

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • November 27, 2022 •

First Sunday of Advent



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COLORED BY SUSANNA COX

WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Let All Mortal Flesh*

Roberts

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be God's name forever.

C Amen.

P Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of new beginnings,

C we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.

P People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on ✠ Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

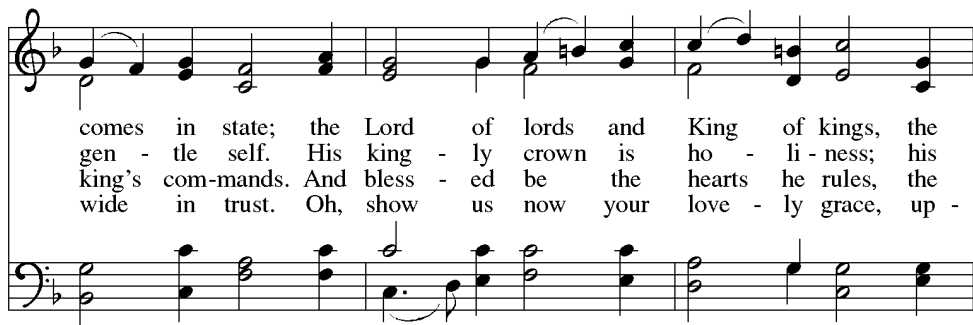
C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Fling Wide The Door*

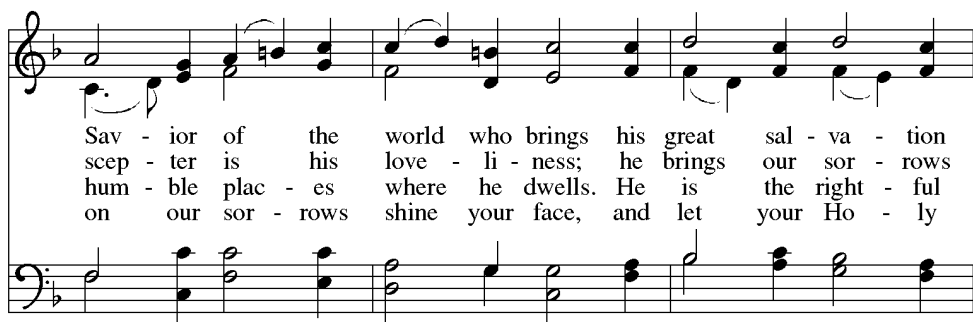
All Stand & Sing

1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen

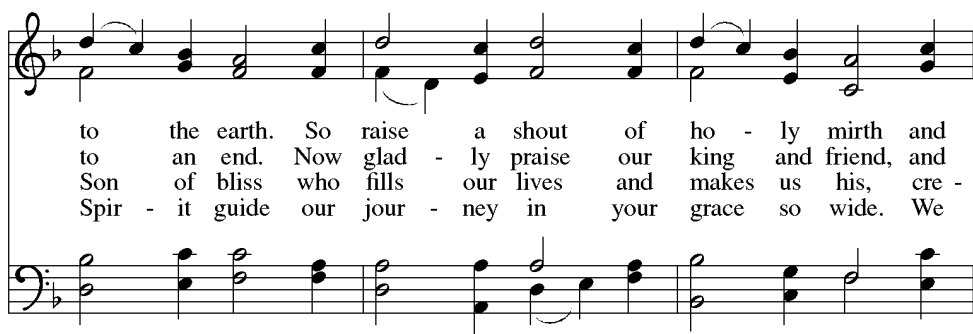
The musical score is written for a choir or congregation. It features a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with some lower notes in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the staves, with numbers 1 through 4 indicating different parts of the song.



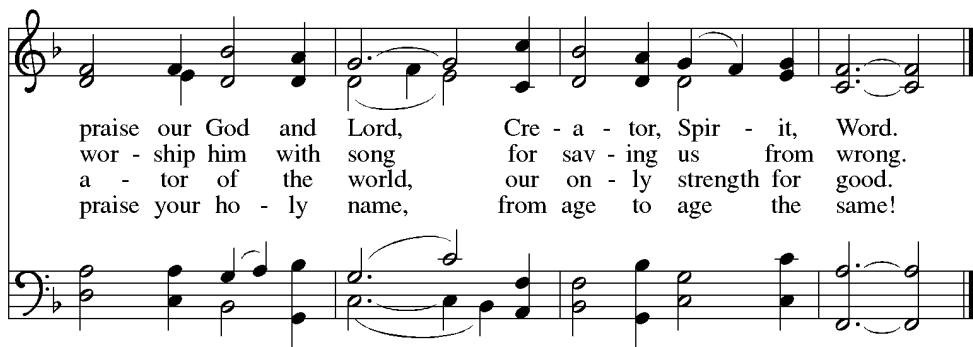
comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
 gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
 king's com-mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
 wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -



Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
 scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
 hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
 on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
 to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
 Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
 Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We



praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
 wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
 a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
 praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

GREETING

P Siblings in Christ, beloved children of God: grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

C And also with you.

KYRIE

Leader

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have

For the reign of God, and for

mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through - out the world, for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord.

For your

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo - ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your

word, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Lord, have

Help, save, and de - fend us, O God.

mer - cy. A - men.

Text: *Lutheran Book of Worship*, adapt. Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: *Now the Feast and Celebration*, Marty Haugen

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CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion



sings for joy to the God of life and love and free-dom;



praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!



1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has



Refrain

freed and u - nit-ed us to be one great peo-ple of God.



2 Pow - er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and



Refrain

glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er.



3 For God has come to dwell with us, to make us peo-ple of

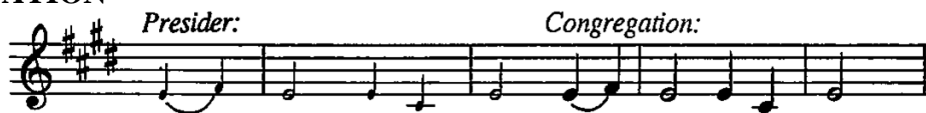


Refrain

God; to make all things new.

SALUTATION

Presider: *Congregation:*



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH

LIGHT ONE CANDLE *All Sing*



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.

He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

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

FIRST READING

Isaiah 2:1-5

A reading from the second chapter of Isaiah.

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come
the mountain of the Lord's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

³Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

⁴He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

⁵O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the Lord!

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Romans 13:11-14

A reading from Romans, the thirteenth chapter.

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in

debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL VERSE

All Stand & Sing

Congregation:

Al - le - lu - ia, 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 24:36-44

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

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

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶“About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house

be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Congregation is seated.

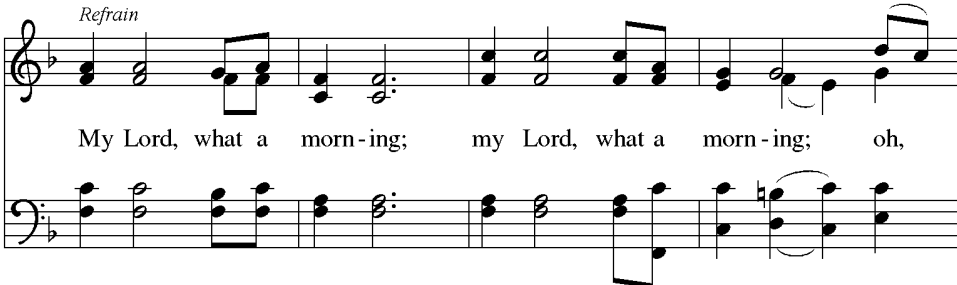
SERMON Pastor Micah

Silence is kept for reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *My Lord, What a Morning*

All Stand & Sing

Refrain



My Lord, what a morn-ing; my Lord, what a morn-ing; oh,



my Lord, what a morn-ing, when the stars be-gin to fall.



- 1 You will hear the trum-pet sound,
- 2 You will hear the sin-ner cry, to wake the na-tions un-der - ground,
- 3 You will hear the Chris-tian shout,



look-ing to my God's right hand, when the stars be-gin to fall.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BURLEIGH, African American spiritual

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

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God of all, your children everywhere cry out for mercy. Awaken the global church to the urgent needs of our time. Break down barriers of culture and custom and unite people of all faiths in your redemptive and healing work. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of wonder, the earth's beauty and abundance is your gift. Teach us your ways of sharing resources and caring for life. Guard fragile habitats, preserve the wild places, and protect endangered plants and animals. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of peace, you judge the nations. Beat our weapons into tools for serving the neighbor. Strengthen the resolve of all who work for an end to war. We pray for lasting peace in the land of Jesus' birth. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of lovingkindness, you desire fullness of life for everyone. Fill those who hunger. Comfort the grieving and attend to those near death. Bring help and hope to any who are sick or needing your care, especially... God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of community, you are present when we gather in your name. Guide congregations in transition or conflict. Give wisdom to congregational councils, call committees, and ministry leaders. Keep us alert to unexpected opportunities for mission. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of promise, your goodness is everlasting. We give thanks for the lives of the faithful who now rest in you. We trust that you will bring us into the company of all the saints with rejoicing. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*

