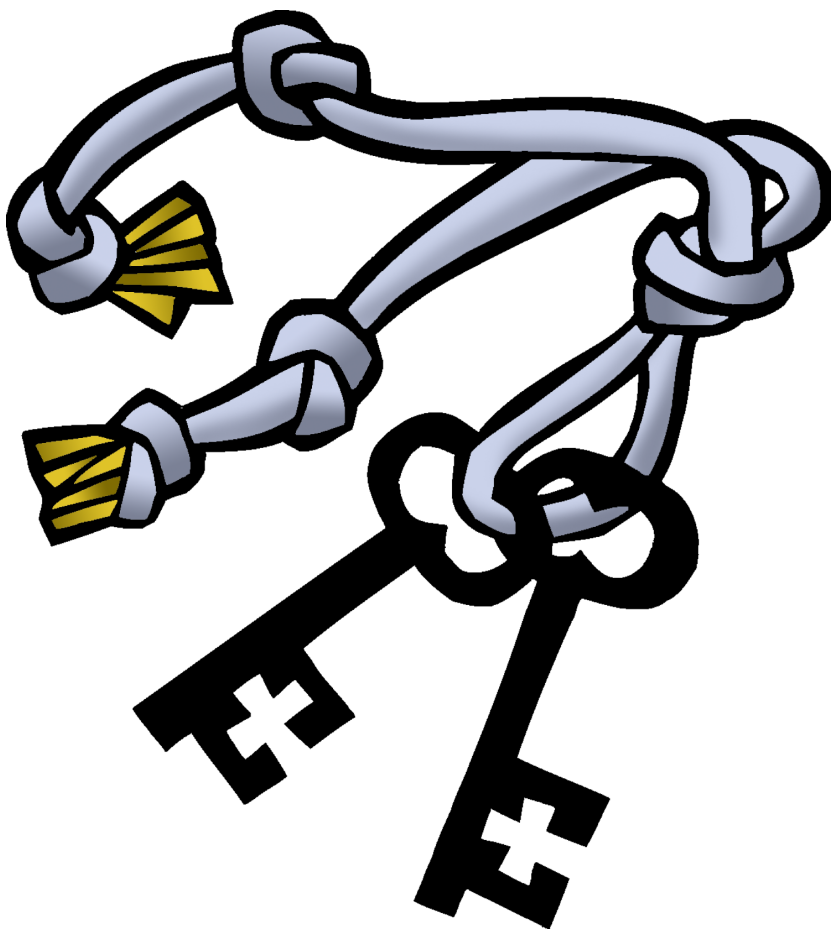




**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

2610 Campbell Street
Valparaiso, Indiana 46385
(219) 462-6660 • clcvalpo.org



**Time after Pentecost
August 23, 2026**

We welcome you to Christ Lutheran Church! We are a community of people sharing God's love through Christ and growing together in faith.

We celebrate all the ways we are made in the image of God, seeking to see God in everyone. We honor and respect each person's age, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity, gender expression, life history, mental well-being, physical ability, relationship status, sexual orientation, skin color, and socioeconomic standing. Together, we strive to love and serve our neighbor and all creation, including working toward racial and social justice. We would love to walk with you on this creative adventure* of faith, grace, and love.

** The first sermon ever preached at Christ Lutheran was titled "A Call to Creative Adventure."*

ABOUT WORSHIP

We gather to worship weekly to hear and remember our shared hope: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ makes all things new, even us.

You will find everything that happens in worship printed in this bulletin, with hymns found in the red hymnals ("ELW") in the seats in front of you.

If you have a prayer request, note it on a yellow card from the seatback holder and pass it to an usher; the other side is for any information you would like about Christ Lutheran. Please feel welcome to remain seated as necessary during the service.

CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN CHURCH!

God's people come in all shapes and sizes – it is a gift to the whole community when the smallest of us are present! Sitting with parents and learning to treasure times of worship is the foundation for helping build a growing faith in a child's life. There's some noise and movement that we expect from little ones - feel free to make use of the **activity bags, doodle pads, bookshelf in the overflow area and cry room at the back of the sanctuary** as needed. Whatever sacrifice of energy and effort you make to include your children in worship is multiplied as the good news of God's love takes root in their lives!

