

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday August 20, 2023 •

12th Sunday after Pentecost



WELCOME/ GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Jerusalem, My Happy Home*

Land of Rest

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 greets us in this and every season,
whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Merciful God,

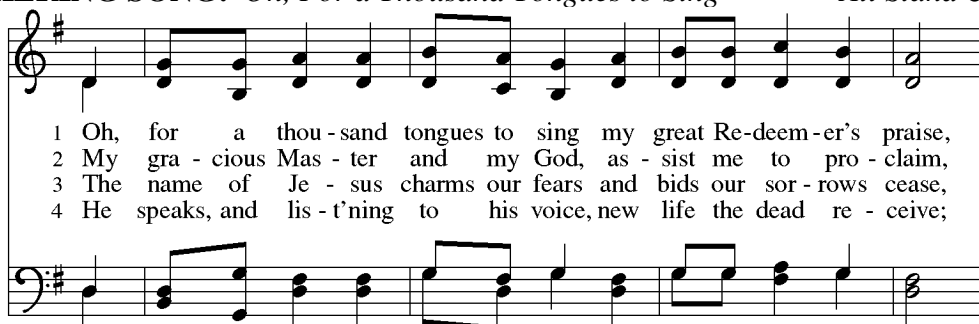
C We confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. We have hurt our community. We have squandered your blessings. We have hoarded your bounty. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

P God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ.

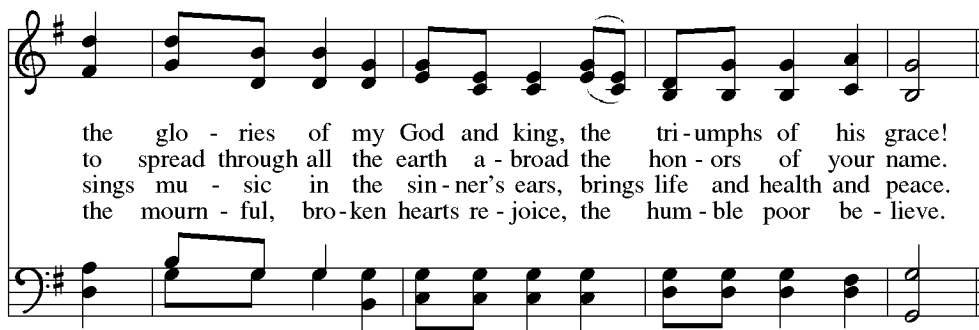
C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

All Stand & Sing



1 Oh, for a thou - sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise,
2 My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as - sist me to pro - claim,
3 The name of Je - sus charms our fears and bids our sor - rows cease,
4 He speaks, and lis - t'ning to his voice, new life the dead re - ceive;



the glo - ries of my God and king, the tri - umphs of his grace!
to spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of your name.
sings mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, brings life and health and peace.
the mourn - ful, bro - ken hearts re - joice, the hum - ble poor be - lieve.

5 Look unto him, your Savior own,
O fallen human race!
Look and be saved through faith alone,
be justified by grace!

6 To God all glory, praise, and love
be now and ever giv'n
by saints below and saints above,
the church in earth and heav'n.

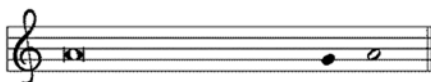
Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
Music: AZMON, Carl G. Glaser, 1784–1829; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

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



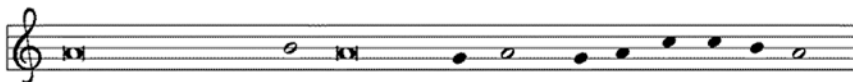
P

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



C

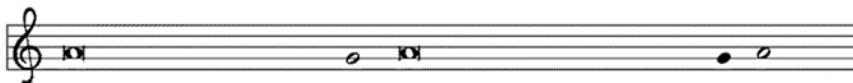
Lord, have mer - cy.



