

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LINCOLN
Worship Plan for Sunday, December 14, 2025
Third Sunday of Advent

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

WEEK 3: JOY

Leader 1: We gather in the season of Advent, waiting and watching for the One who comes not in splendor, but in humility. The God of the universe has changed addresses—leaving heaven’s throne to dwell among us in a manger. This is grace: not earned, not expected, but freely given.

Leader 2: We light the candle of Joy, rejoicing in the fact that God’s address is now among us.

**ALL: Jesus, you chose to be born among our mess, not our perfection.
Let your joy rise in us, even when things seem unfinished.**

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING SONG – JOY

To the tune of “Away in a Manger”

Now Joy joins the chorus, a bright, laughing flame,
For God took on flesh and bore our own name.
In straw and in struggle, in laughter and tears,
God molds us with mercy through all of our years.

PRAYER:

**God of joy, surprise us again in your presence. Let your
Incarnation awaken laughter, song and celebration in our souls.
Amen.**

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the

inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

GATHERING HYMN: LBW 30 “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



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.

GREETING - AM

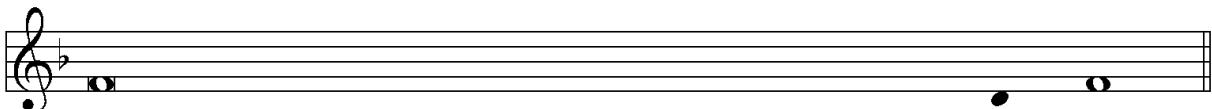
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

KYRIE - AM



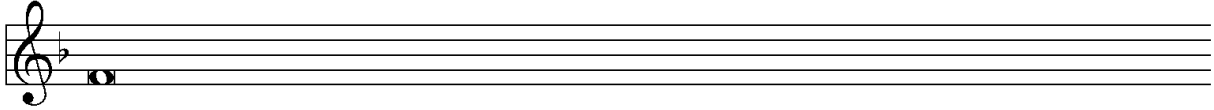
A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **B** Lord, have mer - cy.



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



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



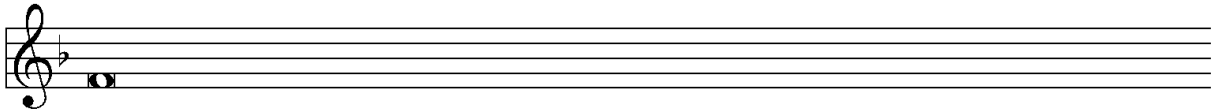
☩ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



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



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



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



let us pray to the Lord.

☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



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

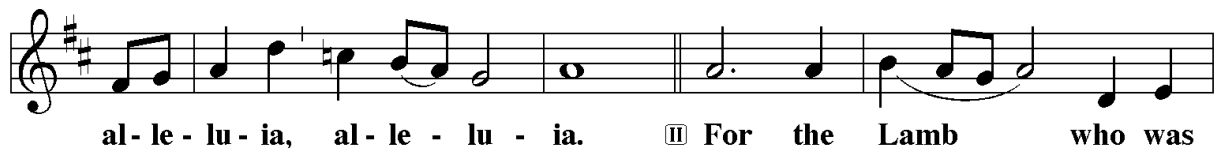
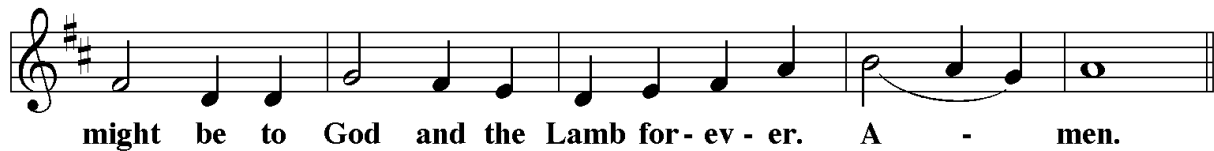
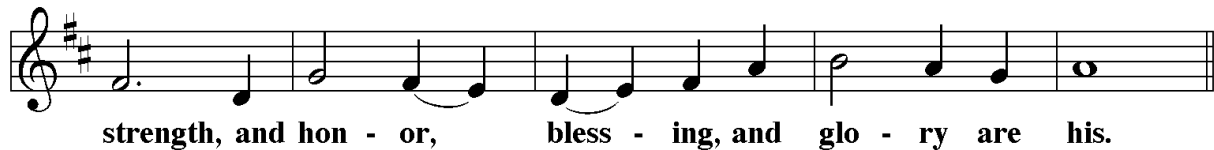
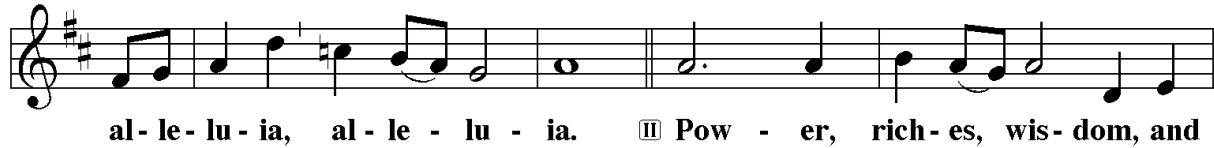
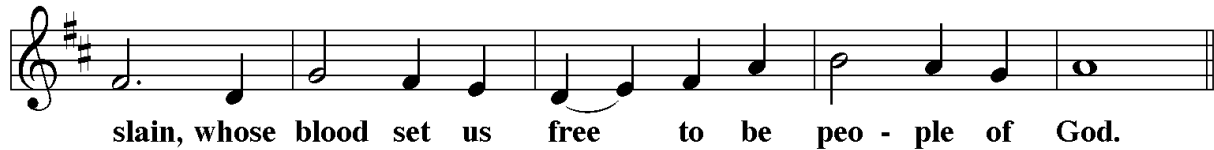
HYMN OF PRAISE - AM