WHEN NURSERY CARE IS NEEDED DURING WORSHIP

A fully equipped and staffed Nursery is available for both infants and toddlers during all services. The Nursery is located west of our gathering area in **Room 110**.

RESTROOMS

Men's and women's restrooms off the Gathering Area and Church Hall have changing tables, as does the all-gender restroom near the nursery. A second all-gender restroom is through the Vestry off the East hallway, past the Welcome Center.

HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

Our services are on video, and occasional photographs are taken for our website and e-mail news. If you have concerns, please speak to a church staff member.

Hearing assistance devices are available to those who need help with listening to the service and are located at the entrance to the sanctuary, or please see an Usher for assistance.

A Reminder: Please turn off all cell phones during worship services.

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

*Allegro
(from Organ Concerto No. 13)*

G.F. Handel

WELCOME

If you are joining us for the first time, welcome! We'd love to meet you, or if there's anything you'd like to know about the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church, please consider [filling out a Connection Card online](#) (you can point your phone at the graphic to the right) or using a yellow Connection Card in the pew holders.



***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request (on the backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.*

*If you are worshipping with us via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose compassion endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
we confess to you all our sins.
Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.
In your mercy, call us back to you.
Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.
Restore us to dwell in your peace.
In Christ's name we pray,
Amen.

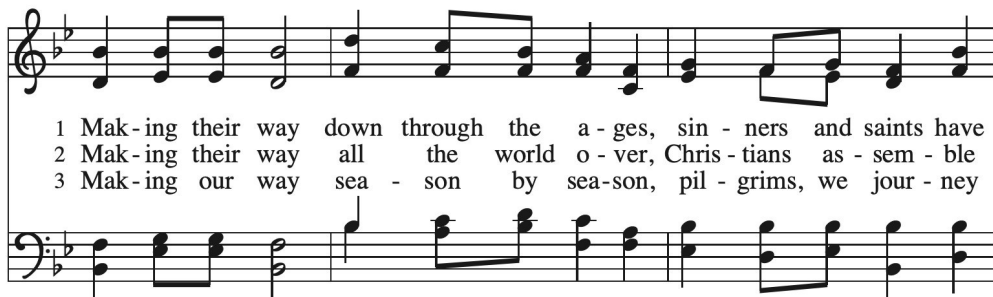
Jesus says, "Come to me,
all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."
In the name of God,
Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Rest in God's love.
Amen.

GREETING

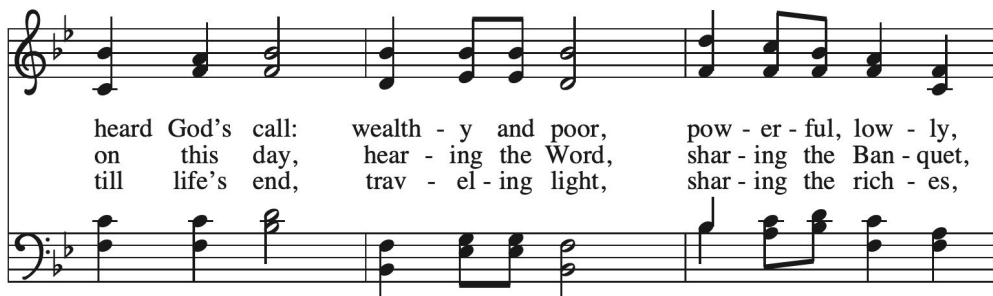
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

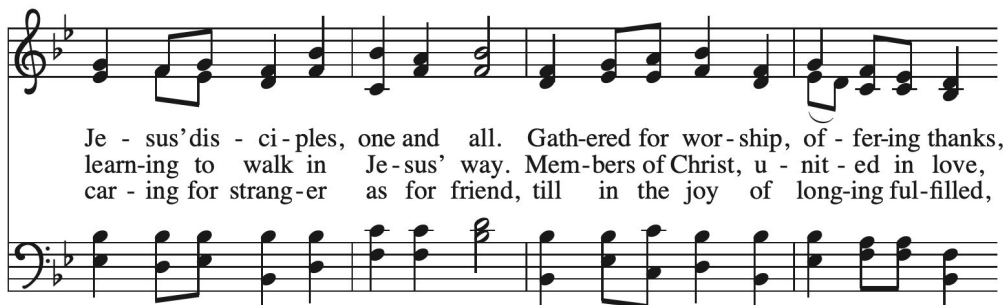
GATHERING HYMN ACS #979 *Making Their Way*