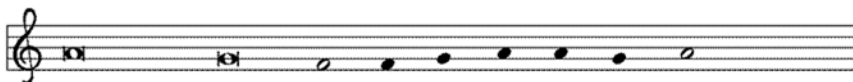
P For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



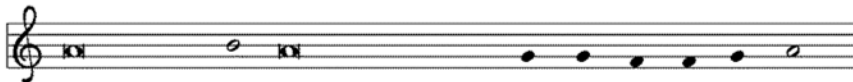
P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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



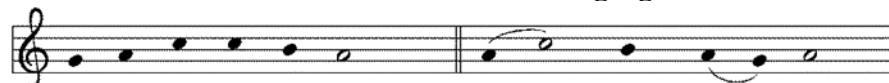
C Lord, have mer - cy.



P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,

Pastor

Congregation



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.

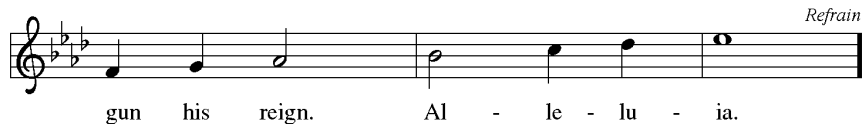
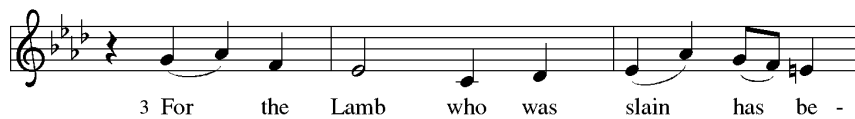
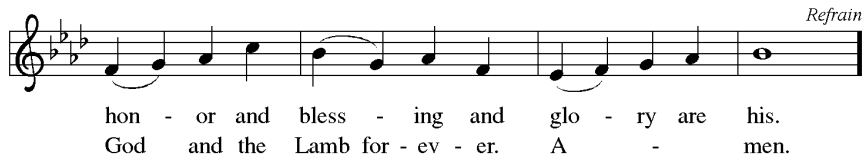


Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord.

A - men.

THIS IS THE FEAST

All Sing



SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P God of all peoples, your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may be known throughout the earth, 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 56:1, 6-8

A reading from Isaiah, the fifty-sixth chapter.

The prophet calls upon Israel to do justice in view of God's imminent intervention to save. Righteousness and obedience define who belongs to the Israelite community—not race, nationality, or any other category.

¹Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. ⁶And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant—⁷these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. ⁸Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

A reading from Romans, the eleventh chapter.

God has not rejected Israel. Rather, the call and gifts of God are irrevocable so that, while all have been disobedient, God has mercy upon all.

[Paul writes:] ¹I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ^{2a}God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

²⁹For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. ³²For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

A The word of the Lord.

C 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.

GOSPEL

Matthew 15:10-28

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

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

Jesus teaches his disciples that true purity is a matter of the heart rather than outward religious observances. Almost immediately, this teaching is tested when a woman considered to be a religious outsider approaches him for help.

¹⁰[Jesus] called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” ¹²Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” ¹³He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

²¹Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²²Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” ²³But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” ²⁴He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ**

Congregation is seated.

SERMON

Pastor Micah

Silence is Kept for Reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

All Stand & Sing

1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
 2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
 3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream

Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
 my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
 be thou my guide; bid dark - ness turn to day, wipe sor - row's
 shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -

guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
 love to thee pure, warm, and change - less be, a liv - ing fire!
 tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
 trust re - move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

Text: Ray Palmer, 1808–1887
 Music: OLIVET, Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

O God, your Spirit gathers the church. Shepherd those who are newly baptized and newly ordained in the proclamation of the gospel, breathe life into ecumenical and inter-religious endeavors, and support missionaries throughout the globe. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You created the earth and all its inhabitants and declared it good. Clean polluted skies, seas, and soil, provide nourishment to plants and animals, and support those experiencing effects of natural disasters. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You call leaders to bridge differences and practice generosity. Inspire all in authority to protect people in harm's way, deliver those in bondage, support fair elections, provide care for military personnel and veterans, and show mercy to those for whom they have responsibility. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You provide for those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. Embrace people who have been rejected because of difference, heal trauma caused by racism or prejudice, shield any who are persecuted, console the dying, and heal the sick. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, you journey with us in all of life's transitions. Guide those preparing for baptism, marriage, and retirement. Guide our church council and committees in their visioning and ministry. Safeguard those who travel. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give you thanks for those who now rest from their labors. Motivate us by their lives of dedication to the gospel, until that day when we join with them in our eternal home. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Ten Thousand Reasons*

Church Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Create in Me*

All Stand & Sing

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 pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

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 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: 'Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right'. The second staff continues: 'spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take'. The third staff continues: 'not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of'. The fourth staff concludes: 'your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.' The music ends with a double bar line.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERING PRAYER

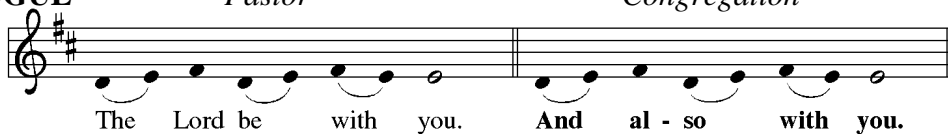
P Let us pray.

C God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

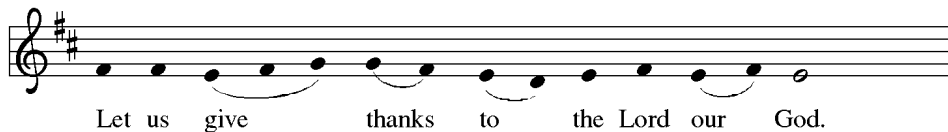
DIALOGUE

Pastor

Congregation



Pastor



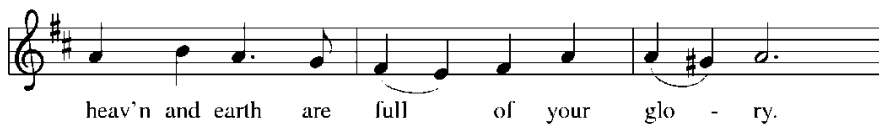
Cong.



PREFACE

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

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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 All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.

C Thanks be to God.

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.

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.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *What Feast of Love*

All Sing



- 1 What feast of love is of-fered here, what ban-quet come from heav-en?
- 2 What light of truth is of-fered here, what cov-e-nant from heav-en?
- 3 What wine of love is of-fered here, what crim-son drink from heav-en?



What food of ev-er-last-ing life, what gra-cious gift is giv-en?
What hope of ev-er-last-ing life, what won-drous word is giv-en?
What stream of ev-er-last-ing life, what pre-cious blood is giv-en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav-en.
This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heav-en.
This, this is Christ the king, the sweet-est wine of heav-en.



Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man-na giv-en!
Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is giv-en!
Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is giv-en!

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 We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed † bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *Soli Deo Gloria*

All Stand & Sing



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!

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
 Music: SOLI DEO GLORIA, Marty Haugen
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SENDING

P Go in peace. Share the harvest.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Trumpet Dialog*

Ashdown

*Special thank you to our Lector, Jan Buell.

This weeks schedule:

Sunday, August 20th

10:10 am – Church Choir

10:30 am - Worship

6:00 pm – Church Choir Reunion

Tuesday, August 22nd

7:00 pm – Nar-Anon Meeting

(Next) Wednesday, August 30th

6:30 pm – Dinner Church



Holy Comforter Lutheran Church

216 N. Main Street Belmont, NC 28012 704-825-2483
holycomforter@gmail.com

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

Micah Kearney, Pastor - holycomforter@gmail.com
Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - rforst@holyc.org
Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster
Chelsea Spicer, Office Manager