

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, February 25th, 2024

The Second Sunday in Lent



WELCOME

PRELUDE: *Come, Sinners, Poor and Needy*

Haan

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

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 writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus.

C Amen.

P Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Holy God,

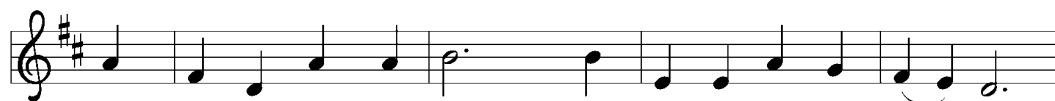
C we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.

P Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through ☩ Jesus Christ.

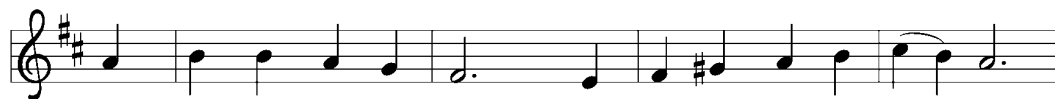
C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *O God, Me Faithful God*

All Stand & Sing



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,
2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing
3 Keep me from say - ing words that lat - er need re - call - ing;
4 When dan - gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth - ing is, all per - fect gifts be - stow - ing:
what - ev - er you com - mand, my call - ing here ful - fill - ing—
guard me, lest i - dle speech may from my lips be fall - ing;
help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer - less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in
to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless
but when, with - in my place, I must and ought to speak,
help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con - science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.
what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.
then to my words give grace, lest I of - fend the weak.
and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: WAS FRAG ICH NACH DER WELT, Ahasuerus Fritsch, 1629–1701

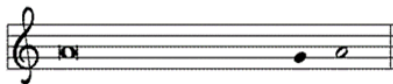
GREETING

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



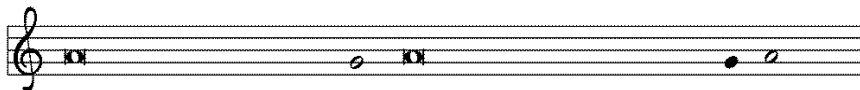
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

C

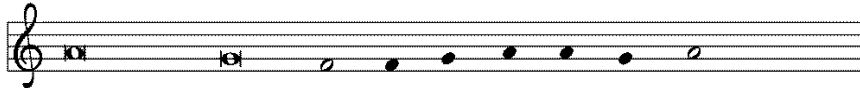


Lord, have mer - cy.

P

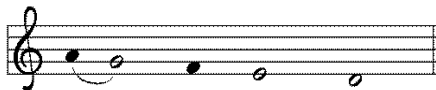


For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



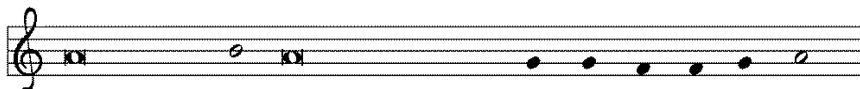
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C



Lord, have mer - cy.

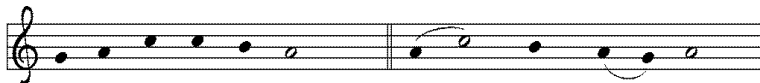
P



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

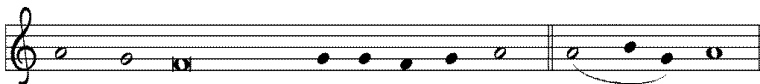
Pastor

Congregation



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

FIRST READING:

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

A reading from the seventeenth chapter of Genesis.

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you." ¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Romans 4:13-25

A reading from the fourth chapter of Romans.

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what

God had promised to accomplish.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

GOSPEL

Mark 8:31-38

P The holy gospel according to St. Mark, the eighth chapter.

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

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Micah

Silence is kept for reflection.

- 1 "Take up your cross," the Savior said,
"if you would my disciple be;
forsake the past, and come this day,
and humbly follow after me."
- 2 Take up your cross; let not its weight
pervade your soul with vain alarm;
his strength shall bear your spirit up,
sustain your heart, and nerve your arm.
- 3 Take up your cross, nor heed the shame,
nor let your foolish heart rebel;
for you the Lord endured the cross
to save your soul from death and hell.
- 4 Take up your cross and follow Christ,
nor think till death to lay it down;
for those who humbly bear the cross
one day will wear the glorious crown.

Text: Charles W. Everest, 1814-1877, alt.

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 God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A brief silence.