☩ This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. ☩ Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was



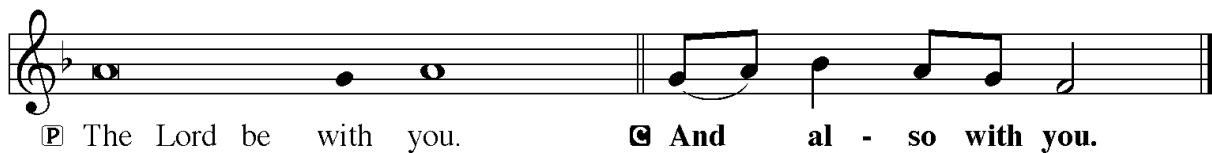


slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

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

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY - AM



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

Let us pray. . . .

Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Here ends the reading.

PSALM: Psalm 146:4-9

TODAYS THEME The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down.

⁴ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;

⁵ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise forever;**

⁶ who gives justice to those who are oppressed,
and food to those who hunger.

⁷ **The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the
blind;**

the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

⁸ the Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger;
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

⁹ **The Lord shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

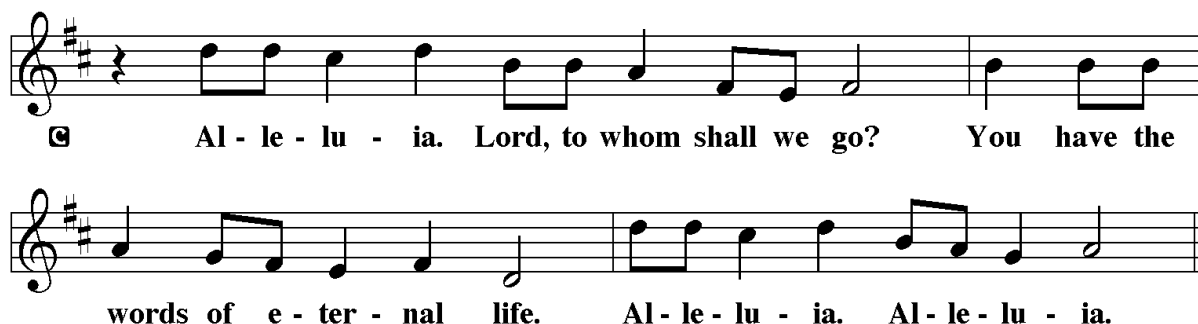
SECOND LESSON: James 5:7-10

*In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate
patience rather than discontent.*

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Here ends the reading.

VERSE



GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th Chapter.



John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

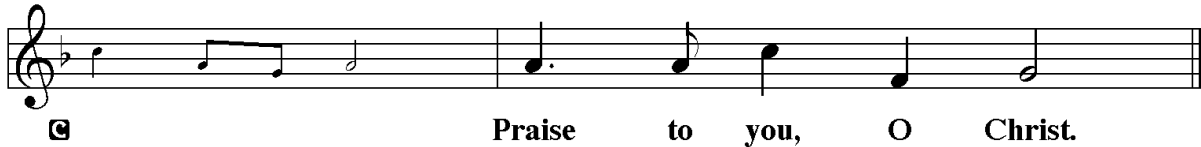
⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater

than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord.



