting you accompanied them in poverty, persecution, and in every trial, we trust you abide with your people always. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.  
**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

**P** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM:** *Lord, You Are Light*

Chamber Choir

# OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Create In Me*

*All Stand & Sing*

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

The first system of music is in G minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of a treble and bass staff. The melody is primarily in the treble staff, with block chords in the bass. The lyrics are: 'Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right'.

spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your'.

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -'.

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

The fourth system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,'.

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

The fifth system concludes the piece. The lyrics are: 'and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.'.

Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670-1739

## OFFERING PRAYER

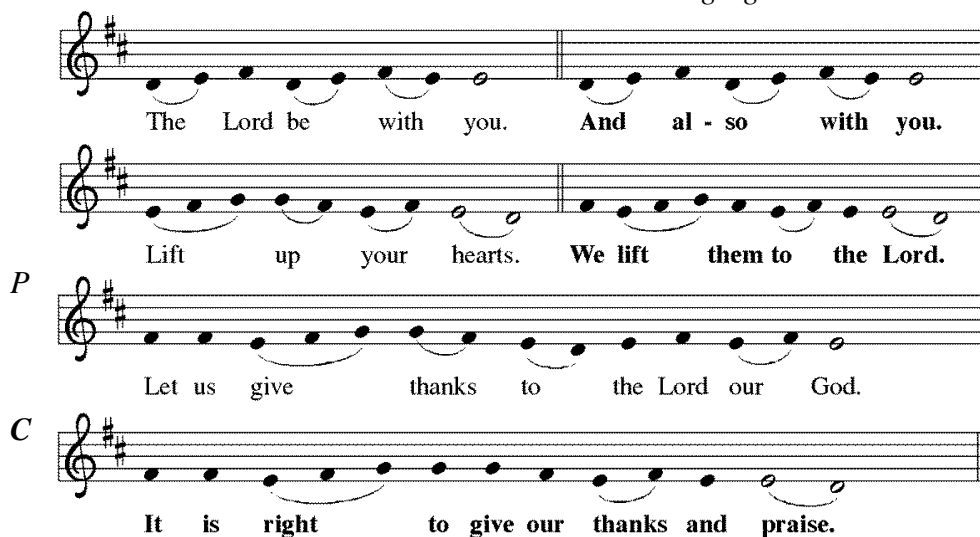
A Let us pray.

**C** Liberating God, you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power, and shape us as people of your justice and freedom. You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior, Amen.

## DIALOGUE

*Presider*

*Congregation*



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

## PREFACE

P ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

*All Sing*



## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

### LORD'S PRAYER

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

P Come and taste the joy of God!  
C Thanks be to God.



## LAMB OF GOD

*All Sing*

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.

## COMMUNION

*During communion the congregation is invited forward by rows, beginning in the back, and will receive the bread and wine at the front of the aisle. You may either eat and drink then, or return to your seat to do so, and place the cups in the bin in your pew.*

# MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life* All Sing

1 Where cross the crowd-ed ways of life, where sound the  
 2 In haunts of wretch-ed-ness and need, on shad-owed  
 3 From ten-der child-hood's help-less-ness, from hu-man  
 4 The cup of wa-ter giv'n for you still holds the

cries of race and clan, a-bove the noise of  
 thresh-olds dark with fears, from paths where hide the  
 grief and bur-dened toil, from fam-ished souls, from  
 fresh-ness of your grace; yet long these mul-ti-

self-ish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man.  
 lures of greed, we catch the vi-sion of your tears.  
 sor-row's stress, your heart has nev-er known re-coil.  
 tudes to view the strong com-pas-sion in your face.

- 5 O Master, from the mountainside  
 make haste to heal these hearts of pain;  
 among these restless throngs abide;  
 oh, tread the city's streets again;
- 6 Till all the world shall learn your love,  
 and follow where your feet have trod;  
 till glorious from your heav'n above  
 shall come the city of our God.

Text: Frank M. North, 1850-1935, alt.  
 Music: WALTON, W. Gardiner, *Sacred Melodies*, 1815

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

C Amen.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

C Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table. Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you. Amen.

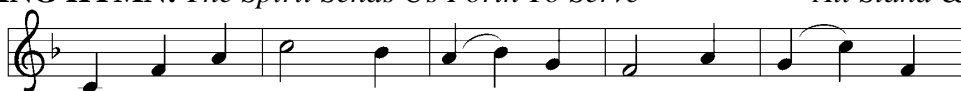
## BLESSING

P The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod † bless, strengthen, and uphold you, today and always.

C Amen.

## CLOSING HYMN: *The Spirit Sends Us Forth To Serve*

*All Stand & Sing*



1 The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in  
2 We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the  
3 We go to be the hands of Christ, to scat - ter  
4 Then let us go to serve in peace, the gos - pel



Je - sus' name to bring glad tid - ings  
bur - dened free; where hope is dim, to  
joy like seed and, all our days, to  
to pro - claim. God's Spir - it has em -



to the poor, God's fa - vor to pro - claim.  
share a dream and help the blind to see.  
cher - ish life, to do the lov - ing deed.  
pow - ered us; we go in Je - sus' name.

Text: Delores Dufner, o.s.u. b. 1939  
Music: CHESTERFIELD, attr. Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820  
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## SENDING

P Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.



\*Special thanks to our Lector, Marcus Cox.

**This Weeks Schedule:**

- **Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am - Sunday School

10:10 am - Church Choir in balcony

10:30 am - Worship in the Sanctuary

5:00 pm - Confirmation

5:00 pm - Handbell practice

6:00 pm - Choir practice

- **Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>**

7:00pm - Book Club

- **Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>**

7:00pm – Nar-Anon Meeting

- **Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup>**

4:00 pm - Faith Formation Video

6:00 pm – Youth Handbells

6:45 pm - Women's Bible Study

7:00 pm - Chamber Choir



**"Journeying through faith in a joyful, safe community, welcoming and serving Belmont and beyond."**

Our core values are: **Embrace, Grow, Connect, and Give**

**Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter**

216 N. Main Street Belmont, NC 28012 704-825-2483  
[holycomforter@gmail.com](mailto:holycomforter@gmail.com)

**Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 1:30 pm**

Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: [mkearney@holyc.org](mailto:mkearney@holyc.org)

Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: [rforst@holyc.org](mailto:rforst@holyc.org)

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

Chelsea Spicer, Office Manager