We turn to you for meaning, holy God. Nurture in your children the gifts of the Spirit poured out in baptism and let the mind of Christ guide the church. Give wisdom and discernment to our bishops, pastors, deacons, teachers, and leaders. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We turn to you for renewal. Save lives and ecosystems threatened by pollution and a changing climate. Cleanse the earth's waters and restore the soil. Preserve rainforests, deserts, and wildlife, that generations to come may cherish your creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We turn to you for justice. Uphold the worth and dignity of every person, especially any who experience hatred and rejection because of age, education, finances, gender, ability, sexual orientation, color, ethnicity, or religion. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We turn to you for healing. Send compassionate helpers to any who suffer because of war and violence. Shelter unhoused people, befriend those who are lonely, bring hope to any in despair, and console the bereaved. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We turn to you for purpose. Remind us of your faithfulness to this congregation. Increase our trust in your guidance and keep us near the cross. Grant that our acts of service will express Christ's sacrificial love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We turn to you for peace. We honor the saints who lived in service to others. Inspire us by their example until you gather us into your kingdom. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Jesus, Gentle Savior*

Church Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: Restore in Us, O God

All Stand & Sing

1 Restore in us, O God,
the splendor of your love;
renew your image in our hearts,
and all our sins remove.

2 O Spirit, wake in us
the wonder of your pow'r;
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives
like springtime bud and flow'r.

3 Bring us, O Christ, to share
the fullness of your joy;
baptize us in the risen life
that death cannot destroy.

4 Three-personed God, fulfill
the promise of your grace,
that we, when all our searching ends,
may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray.

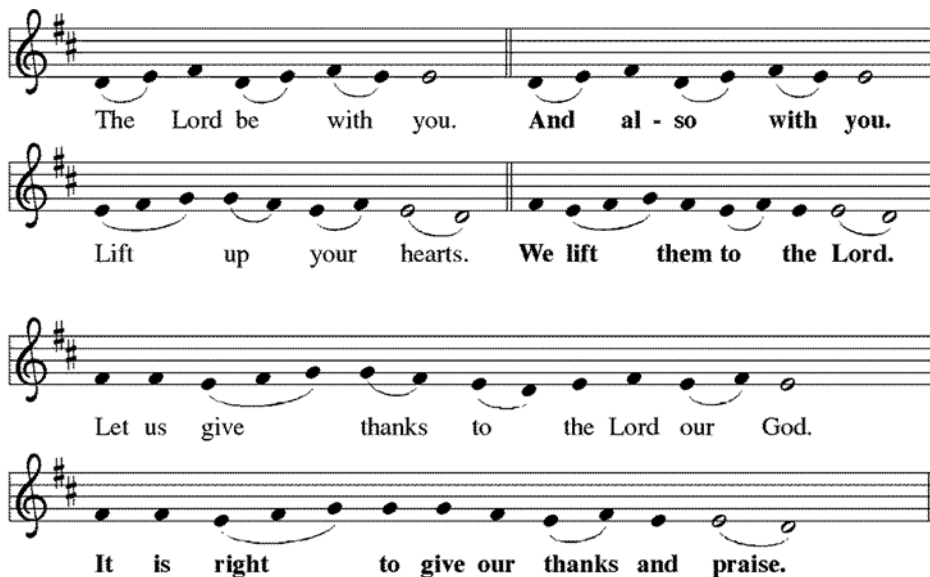
C **Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

Presider

Congregation



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

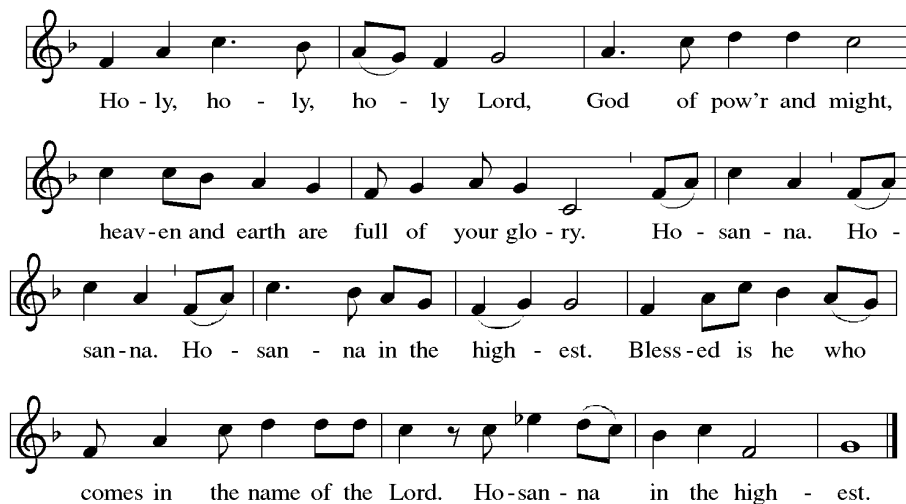
C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Detailed description: This block contains four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first two staves are for the Presider and Congregation respectively, with lyrics 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.' and 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.' The next two staves are for the Presider (P) and Congregation (C), with lyrics 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.' and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The music is written in a simple, melodic style with eighth and quarter notes.

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.

Detailed description: This block contains four staves of music in G major. 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. 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 music is written in a simple, melodic style with eighth and quarter notes.

