

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



Holy Trinity June 4, 2023

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

At Christ Lutheran people of all backgrounds and experiences gather to worship because we all share a common 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. If you have a prayer request, the yellow cards in the seatback holders have a place for them; 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.

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, please indicate which you want. The COMMON CUP is available for anyone who wishes. 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. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

COVID Procedure Update

Masks are encouraged but optional during worship. Naturally if you prefer to stay masked throughout the service, you are of course welcome to do so. Masks are not required for singing but suggested.

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.

Though the word **trinity** is not found in the scriptures, today's second reading includes the apostolic greeting that begins the liturgy: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. In the gospel Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus Christ and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity in word and sacrament, as we profess the creed, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

All Glory Be to God on High

Böhm

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 <u>filling out a Connection Card online</u> (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 (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, 4 one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Righteous God, we confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

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

Amen.



GATHERING HYMN ELW #413

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!



Text: Reginald Heber, 1783–1826, alt. Music: NICAEA, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



- 1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
- 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for ev er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
- 3 Ho-ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth: Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove; Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise. on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand. Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise. Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand. For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Trinity of love,
deposing the powers
of hate and isolation;
gathering creation
in bonds of mutual care:
through the waters of baptism
may our relatedness be reborn
in justice, mercy and peace;
through Jesus Christ, who is with us always.

Amen.

WORD

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

When children read, they may read a version that is appropriate to their reading level and voice, which may vary from the printed texts.

CHILDREN'S TIME

The assembly is seated as children are invited forward for a time together.

READING: Genesis 1:1-2:4a

At the beginning of time, God the Creator, God the powerful Word, and God the life-giving Spirit form the earth and all its inhabitants. God sees that all this created work is good and then rests on the seventh day.

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night;

and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saving, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." ²⁹God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

^{2:1}Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ²And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

^{4a}These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

8

RESPONSIVE PSALM 8

¹O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!—

²you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children; you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger.

³When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

⁴what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them, human beings that you should care for them?

⁵Yet you have made them little less than divine;

with glory and honor you crown them.

⁶You have made them rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet:

⁷all flocks and cattle.

even the wild beasts of the field.

⁸the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,

and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

⁹O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

³²You look at the earth and it trembles;

you touch the mountains and they smoke.

³³I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;

I will praise my God while I have my being.

³⁴May these words of mine please God.

I will rejoice in the LORD.

35bBless the LORD, O my soul.

Hallelujah!

READING: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Paul closes a challenging letter to the Corinthians with an appeal to Christian fellowship grounded in the triune harmony of Christ's grace, God's love, and the Spirit's partnership.

[Paul writes:] ¹¹Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

¹³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy

Spirit be with all of you.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav-ing word.



Let it burn like fire with-in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 28:16-20

After his resurrection, Jesus summons his remaining disciples and commissions them to baptize and teach all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

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 #414 Holy God, We Praise Your Name The assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.



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

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need. *A brief silence*.

Holy three, holy one, you call the church to make disciples of all nations. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel and direct all the baptized into lives of humble service. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you spoke creation into being and called it good. Protect lands and waters threatened by human misuse and sustain living creatures of every kind: wild animals, birds, fish, and every creeping thing. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you have given humankind authority over the earth. Raise up leaders who listen earnestly, speak honestly, and govern thoughtfully. Heal divisions between nations, that we might agree with one another and live in peace. In Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Eswatini, continue to guide leaders and churches to build on the work of truth and reconciliation. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

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

Holy three, holy one, you promise to be with us always, to the end of the age. Surround those most in need of your healing presence: any who are lonely, all who are grieving, and those who are sick. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you set the earth on its axis, and we experience the seasons. Strengthen those enduring challenges this summer: those who suffer in the heat, parents overwhelmed by childcare responsibilities, and children experiencing food insecurity outside of school. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Holy three, holy one, you give rest when our work is done. We give thanks for Boniface, Seattle, Columba, Aidan, Bede, and all the saints who now rest in you, confident in the promise of resurrection life in the age to come. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

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

The assembly is seated. This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the participation and support of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts with Food Bank of Northwest Indiana http://www.foodbanknwi.org and Project Neighbors https://www.foodbanknwi.org and Project Neighbors.

If you wish to give electronically, browse to our secure on-line portal at <u>clcvalpo.org/give</u> or use <u>our CLC app</u> (download at clcvalpo.org/app).

OFFERTORY

Allegretto (Sonata No.1)

Naumann

OFFERING PRAYER

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

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

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.")

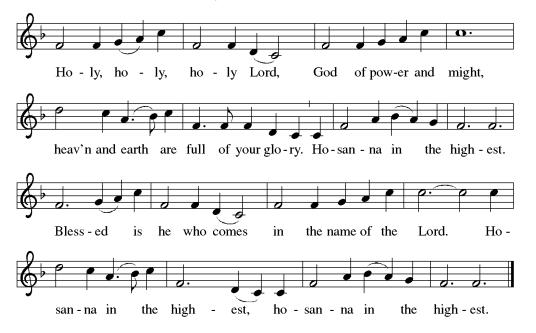


TABLE PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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

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

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION

The assembly is seated.

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.

The pastor invites those worshipping via livestream to commune:

The body of Christ, given for you.

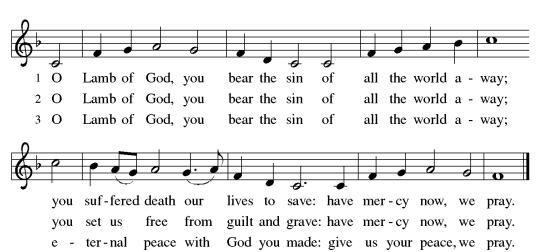
Amen (receive the bread)

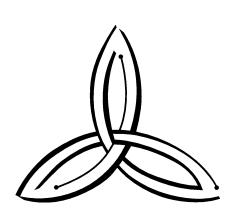
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

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, please indicate which you want. The **COMMON CUP** is available for anyone who wishes. **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. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

LAMB OF GOD





COMMUNION HYMNS ELW #684 Creating God, Your Fingers Trace

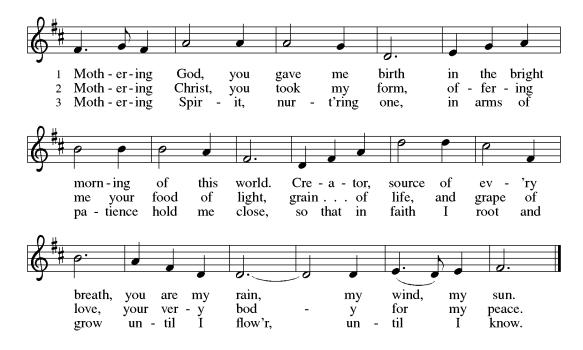


Text: Jeffery Rowthorn, b. 1934

Nusic: PROSPECT, W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835; arr. hymnal version
Text © 1979 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

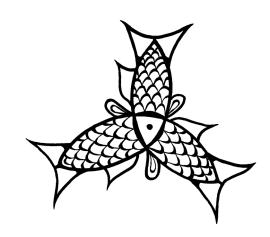
Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

ELW #735 Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth



Text: Jean Janzen, b. 1933; based on Julian of Norwich, c. 1342–c. 1413 Music: NORWICH, Carolyn Jennings, b. 1936

Text © 1991 Jean Janzen, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Music © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.



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

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table.

Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure,

Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

INVITATIONS

Brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.

BLESSING

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

Amen.



SENDING HYMN ELW #412 Come, Join the Dance of Trinity



Text: Richard Leach, b. 1953 Music: KINGSFOLD, English folk tune Text © 2001 Selah Publishing Co., Inc. www.selahpub.com. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Children join the pastor to send us in mission.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Allegro maestoso
(Organ Sonata, No. 2)

Mendelssohn

As worship concludes we move to the Gathering Place, where we are invited to greet one another and share in fellowship.

Worship Leaders

8:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.

Acolyte Olivia Hernandez Lynx Vittitoe

Lector Ruthie Ridley Becky Fry

Prayer Assistant Linda Mapes Becky Fry

Communion Assistants Erin Schmidgall Erin Crill

Chris Schmidgall Audrey Crill

Ushers Tim Sutherland

Luke Venstrom

Sound/Light Lance Nolting Jeff Peiffer

Video/Livestream — Ben Crill

Guest Pastor Rev. Karyn Kost

Director of Music Ministries Brian Bartusch

Communion Baker Marilyn McGawn

June Altar Gifts

Holy Communion Cheryl Watson ~ In celebration of Ken's birthday (6/14)

Altar Candles Lois & Michael Felten ~ In memory of Robert Bauer

Eternal Lamp Candles Sara & Jeremy Long ~ In memory of Fred & Edna Eickemeyer

(Grandparents)

COMMEMORATIONS Week of June 4, 2023

June 5

Boniface, Bishop of Mainz, missionary to Germany, martyr, died 754

Boniface (his name means "good deeds") was born Wynfrith in Devonshire, England. He was a Benedictine monk who at the age of thirty was called to missionary work among the Vandal tribes in Germany. His first missionary attempt was unsuccessful, but he returned two years later and was able to plant the gospel in an area filled with superstitious and violent practices. He led large numbers of Benedictine monks and nuns in establishing churches, schools, and seminaries. Boniface was also a reformer. He persuaded two rulers to call synods to put an end to the practice of selling church offices to the highest bidder. Boniface was preparing a group for confirmation on the eve of Pentecost when he and they were killed by a band of pagans.

June 7

Seattle, chief of the Duwamish Confederacy, died 1866

Noah Seattle was chief of the Suquamish tribe and later became chief of the Duwamish Confederacy, a tribal alliance. When the tribes were faced with an increasing number of white settlers, Seattle chose to live and work peacefully with them rather than engage in wars. After Seattle became a Roman Catholic, he began the practice of morning and evening prayer in the tribe, a practice that continued after his death. On the centennial of his birth, the city of Seattle—named for him against his wishes—erected a monument over his grave.

June 9

Columba, died 597; Aidan, died 651; Bede, died 735; renewers of the church

These three monks from the British Isles were pillars among those who kept alive the light of learning and devotion during the Middle Ages. Columba founded three monasteries, including one on the island of Iona, off the coast of Scotland. That monastery was left in ruins after the Reformation but today is home to an ecumenical religious community. Aidan, who helped bring Christianity to the Northumbria area of England, was known for his pastoral style and ability to stir people to charity and good works. Bede was a Bible translator and scripture scholar. He wrote a history of the English church and was the first historian to date events *anno Domini* (A.D.), "year of our Lord." Bede is also known for his hymns, including "A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!" (ELW 393).

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini.

We are thankful for:

- the rich biodiversity of plants and animals and of mineral resources in this region
- the faithful witness of churches throughout the world during apartheid and how people of different races and lifestyles have come together since then
- the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and others to bring healing from the atrocities committed
- how South Africa has made antiretroviral drugs accessible to all with HIV and AIDS.

We **pray** for:

- protection of resources for the good of all rather than their exploitation for economic gain
- more democratic and transparent governance in these countries, at all levels
- effectively countering rape, sexual violence, and other crime
- adequate resources and changed attitudes for welcoming refugees in these countries.

Stewardship Snippet

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."—Matthew 28:18-20

What's holding you back from having a bold, wonderful, satisfying, spirit-filled life? Jesus not only proclaims his sovereignty as ruler of the universe, but he also promises always to be with us. Now that's a win-win! As you steward your life, remember Jesus' proclamation and promise! Now get moving!

Authority and Assurance

When the eleven disciples arrived at the mountain to which Jesus had directed them, they might have been surprised or overwhelmed by his commission to make disciples, baptize, and teach.

At first glance, this description of their future ministry maybe felt like a tall order. But remember, they'd been watching and learning. And on either side of these ministry specifics are promises they surely found comforting: first authority, then assurance. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18), Jesus said. This is authority in the best sense of the word, offered with confidence, love, and respect. The disciples are empowered to do the ministry Jesus is asking of them. And next, they are given assurance in these final words from Jesus, which serve as a benediction—"I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). Whatever the outcome—trials, or joys that come along the way as they disciple, baptize, and teach—Jesus will be present with them.

This call is not just for the eleven but for us as well. We are called to heal the brokenhearted, care for the earth, and work for peace in the world. This commission comes to us in baptism. And having been baptized in the name of the triune God whom we celebrate this festive day, the newly baptized—whether child or adult—is presented to the assembly and welcomed into the mission we share, invited to join in "giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world" (*ELW*, p. 231).

Jesus sends the disciples from the mountain, and sends us empowered with the same authority and assurance that we do not go alone.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress.

All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #26201.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Portions printed under OneLicense.net License #A-711129. Stewardship Toolkit, Copyright © 2021, Rev. Robert Blezard.

Portions from Prayers for an Inclusive Church by Steven Shakespeare.