PROCLAMATION OF THE DAY

HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW #28 “Savior of the Nations, Come”

Savior of the Nations, Come



- 1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; show the glo - ry of the Son!
- 2 Not of hu - man seed or worth, but from God's own mys - tic breath,
- 3 Won-drous birth! Oh, won-drous child of the vir - gin un - de - filed!
- 4 God the Fa - ther is his source, back to God he runs his course;



Ev - 'ry peo - ple, stand in awe; praise the per - fect Son of God.
fruit in Mar - y's womb be - gun when God breathed the Word, his Son.
Might-y God and man in one, ea - ger now his race to run!
down to death and hell de - scends, God's high throne he re - as - cends.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5 He leaves heaven to return;
trav'ling where dull hellfires burn;
riding out, returning home
as the Savior who has come. | 6 God the Father's precious Son
girds himself in flesh to run
for the trophies of our souls,
longer than this round earth rolls. |
| 7 Shining stable in the night,
breathing vict'ry with your light;
darkness cannot hide your flame,
shining bright as Jesus' name. | |

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

THE PRAYERS - AM

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Put your light in us so that with boldness we proclaim the gospel of Christ throughout the world along with our ministry partners Rev. Sharon Baker; Rev. Joseph Burgess; Rev. Van Vechten Crane; Rev. Betty Czubay; Rev. Brad Dokken; Rev. Randy Emgarten; Rev. Jeff Giles; Rev. Joel Hernes; Rev. Sharon Korsmo; Rev. Dominique McFall-Buchholz; Dn. Carol Moen; Rev. Chris Montgomery; Rev. Robert Schmidt; Rev. Dorothy Stein; Rev. Sam Trottier; Peace Lutheran, Lincoln; Peace Lutheran, Burlington; Peace Lutheran, Crosby; Peace Lutheran, Dickinson; Bishop Craig Schweitzer, Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry; our brothers and sisters in the Central African Republic, our sisters and brothers in the Northeast Ohio Synod, World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran World Federation, and Food for the Poor. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing, especially those from our midst: Don Franklund, Doug Rebel, Myron Kroh, Wade Schultz, Elmer Wagner, Gerold Stern, Brian Ventsh, Kyla Guthmiller, Jenny Masset, Jason Wentz, and all others on our hearts and minds. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant. We especially pray for Global Refuge and Lutheran Social Services. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Abba Father, in our busy lives we don't take the time away from the distractions of this world to speak with you as we should, hear now the prayers that we offer in the silence of our hearts. *A brief silence.* God of grace,

hear our prayer.

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work.

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

PEACE - AM

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

OFFERING



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 the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

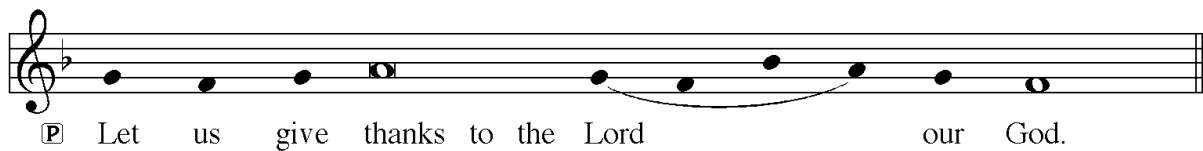
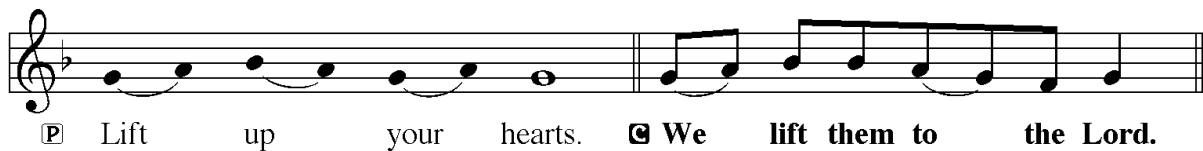
OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray...