Chamber Choir

- 1 Now the heavens start to whisper,
as the veil is growing thin.
Earth from slumber wakes to listen
to the stirring, faint within:
seed of promise, deeply planted,
child to spring from Jesse's stem!
Like the soil beneath the frostline,
hearts grow soft to welcome him.
- 2 Heavy clouds that block the moonlight
now begin to drift away.
Diamond brilliance through the darkness
shines the hope of coming day.

- Christ, the morning star of splendor,
gleams within a world grown dim.
Heaven's ember fans to fullness;
hearts grow warm to welcome him.
- 3 Christ, eternal Sun of justice,
Christ, the rose of wisdom's seed,
come to bless with fire and fragrance
hours of yearning, hurt, and need.
In the lonely, in the stranger,
in the outcast, hid from view;
Child who comes to grace the manger,
teach our hearts to welcome you.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953
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OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* *All Stand & Sing*



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

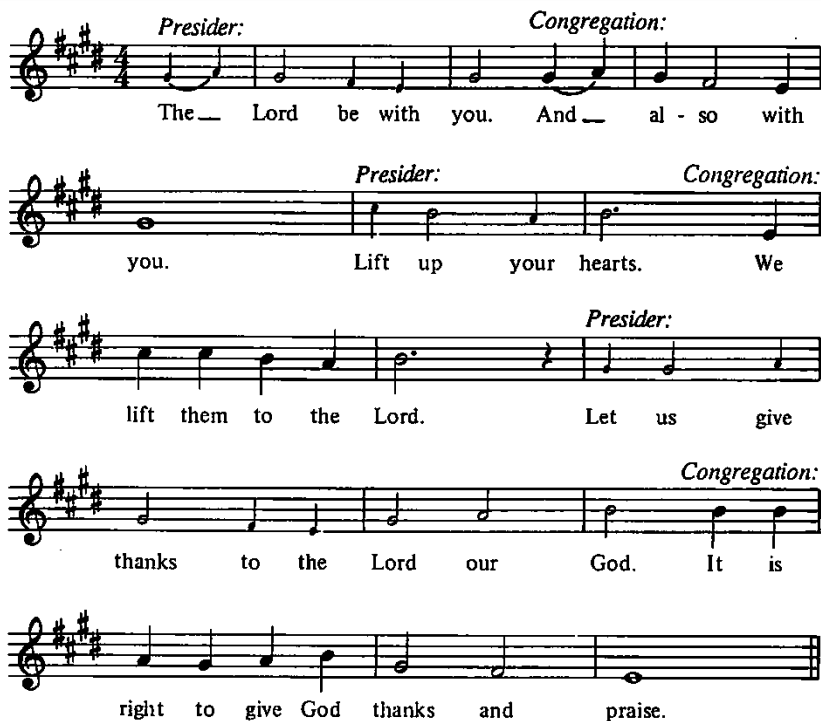
OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray.

C Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE



President: *Congregation:*

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

you. Lift up your hearts. We

lift them to the Lord. Let us give

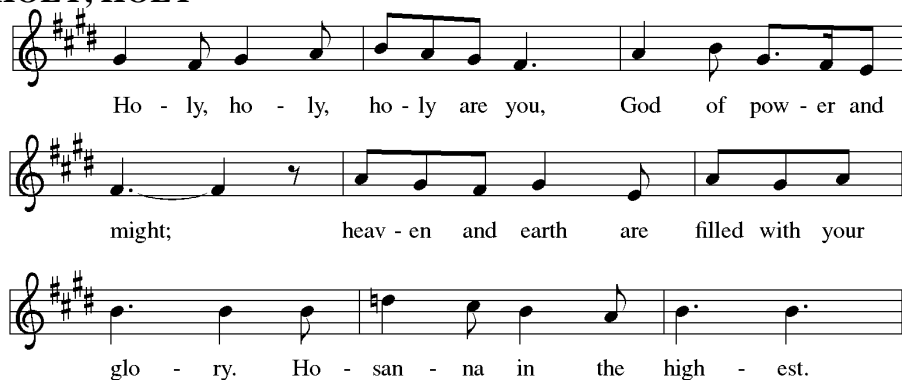
thanks to the Lord our God. It is

right to give God thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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