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 Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

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

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 *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

Bach

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 Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life. Amen.

BLESSING

P Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus*

Stand & Sing



- 1 Let us ev - er walk with Je - sus, fol - low his ex - am - ple pure,
- 2 Let us suf - fer here with Je - sus, and with pa - tience bear our cross.
- 3 Let us glad - ly die with Je - sus. Since by death he con - quered death,
- 4 Let us al - so live with Je - sus. He has ris - en from the dead



through a world that would de - ceive us and to sin our spir - its lure.
Joy will fol - low all our sad - ness; where he is there is no loss.
he will free us from de - struc - tion, give to us im - mor - tal breath.
that to life we may a - wak - en. Je - sus, you are now our head,



On - ward in his foot - steps tread - ing, trav - 'lers here, our home a - bove,
Though to - day we sow no laugh - ter, we shall reap ce - les - tial joy:
Let us mor - ti - fy all pas - sion that would lead us in - to sin;
we are your own liv - ing mem - bers; where you live, there we shall be



full of faith and hope and love, let us do our Sav - ior's bid - ding.
all dis - com - forts that an - noy shall give way to mirth here - af - ter.
and the grave that shuts us in shall but prove the gate of heav - en.
in your pres - ence con - stant - ly, liv - ing there with you for - ev - er.



Faith - ful Lord, with me a - bide; I shall fol - low where you guide.
Je - sus, here I share your woe; help me there your joy to know.
Je - sus, here with you I die, there to live with you on high.
Je - sus, let me faith - ful be; life e - ter - nal grant to me.

Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626–1681; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.
Music: LASSET UNS MIT JESU ZIEHEN, Georg G. Boltze, 18th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

SENDING

P Go in peace. Share your bread.

C Thanks be to God.

*A special thanks to our Lector, William Charnock.

*We give thanks for special musicians, our soloist, Cheryl Bansen, and our prelude and communion organist, Suzanne Fairbairn.

* The altar flowers are given by Carole Jolley in memory of my mother's birthday today, Sybil Jolley.

This Weeks Schedule:

Sunday, February 25th

9:30 am – Sunday School
10:10 am – Church Choir
10:30 am – Worship Service
5:00 pm – Adult Handbells
5:00 pm – Confirmation
6:00 pm – Church Choir

Monday, February 26th

7:00 pm – Book Club hosted by Pastor Micah

Tuesday, February 27th

7:00 pm – Nar-Anon
6:14 pm – Young Families Small Group
Meeting at Grosses' home

Wednesday, February 28th

5:30 pm – Youth Handbells
6:00 pm – Lenten Dinner
6:45 pm – Lenten Holden Evening Prayer Service
7:15pm – Chamber Choir

Thursday, February 29th

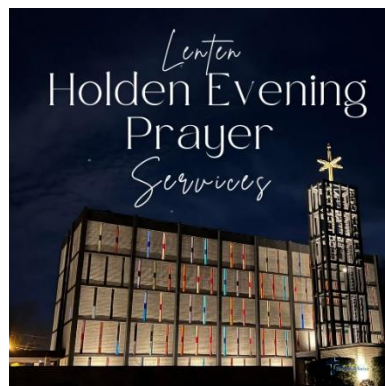
7:00 pm – Evangelism Interest Meeting

Join us for our Lenten “Holden Evening Prayer” Dinner and Worship on Wednesdays in Lent from February 21-March 13. Dinner is at 6 pm, and worship at 6:45. It is a time for peace, worship, and fellowship amidst the busyness of life.

Give your offering online!



If you'd like to give an offering but don't carry money with you, simply scan the QR code above and you'll be able to give through an online form.



Lenoir-Rhyne Choir at Holy Comforter!

On Thursday, March 21st, at 7:00 pm, the Lenoir-Rhyne Choir will perform at Holy Comforter. We are excited to host this wonderful event and opportunity to have such exquisite music in our sanctuary. This concert is open to the community, so tell and bring your friends!

Meet the Summer Mission Trip Travelers!

Holy Comforter is excited to send all of our active youth group members and adults to the Dwelling and the Youth Gathering this summer! June 12th-16th, our group will spend time learning about homelessness while serving the community of Winston-Salem and The Dwelling. July 16th-20th is our second trip to New Orleans where we are excited to experience the Youth Gathering. We are spotlighting each traveler over the upcoming months.



My name is Leah Koehler, I am in 10th grade at South Point High School. I play tennis and have gone to youth group for years. I have been to the Dwelling twice before and I really enjoy going! I've heard different stories about homelessness. Last summer, I learned that women experiencing homelessness have a much harder time finding a place to stay because not many shelters allow women or kids. I can't wait to go back and see the friends I've made at the Dwelling and to Worship with them on a Sunday. This will be my first time going to the Youth Gathering and I am very excited to experience it and learn about New Orleans.



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

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

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 - 2:00 pm

Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: mkearney@holyc.org

Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: rforst@holyc.org

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

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