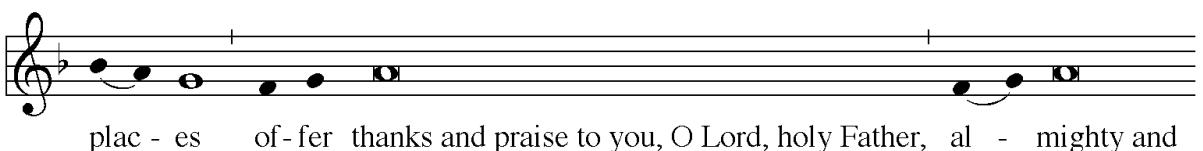
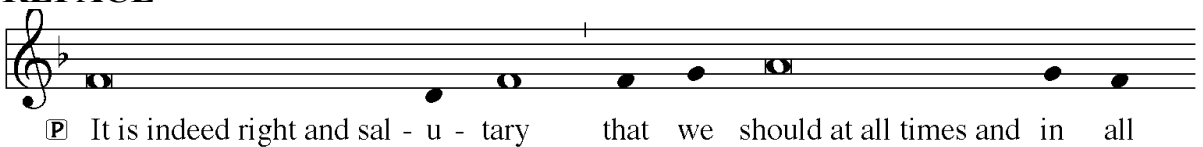
Blessed are you,

O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

DIALOGUE



PREFACE



ev - er - liv - ing God. You comforted your peo - ple with the
promise of the Re - deem - er, through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righ - teous - ness.
And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heav - en, we
praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

SANCTUS

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.

THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.
In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him should not perish,
but have eternal life.
We give thanks to you
for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.
Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith
as he comes to us in his holy supper.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

On the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, blessed it;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
Take and drink; this cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
For as often as we eat of this bread and drink of this cup,
We proclaim our Lord's death until he comes again.

LORD'S PRAYER

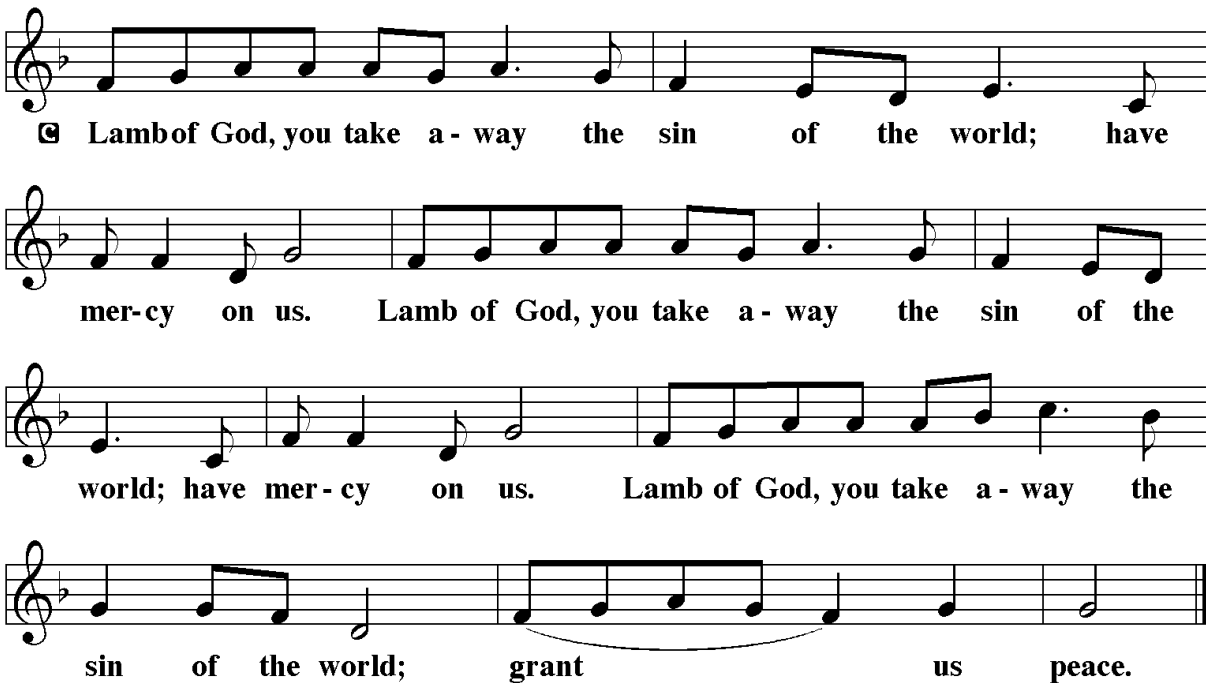
***Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,***

*but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.*

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
After each, the communicant responds:
C: Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN



☐ 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.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

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



☞ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN: WOV 629 “All Earth Is Hopeful”

All Earth Is Hopeful *Toda la tierra*



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co_a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.