

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, October 22, 2023

21st Sunday after Pentecost



WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *“St. Anne” Variations*

Croft

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ✠ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C Amen.

P Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Steadfast and faithful God,

C you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world’s violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

P Beloved in Christ, God’s justice stretches beyond all understanding. God’s compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ✠ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Take My Life, That I May Be*

All Stand & Sing

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

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

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

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

Pastor

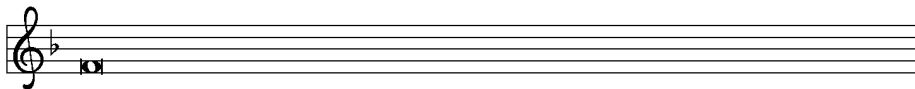
Congregation

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

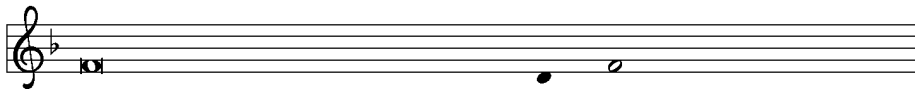
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mer - cy.

P



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



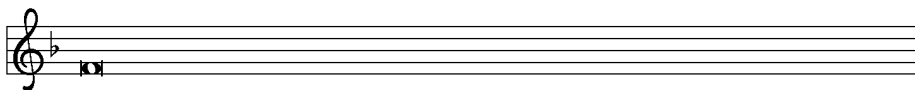
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C



Lord, have mer - cy.

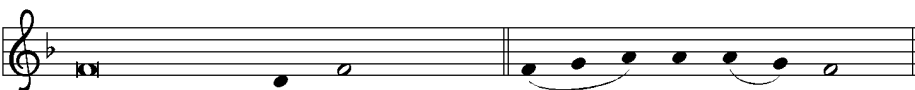
P



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

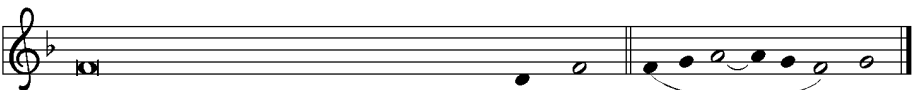
Pastor

Congregation



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

GLORY TO GOD

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through 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

Isaiah 45:1-7

A reading from the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah.

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the Lord has anointed to end Israel's exile. The Lord makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this Lord as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the Lord claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him— and the gates shall not be closed: ²I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, ³I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. ⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me. ⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, ⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. ⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Thessalonians 1:1-10

A reading from the first chapter of Thessalonians.

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

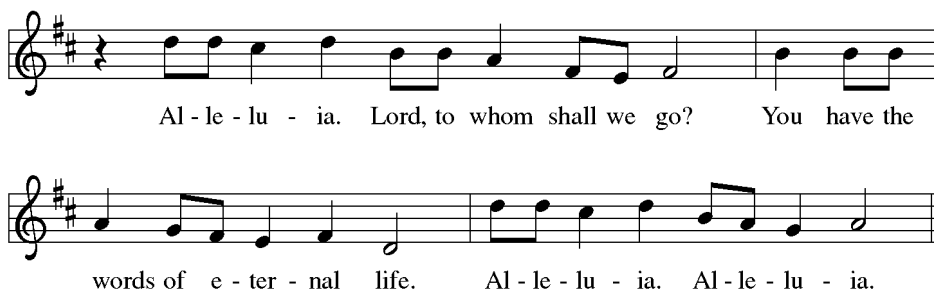
¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. ²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen

you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

Matthew 22:15-22

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.

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

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said,

“Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” ²¹They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Micah

Silence is Kept for Reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord*

Stand & Sing



- 1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call
- 2 But if, for - get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
- 3 We mar - vel how your saints be - come in hin-dranc-es more sure;
- 4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,



to live ac-cord-ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re-freshed, re - stored,
if world-ly pres-sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un - wind
whose joy - ful vir - tues put to shame the ca - sual way we wear your name,
in old rou-tines or ven-tures new, may we not cease to look to you,



that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.
its tan - gled skein of care: our in - ward life re - pair.
and by our faults ob - scure your pow'r to cleanse and cure.
the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav - ored done.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918
Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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

Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Faithful God, your Spirit animates the church throughout the world and binds believers near and far into the body of Christ. Equip us for the work of faith, and enlarge our hearts for the labor of love. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Creating God, the sea roars, the earth rejoices, and the heavens are glad at the wonder of all you have made. Bless the work of ecologists and conservationists and all those who safeguard the riches of creation. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Sovereign God, your rule and authority is over the cosmos. As you once worked through the ruler Cyrus for the good of your people, accomplish your purposes through the work of elected leaders and public servants. Guide them with your wisdom and compassion. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Caring God, your arms enfold all who are lonely, oppressed, despairing, sick, and suffering. Pour out your abundant mercy on all whom this world has neglected, abandoned, and forgotten, that they may know your joy. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Almighty God, all our life belongs to you. When earthly idols threaten to lead your church astray, remind us that you alone are the source of our eternal hope. Direct the work of church treasurers, councils, and all who manage financial matters. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Everlasting God, the saints of every age have sung your praise and shared your word. We give you thanks for their witness and pray that we may join them as citizens of your unending kingdom. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Somebody's Knockin At Your Door*

Chamber Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Let the Vineyards*

All Stand & Sing



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.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927
Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERING PRAYER

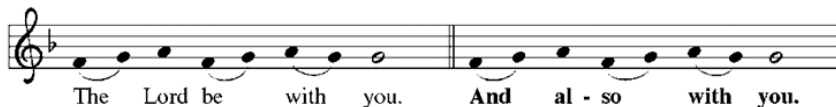
A Let us pray.

C God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

DIALOGUE

Pastor

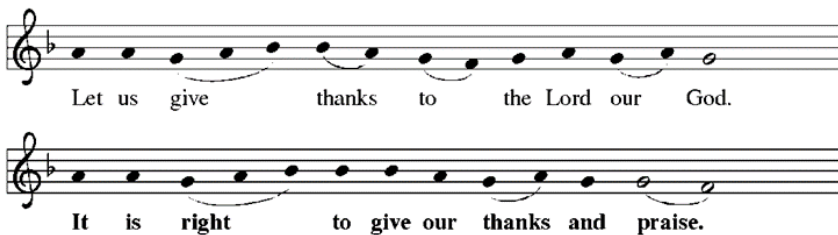
Congregation



Pastor



Congregation



PREFACE

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

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are 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 in the high - est.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The first staff ends with a double bar line, and the fourth staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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 Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

C Thanks be to God.

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.

COMMUNION

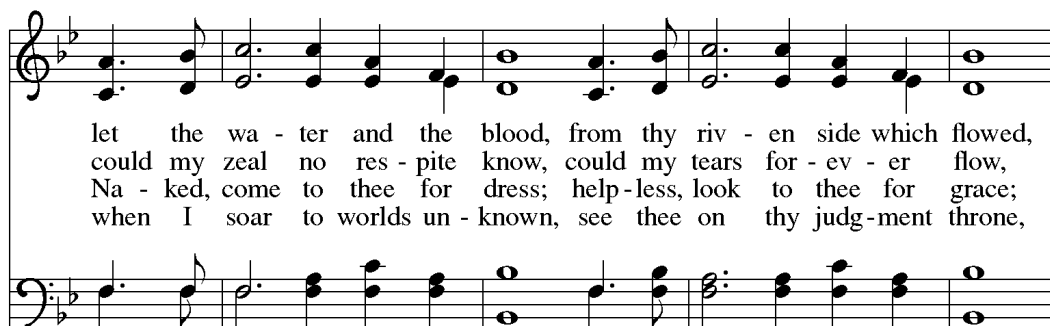
During communion the congregation is invited forward by rows, beginning in the back, and will receive the bread and wine at the front of the aisle. You may either eat and drink then, or return to your seat to do so, and place the cups in the bin in your pew.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *Rock of Ages*

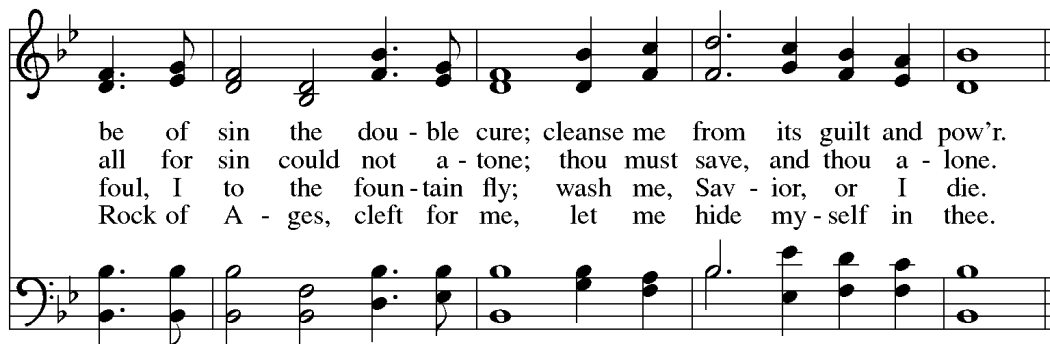
All Sing



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
 2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
 3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
 4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
 could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
 Na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to thee for grace;
 when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure; cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
 all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.
 foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740–1778
 Music: TOPLADY, Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray.

C Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

BLESSING

P The God of glory, † Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

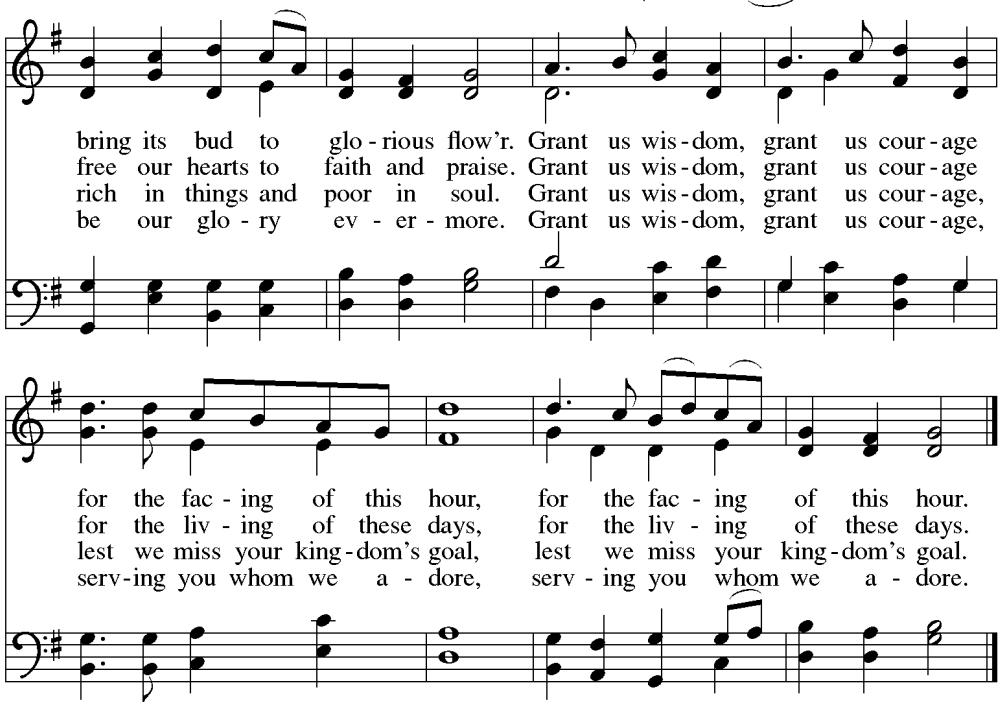
CLOSING HYMN: *God of Grace and God of Glory*

All Stand & Sing

The musical score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It features a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is primarily in the soprano part, with the piano accompaniment providing harmonic support. The lyrics are arranged in four lines, corresponding to the four voices.

1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple
2 Lo! The hosts of e - vil round us scorn the Christ, as -
3 Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your pow'r; crown your an - cient chur - ch's sto - ry;
sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us
your con - trol; shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
we de - plore; let the gift of your sal - va - tion



bring its bud to glo-rious flow'r. Grant us wis-dom, grant us cour-age
 free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis-dom, grant us cour-age
 rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis-dom, grant us cour-age,
 be our glo-ry ev-er-more. Grant us wis-dom, grant us cour-age,

for the fac-ing of this hour, for the fac-ing of this hour.
 for the liv-ing of these days, for the liv-ing of these days.
 lest we miss your king-dom's goal, lest we miss your king-dom's goal.
 serv-ing you whom we a-dore, serv-ing you whom we a-dore.

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878–1969
 Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873–1932

SENDING

P Go in peace. God is at work in you.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Trumpet Voluntary*

Stanley

*Special thanks to our Lector, Anne Reese, and to Soloist Leslie Crist.

*The altar flowers were given by Rochelle Potter in celebration of Carson Potter & Taylor Gross' birthday.

This Weeks Schedule:

Sunday, October 22nd

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:10 am – Church Choir

10:30 am – Worship

4:00 pm – Blessing of the Animals

5:00 pm – Adult Handbells

5:00 pm – HCY

5:00 pm – Discipleship Academy

6:00 pm – Church Choir

Monday, October 23rd

7:00 pm – Fall Book Club

Tuesday, October 24th

7:00 pm – Nar-Anon Meeting

Wednesday, October 25th

6:45pm – Women's Bible Study

7:00 pm – Chamber Choir

Saturday, October 28th

3:00 pm – Trunk or Treat

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