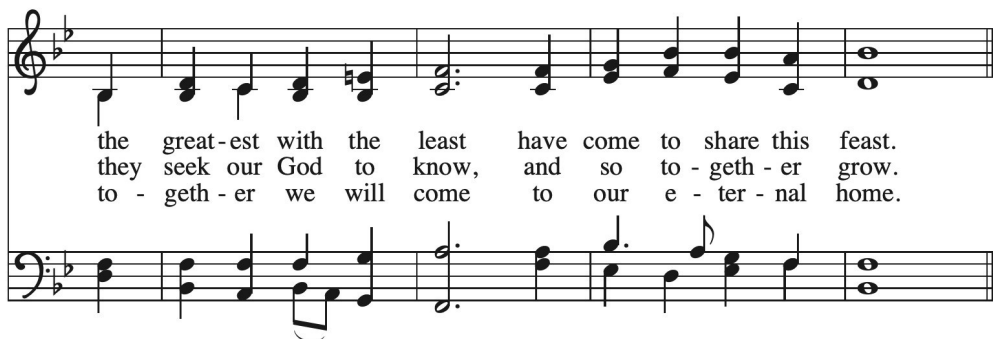
1 Mak-ing their way down through the a - ges, sin - ners and saints have
 2 Mak-ing their way all the world o - ver, Chris - tians as - sem - ble
 3 Mak-ing our way sea - son by sea-son, pil - grims, we jour - ney



heard God's call: wealth - y and poor, pow - er - ful, low - ly,
 on this day, hear - ing the Word, shar - ing the Ban - quet,
 till life's end, trav - el - ing light, shar - ing the rich - es,



Je - sus' dis - ci - ples, one and all. Gath - ered for wor - ship, of - fer - ing thanks,
 learn - ing to walk in Je - sus' way. Mem - bers of Christ, u - nit - ed in love,
 car - ing for strang - er as for friend, till in the joy of long - ing ful - filled,



the great - est with the least have come to share this feast.
 they seek our God to know, and so to - geth - er grow.
 to - geth - er we will come to our e - ter - nal home.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A silence is kept before the prayer.

Living God,
you accept our stumbling faith,
our misplaced answers,
our false horizons,
and through them build a way of peace:
empower us
to bind the wounds of the world
and loose the debts of oppression,
that all may confess the grace
that is your work alone;
through Jesus Christ, anointed for the world.
Amen.

The assembly is seated.

INSTALLATION OF LAURA VENSTROM, DIRECTOR OF LLP

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children are invited for a time together.

SPECIAL MUSIC

*Arioso
(from Cantata No. 156)*

J.S. Bach

READING: Exodus 1:8—2:10

The brave Hebrew midwives defied Pharaoh to save many infants from death. When the mother of Moses placed him in a basket in the Nile, the daughter of Pharaoh found him, adopted him, and raised him. Moses' sister and mother also played crucial roles in this drama.

⁸ Now a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³ The

Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ “When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live.” ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this and allowed the boys to live?” ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.”

^{2:1} Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” ⁸ Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. ⁹ Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰ When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE PSALM 124

¹ If the LORD had not been on our side,
let Israel now say;

² **if the LORD had not been on our side,
when enemies rose up against us,**

³ then would they have swallowed us up alive
in their fierce anger toward us;

⁴ **then would the waters have overwhelmed us
and the torrent gone over us;**

⁵ then would the raging waters
have gone right over us.

⁶ **Blessed be the LORD
who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.**

⁷ We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler;
the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

⁸ **Our help is in the name of the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

READING: Romans 12:1-8

In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by the time in which we live but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Word of God, word of life.

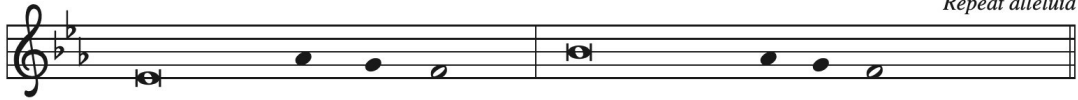
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



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



Our hearts burn with - in us as you open to us the scriptures.

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:13-20

At a climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the very gates of Hades.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The assembly is seated. Time for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW #576***We All Are One in Mission***

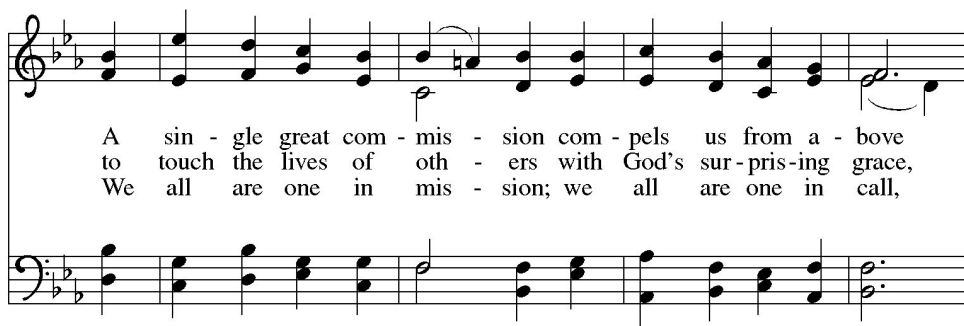
The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.



1 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,
2 We all are called for ser - vice, to wit - ness in God's name.
3 Now let us be u - nit - ed, and let our song be heard.



our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.
Our min - is - tries are dif - f'rent; our pur - pose is the same:
Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem - ing Word.



A sin - gle great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove
to touch the lives of oth - ers with God's sur - pris - ing grace,
We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,



to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.
so ev - 'ry folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.
our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

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.

**Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.*

PRAYERS

Our prayers draw on the Ecumencial Prayer Cycle and the Church's calendar of Commemorations—further information is found each week at the end of the bulletin.

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

God, our rock, you are the foundation on which the church is built. Strengthen and encourage your faithful people everywhere they gather, that they boldly proclaim your word of life to all the world. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You spoke and all creation came into being. Field and forest, wetland and wilderness—all reveal your glory. Sustain and nourish your creation; bring restoration and new life in all our storm-damaged communities nearby, and relief from flooding downstate. Teach us to be wise stewards of all you have made. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You bring deliverance to nations and peoples. Come to the aid of nations experiencing war, conflict, disease, famine, and disaster. Guide the work of relief agencies and peacemaking organizations. We pray for the churches, people, and lands of Liberia and Sierra Leone, that democracy and justice might grow and peace flourish. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You regard the lowly and hear us when we cry out to you. Be present among all who struggle with addiction, housing insecurity, incarceration, and mental illness, that they know they are not alone. Hear our prayers for all in need this day, especially those recovering from recent disasters, waiting for power, or displaced from their homes. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You draw together people with differing gifts. Lift up the many and varied gifts and talents of this congregation and strengthen the bonds of fellowship that all may be united as the body of Christ. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Your steadfast love endures forever. We give thanks for the faithful who died in the hope of this promise, remembering especially Bartholomew, Augustine, and Moses the Black. Strengthen us in faith until the day we join them at your eternal banquet.

Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We invite those worshiping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the chat, and for those in person we turn to offer them our greeting of peace before sharing a sign of peace with one another: **Peace be with you!***

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the offerings of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts with

*1. **Global Refuge** (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service)*

*www.globalrefuge.org and 2. **Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW)***

www.lbwinc.org

If you wish to give electronically, use the QR code or browse to our secure on-line portal at clcvalpo.org/give.



OFFERTORY

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

J.S. Bach

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God,

we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts.

**Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love,
so that all creation can taste your abundance.**

**We ask this in the name of Jesus,
through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.
Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also 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 our thanks and praise.

The pastor begins the prayer and all join in singing:

SANCTUS

(An ancient practice invites us to make the sign of the cross in honor of Jesus at the words "Blessed is he.")

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and

God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your

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

Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

TABLE PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

Children: The Spirit makes us one. We pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Heaven has come near.
Come, share in the feast!
Thanks be to God!

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION

*The pastor invites those worshipping via **livestream** to commune:*

The body of Christ, given for you.

Amen (receive the bread)

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen (receive the cup)

In-person distribution: When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. WINE is lighter-colored and GRAPE JUICE is dark; they are received via individual cups in the trays. USED GLASSES are placed in the basket located near the ramp. GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE, please indicate to the server that you require this.

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.

COMMUNION HYMNS

ELW #814 *Take, O Take Me as I Am (sung 4x)*

The musical score is written for a two-part setting in G minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. The first system consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of three flats, and a common time signature. The melody starts on a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth notes: B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. This is followed by a half note C4, a quarter note D4, and a half note E4. The bass staff begins with a bass clef and the same key signature. It provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The lyrics 'Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;' are placed below the first system. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff melody continues with a half note F4, a quarter note G4, and then a series of eighth notes: A4, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4. This is followed by a half note D4, a quarter note C4, and a half note B3. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment. The lyrics 'set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.' are placed below the second system. The score ends with a double bar line.

Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;

set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

ELW #791 *We Sing to You, O God*

- 1 We sing to you, O God,
the Rock who gave us birth,
let our rejoicing sing
your name in all the earth.
To you, O God, let songs be raised,
in joyful hymns, our feast of praise.
- 2 We wandered far from home
out in a desert land,
you shielded with your love
our fearful pilgrim band.
You kept us safe within your arms
and sheltered us against the storm.
- 3 You bear us through the world,
an eagle to its young;
you rise up on your wings
and bear us toward the sun.
We ride the vaults of light and air
and trust in your unfailing care.
- 4 O God, eternal God,
we hide within your wings,
the everlasting arms
to whom our praises ring.
Your word is true, your way is just,
You are the God in whom we trust.

ELW #620 *How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds*

1 How sweet the name of Je - sus sounds in
 2 It makes the wound - ed spir - it whole and
 3 Dear name! The rock on which I build, my
 4 By thee my prayers ac - cep - tance gain al -

a be - liev - er's ear! It soothes our sor - rows,
 calms the heart's un - rest; 'tis man - na to the
 shield and hid - ing place; my nev - er - fail - ing
 though with sin de - filed. The dev - il charg - es

heals our wounds, and drives a - way all fear.
 hun - gry soul and to the wea - ry, rest.
 trea - sury, filled with bound - less stores of grace.
 me in vain, and I am owned a child.

5 O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend,
 my prophet, priest, and king,
 my Lord, my life, my way, my end,
 accept the praise I bring.

6 How weak the effort of my heart,
 how cold my warmest thought;
 but when I see thee as thou art,
 I'll praise thee as I ought.

7 Till then I would thy love proclaim
 with every fleeting breath;
 and may the music of thy name
 refresh my soul in death!

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands as the minister continues.

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Compassionate God,
through the gifts of bread and wine
our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love.
Strengthen us that we
may share your love freely, as you have shared with us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

INVITATIONS

The assembly is seated as brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.

BLESSING

God, who creates, redeems and sustains,
bless, heal, and hold you
today and always.
Amen.



1 O Sav - ior, pre - cious Sav - ior, whom yet un - seen we love;
 2 O bring - er of sal - va - tion, who won - drous - ly hast wrought,
 3 In thee all full - ness dwell - eth, all grace and pow'r di - vine;
 4 Oh, grant the con - sum - ma - tion of this our song a - bove,

O name of might and fa - vor, all oth - er names a - bove:
 thy - self the rev - e - la - tion of love be - yond our thought:
 the glo - ry that ex - cel - leth, O Son of God, is thine.
 in end - less ad - o - ra - tion and ev - er - last - ing love;

we wor - ship thee; we bless thee; to thee a - lone we sing;
 we wor - ship thee; we bless thee; to thee a - lone we sing;
 We wor - ship thee; we bless thee; to thee a - lone we sing;
 then shall we praise and bless thee where per - fect prais - es ring,

we praise thee and con - fess thee, our ho - ly Lord and King.
 we praise thee and con - fess thee, our gra - cious Lord and King.
 we praise thee and con - fess thee, our glo - rious Lord and King.
 and ev - er - more con - fess thee, our Sav - ior and our King!

Children join the pastors to send us in mission.

DISMISSAL

Children: Go in peace, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

*Campane a Sete
(Bells in Seven)*

Fletcher

Worship Leaders	<u>9:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Reid Venstrom
Lector	Linda Mapes
Prayer Assistant	Linda Mapes
Communion Assistants	Kathy Sutherland Grace Basich Darla Hernandez Heather Budnik
Ushers	Braden Longacre Irene Adams
Sound/Light	Tony Reinhold
Video/Livestream	Zach Wehner
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch
Special Music	Jenn Mount, viola
Communion Baker	Bull Family

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Liberia, Sierra Leone.**

We are thankful for:

- the natural resources in these countries, that they might benefit the peace and welfare of all
- the diverse ethnic and religious groups who long have lived together in peace and harmony, especially the Muslims and Christians in Sierra Leone
- democratic election of leaders who have brought political stability and accountability
- how diseases such as Ebola have been brought under control.

We pray for:

- the churches in these countries, for their evangelism and social outreach, faithful witness and action in times of conflict, and for interfaith cooperation with others
- the majority of the people who are still impoverished, that adequate services and policies will be provided that enable them to live with dignity and good health
- more just governance, free of corruption, accountable to the people, and that manages resources in ways that benefit all.

COMMEMORATIONS

Week of August 23, 2026

August 24

Bartholomew, Apostle

Mentioned as one of Jesus' disciples in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Bartholomew's name is replaced in John's gospel by Nathanael, leading many to believe that the two are different names for the same person. Little is known about his work, though some traditions place him later in India or Armenia.

August 28

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died 430

Augustine was one of the greatest theologians of the Western church. A native of North Africa, he recovered from a debauched young adulthood through the influence of his mother, Monica, and Bishop Ambrose of Milan. Besides writing influential theological books, he served as bishop of Hippo, in present-day Algeria.

August 28

Moses the Black, monk, martyr, died around 400

Converted from life as a thief and a robber to Christianity, Moses was an Ethiopian who became a desert monk at Skete. The change in his heart and life had a profound impact on his native country. He was murdered when Berber bandits attacked his monastery.

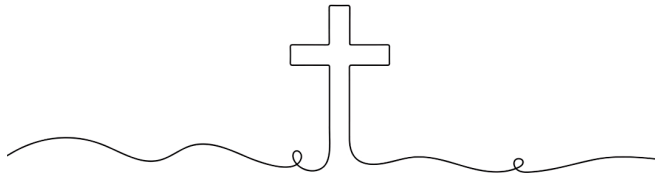
Revealing God

Jesus came to earth as God *incarnate*, meaning “in or having bodily form.” This was no accident. The prophets of the past had used their bodies and their words so people could understand God. In Christ, God was revealed in flesh and blood, allowing us to know who God is and what God’s priorities are for creation.

Peter points this out to us, saying that Christ is “the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). As a *living* God, moving among us as Jesus Christ, God reveals Godself directly. God reveals the divine nature and priorities through Jesus’ earthly life. Jesus lives without possessions, sharing in the suffering of people who are poor and oppressed. On the Galilean coast he feeds thousands of people before teaching them. He befriends outcasts like Zacchaeus the tax collector and the Canaanite woman. He calls out the greed and misplaced priorities of the wealthy by flipping tables. Instead of merely telling us, Christ incarnate shows us that God has a serious concern for all people on the margins of society.

As the church is formed into the body of Christ, we too now reveal to the world who God is and what God’s priorities are. How does our ministry show God’s concern for those who are poor and marginalized today? Do we seek out and walk alongside people cast out by dominant society? Do we not only preach the word but make sure people are fed as well?

By accompanying our neighbors in their struggles for dignity, justice, and the right to flourish, we do the good work of followers of Jesus, striving with God for the end of all oppression and death, for a world made whole.



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