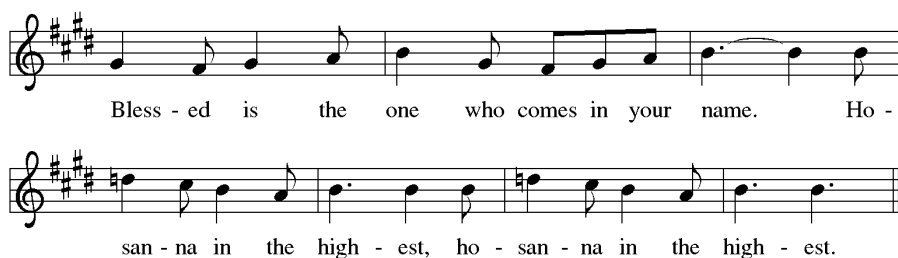
HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and

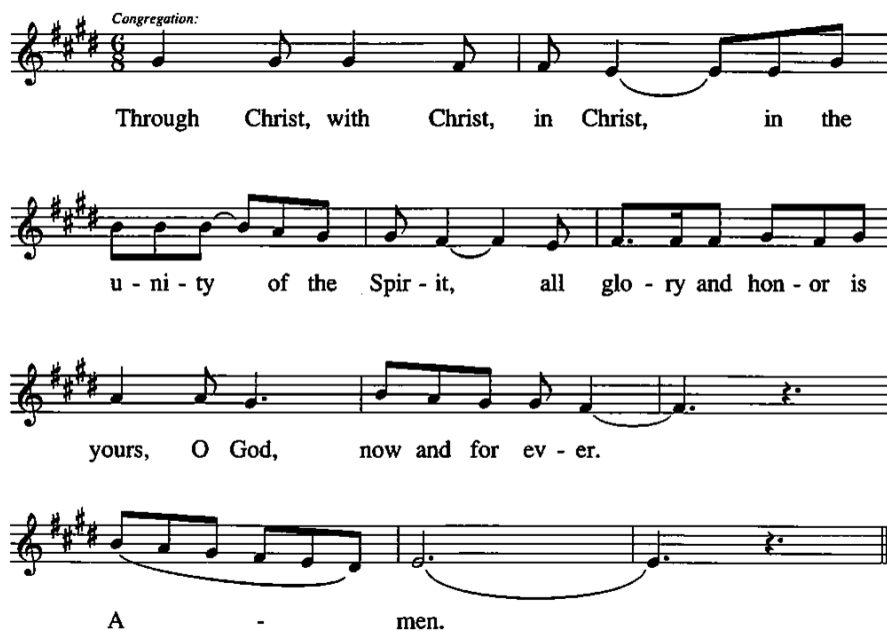
might; heav - en and earth are filled with your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P ... and in whom we live, Jesus Christ.



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 Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

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 return to your seat and drink, 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, mer - cy on us,

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,

grant us peace, grant us peace.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *He Came Down*

All Sing

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn. The second system contains the final four lines. The music features a mix of single notes, dyads, and triads, with many measures containing triplets. The lyrics are printed below the staves, aligned with the corresponding notes.

1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have peace; hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

Arr. © 1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent, 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

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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 Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *Prepare the Royal Highway*

All Stand & Sing

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing; your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch-es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain
Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

SENDING

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: *Joy to the Lord*

Ferguson

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*Thanks to Suzanne Fairbairn, prelude and communion organist, and to Julia Gunter, our resident flutist.

This Week's Schedule:

Sunday, November 27th

- 9:30 am - Sunday School
- 10:10 am - Church Choir in balcony
- 10:30 am - Worship in the Sanctuary
- 5:00 pm - Handbell practice
- 5:00 pm - HCY meets
- 6:00 pm - Choir practice

Wednesday, November 30th

- 4:00 pm - Faith Formation Video posted
- 5:30 pm - Youth Handbell Practice
- 6:00 pm - Advent Meal
- 6:45 pm - Unfailing Light Service
- 7:15 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

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Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: mkearney@holyc.org
Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: rforst@holyc.org
Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster