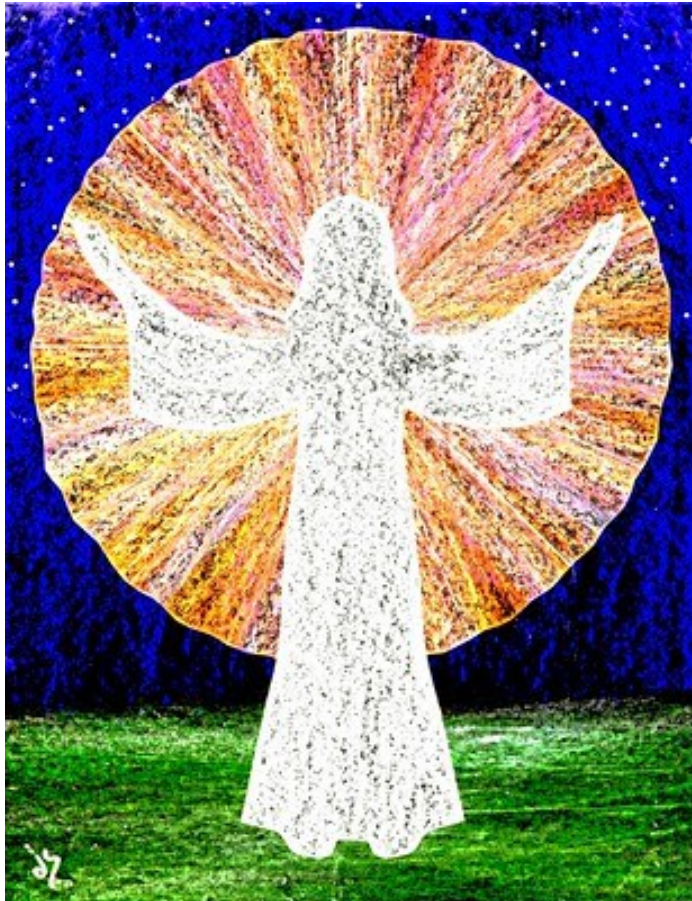




**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

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



Transfiguration of our Lord
February 11, 2024

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 on 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.

The Sundays after Epiphany began with Jesus' baptism and end with three disciples' vision of his transfiguration. In Mark's story of Jesus' baptism, apparently only Jesus sees the Spirit descending and hears the words from heaven. But now Jesus' three closest friends hear the same words naming him God's Beloved. As believers, Paul writes, we are enabled to see the God-light in Jesus' face, because the same God who created light in the first place has shone in our hearts to give us that vision. The light of God's glory in Jesus has enlightened us through baptism and shines in us also for others to see.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

Prelude in b minor

Walther

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).*

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!

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - mighty God and Fa-ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:



have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right



hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a -



lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.

Final refrain



Glo - ry to God in the high - est.



A - men, a - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Almighty God,
the light of your truth shines
from the mountaintop into our hearts.
Transfigure us by your beloved Son, and
illumine the world with your image,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

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

READING: 2 Kings 2:1-12

Today's reading centers on the transfer of power and authority from the prophet Elijah to Elisha. Their travels, which retrace the path of Joshua back to Moab (the place where Moses died) and the parting of the waters, demonstrate that Elisha and Elijah are legitimate successors of the great prophet Moses.

¹Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. ³The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

⁴Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. ⁵The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

⁶Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. ⁷Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.” Elisha said, “Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.” ¹⁰He responded, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.” ¹¹As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²Elisha kept watching and crying out, “Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



PSALM: Psalm 50:1–6

The congregation is invited to sing the psalm refrain when indicated (R). Verses will be chanted alternately by the leader and the people.

Refrain

Out of Zi - on, per - fect in beau - ty,
God shines forth in glo - ry.

Psalm Tone

- ¹The mighty one, God the LORD, has spoken;
calling the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.
- ²**Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty,
God shines forth in glory. R**
- ³Our God will come and will not keep silence;
with a consuming flame before, and round about a raging storm.
- ⁴**God calls the heavens and the earth from above
to witness the judgment of the people.**
- ⁵"Gather before me my loyal followers,
those who have made a covenant with me and sealed it with sacrifice."
- ⁶**The heavens declare the rightness of God's cause,
for it is God who is judge. R**

READING: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

The spotlight of Christian ministry is not on the people who carry out ministry but on the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as God made light shine at creation, God makes the light of Jesus Christ shine in our lives through Christian ministry.

³Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 9:2-9

Mark's gospel presents the transfiguration as a preview of what would become apparent to Jesus' followers after he rose from the dead. Confused disciples are given a vision of God's glory manifest in the beloved Son.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" ⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

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 #316 *Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair*

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



1 Oh, won - drous im - age, vi - sion fair of
2 With Mo - ses and E - li - jah nigh the in -
3 With shin - ing face and bright ar - ray, Christ
4 And faith - ful hearts are raised on high by
5 O Fa - ther, with the e - ter - nal Son, and



glo - ry that the church may share, which Christ up - on the
car - nate Lord holds con - verse high, and from the cloud, the
deigns to man - i - fest to - day what glo - ry shall be
this great vi - sion's mys - ter - y; for which in joy - ful
Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er one, we pray you, bring us



moun-tain shows, where bright - er than the sun he glows!
Ho - ly One says, "This is my be - lov - ed Son."
theirs a - bove who joy in God with per - fect love.
song we raise the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.
by your grace to see your glo - ry face to face.

Text: Sarum, 15th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: DEO GRACIAS, English ballad, 15th cent.

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

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church, that the transformational power of God enters the hearts of all people. May its leaders serve as examples of your grace and healing across time and space. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

We pray for the creation, that we will humbly observe the swirl of wind and the heat of the bright sun. Teach us to honor all you have made and to care for the animals, plants, air, and bodies of water of this planet. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

We pray for those charged with leadership, lawmaking, and governance of our towns, states, and countries, that they will strive for goodness and justice all the days of their lives and callings. In Austria, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland, strengthen churches, tend to your creation, and grant that the cooperative work of non-governmental organizations might increase peace and plenty throughout the world. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

We pray for any who are sick and suffering. Guide us to offer hospitality, shelter, friendship, and care to any in need. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

We pray for this congregation and its ministry in the wider community. May we share the transforming beauty and love of God in ways that honor the dignity of all whom we encounter. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Trusting that all the saints, prophets, and those who die in faith are held in your care, we remember in thanksgiving those who have died, especially Cyril and Methodius. Grant us your gift of salvation as we await your coming again in glory. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We invite those worshipping 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 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 Hilltop House www.hilltophouse.org.

If you wish to give electronically, use the QR code or browse to our secure on-line portal at clcvalpo.org/give or use [our CLC app](#) (download at clcvalpo.org/app).



OFFERTORY ANTHEM (8:00 am):

Rise, Shine!

Wood

Rise, shine, you people! Christ the Lord has entered our human story; God in him is centered. He comes to us, by death and sin surrounded, with grace unbounded. See how he sends the powers of evil reeling; He brings us freedom, light and life and healing. All men and women, who by guilt are driven, now are forgiven. Celebrate! Celebrate your joy, now. Come, celebrate; your banners high unfurling, your songs and prayers against the darkness hurling. To all the world go out and tell the story of Jesus' glory. Tell how the Father sent his Son to save us. Tell of the Son, whose life and freedom gave us. Tell how the Spirit calls from every nation His new creation. Rise and shine!

OFFERTORY (10:30 am):

Voluntary Air

Long

OFFERTORY PRAYER

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

Blessed are you, Holy One,
for all good things come from you.
In bread and cup you open heaven to us.
Meet us at this table,
that we receive what we seek
and follow your Son, Jesus,
in whose name we pray.
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.

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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-er 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.

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

At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one.
Come and see.

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION

The assembly is seated.

*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: ACS #954

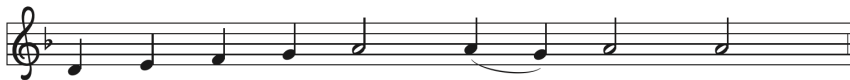
You, Lord, are Both Lamb and Shepherd



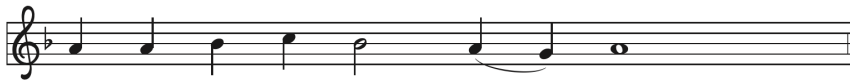
1 You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shep - herd.
 2 Clothed in light up - on the moun - tain,
 3 You, who walk each day be - side us,
 4 Wor - thy is our earth - ly Je - sus!



You, Lord, are both prince and slave.
 stripped of might up - on the cross,
 sit in pow - er at God's side.
 Wor - thy is our cos - mic Christ!



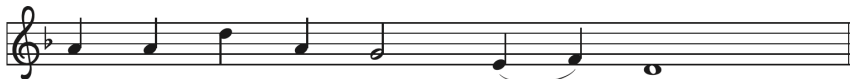
You, peace - mak - er and sword - bring - er
 shin - ing in e - ter - nal glo - ry,
 You, who preach a way that's nar - row,
 Wor - thy your de - feat and vic - t'ry;



of the way you took and gave.
 beg - gared by a sol - dier's toss,
 have a love that reach - es wide.
 wor - thy still your peace and strife.



You, the ev - er - last - ing in - stant;
 you, the ev - er - last - ing in - stant;
 You, the ev - er - last - ing in - stant;
 You, the ev - er - last - ing in - stant;



you, whom we both scorn and crave.
 you, who are both gift and cost.
 you, who are our pil - grim guide.
 you, who are our death and life.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993
 Music: PICARDY, French folk tune, 17th cent.
 Text © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.

ELW #715 *Christ, Be Our Light*



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.



Refrain
 Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957
 Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell
 Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.
 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

When all have returned to their places, the assembly stands.

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

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Giver of every gift,

Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body.

Raise us to life by your power

for the benefit of all and to your glory,

now and forever.

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

God who names you,

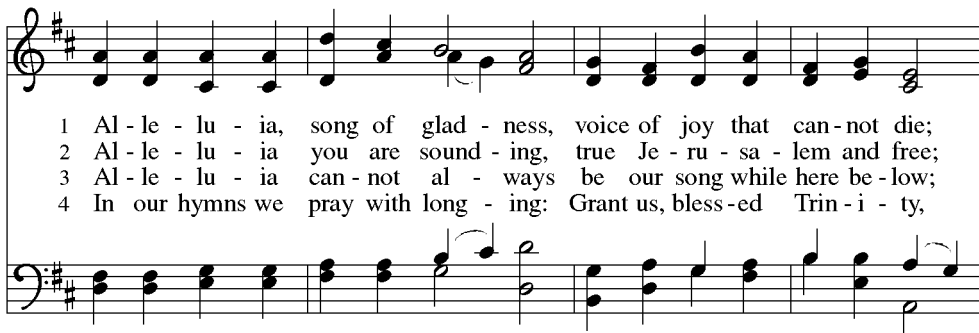
Christ who claims you,

and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,

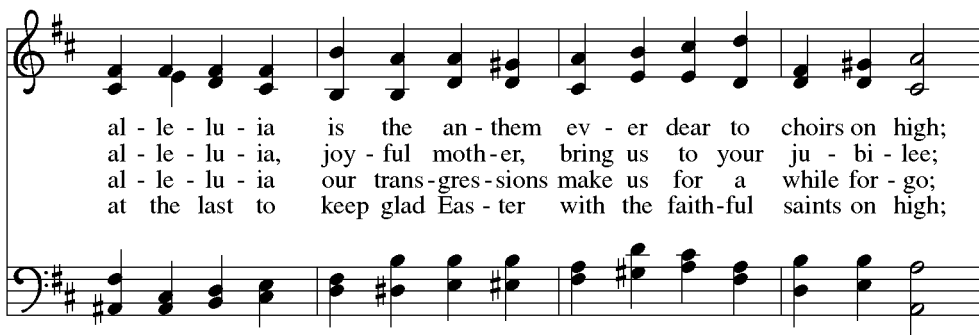
✠ bless you and remain with you always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN ELW #318

Alleluia, Song of Gladness


1 Al - le - lu - ia, song of glad - ness, voice of joy that can - not die;
 2 Al - le - lu - ia you are sound - ing, true Je - ru - sa - lem and free;
 3 Al - le - lu - ia can - not al - ways be our song while here be - low;
 4 In our hymns we pray with long - ing: Grant us, bless - ed Trin - i - ty,



al - le - lu - ia is the an - them ev - er dear to choirs on high;
 al - le - lu - ia, joy - ful moth - er, bring us to your ju - bi - lee;
 al - le - lu - ia our trans - gres - sions make us for a while for - go;
 at the last to keep glad Eas - ter with the faith - ful saints on high;



in the house of God a - bid - ing thus they sing e - ter - nal - ly.
 here by Bab - y - lon's sad wa - ters mourn - ing ex - iles still are we.
 for the sol - emn time is com - ing when our tears for sin shall flow.
 there to you for - ev - er sing - ing al - le - lu - ia joy - ful - ly.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
 Music: PRAISE, MY SOUL, John Goss, 1800–1880

DEDICATION OF “CHRIST IN BLESSING”

DISMISSAL

Children: Go in peace. Share God’s love.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Rigaudon

Campra

Worship Leaders

	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Joanie Furuness	Valerie Hernes
Lector	Erin Schmidgall	Karen Hernes
Prayer Assistant	Sue McPherson	Doc Knauff
Communion Assistants	Barbara Clements Kathy Sutherland	Jacque Chevalier Amy Knauff
Ushers	Don MacMillan Tim Sutherland	Bull Family
Sound/Light	Lance Nolting	Jeff Peiffer
Video/Livestream	-----	Ben Crill
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even	
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch	
Worship Participants:	Sanctuary Choir Daniel Gibson-Even, cantor	
Communion Baker	Lois Felten	

COMMEMORATIONS
Week of February 11, 2024

February 14

Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs

These two brothers from a noble family in Thessalonika in northeastern Greece were priests and missionaries. After some early initial missionary work by Cyril among the Arabs, the brothers retired to a monastery. They were later sent to work among the Slavs, the missionary work for which they are most known. Since Slavonic had no written form at the time, the brothers established a written language with the Greek alphabet as its basis. They translated the scriptures and the liturgy using this Cyrillic alphabet. The Czechs, Serbs, Croats, Slovaks, and Bulgars regard the brothers as the founders of Slavic literature. The brothers' work in preaching and worshiping in the language of the people are honored by Christians in both East and West.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland.**

We give **thanks** for:

- the quality of life that many in these countries enjoy and their commitment to provide for those in the world who are in need
- the organizations located here that seek to increase ecumenical and interfaith understanding and work together for the common good of all people and creation
- political and economic transparency in these countries
those who reach out to migrants and counter attitudes and practices that oppose them

We **pray** for:

- environmental practices that preserve the natural environment, especially the Alps' melting glaciers
- the work for justice, reconciliation and peace pursued by the people and organizations here, seeking to shape globalization so that it benefits all
- religious freedom, also for those from non-Christian traditions
overcoming the fear of, and welcoming the embrace of, those who are outsiders to the countries' historic, ethnic traditions

Stewardship Snippet

“For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus’ sake.” – 2 Corinthians 4:5

Like the Apostle Paul, we sometimes need to remind ourselves and others that what we do as disciples isn't about us but about the crucified and risen Christ. Following Jesus makes us responsible toward and accountable to both God and neighbor.

Just Listen

There are transfiguration moments in everyday life that can absolutely stop us in our tracks with the glory of Christ's presence: The smell of a new baby. Flowering trees blooming in the spring. The embrace of a friend when we need them most. Voices raised in cries for justice. The bravery of difficult conversations. The sacred minutes just before death. It may not be Jesus in dazzling clothes or a visit from the ancestors on a mountaintop, but by God's grace, we perceive the love of Christ shining brightly in these ordinary, yet holy, moments.

When they happen to us, what are we to do? It can be difficult, when in the presence of the divine, to know quite what to say. Peter, grasping at straws, offered to make three dwellings. You can't blame him—we all make weird choices when we are terrified! But a voice came from heaven: "Listen." It is not necessary to do or say anything. This moment is simply a gift. Our job is only to listen to Jesus.

Have you ever spent time just listening? Maybe outdoors, on a hike or in a park—listening to the sounds of creation. Or during a quiet moment in worship—the sound of cars driving by outside, or your neighbor breathing, or your own heart beating. Perhaps you have listened compassionately to a loved one who didn't need advice but just needed to be heard.

As people accustomed to *doing*, we can find it challenging to just listen. We may have learned that it is important for us to have something to say, something to offer, something to provide. But the good news of grace is that Christ's love has come to us even before we could do anything. That's why we baptize even helpless infants. That's why, when we come to communion, we do so with hands outstretched and empty, ready to receive: "This is the body of Christ." All we can do is listen . . . and say, "Amen."

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