First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Reverend Tracy S. Megli

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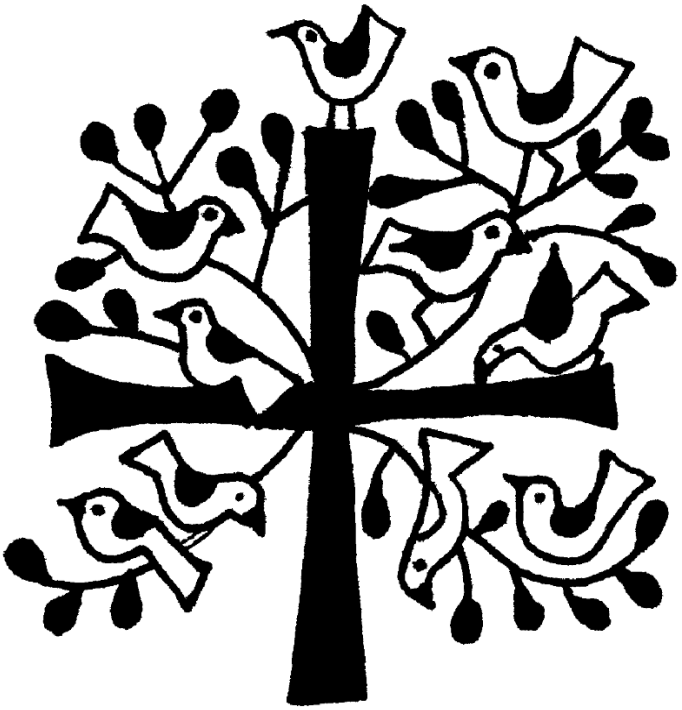


Twenty Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

November 15, 2026

9:30 am

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Mission Statement

First Lutheran church **strives to inspire hope**
for a wounded world;

Gathers in worship
that both **uplifts** and **challenges**;

And **builds life-affirming relationships**
inside and outside the walls of our building.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, First Lutheran Church
welcomes all because God welcomes all,
and we recognize that our differences are gifts to our communal life.

Sunday Morning Worship
November 15, 2026

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

First Reading: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

Prelude *Pastor Tracy Megli*

Please stand when the (*) indicates standing. Know the communion of Saints, both living & departed, stand for you if you should choose to remain seated for any reason.

Welcome All

*Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
our dwelling place for all generations,
whose compassion never slumbers.
Amen.

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

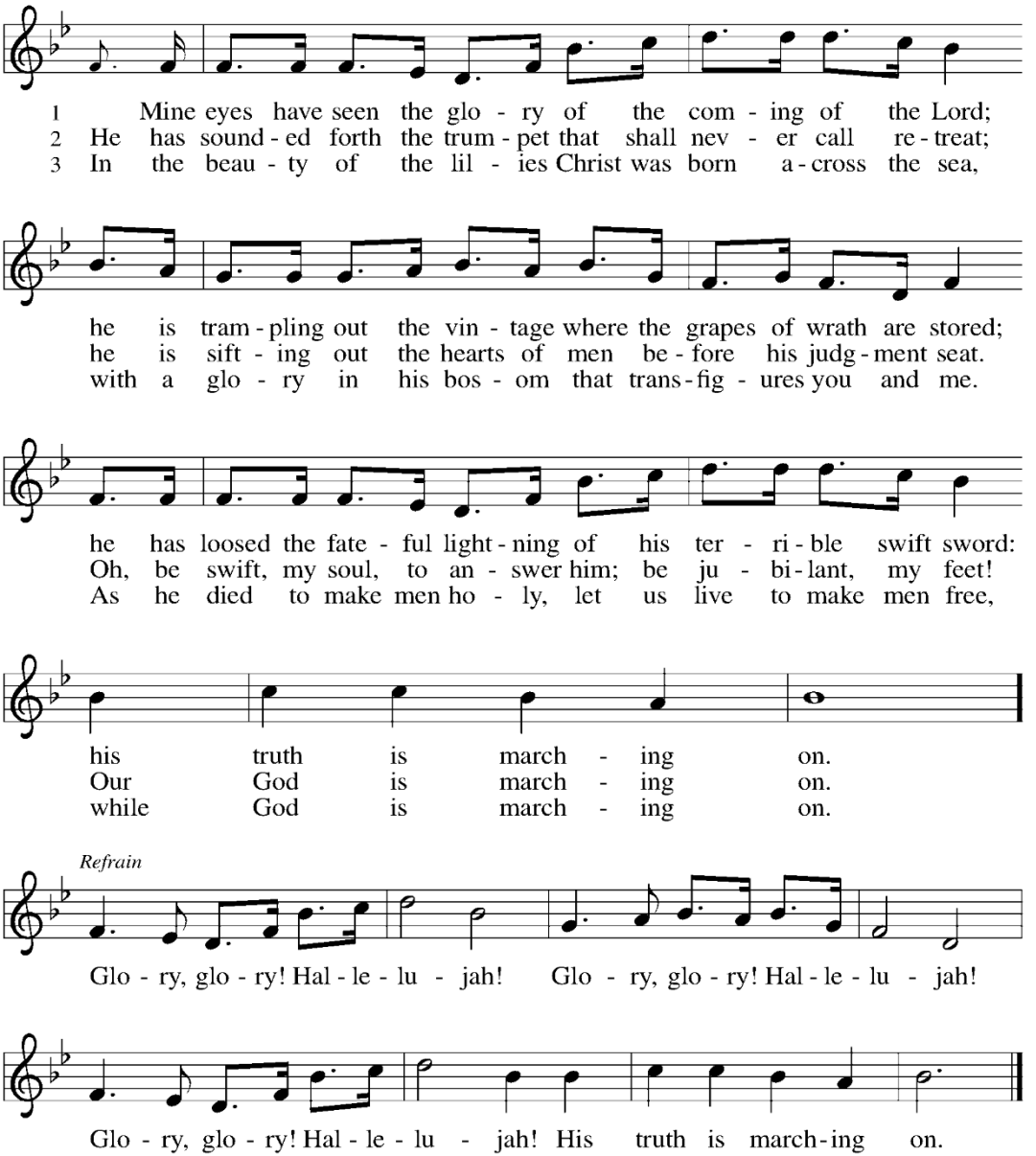
Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,
we confess that we have trusted in our preparation
instead of your invitation.
We prioritize our piety over care for your beloved.
We trust the voice of our shame and fear,
which keeps us from entering fully
into relationship with you and others.
We are not awake to the coming of your reign.
Rouse us and rescue us,
that we may enter into your joy.
Amen.

Inherit the riches of God's grace.
☩ Jesus, the good shepherd, feeds you with his mercy.
You are forgiven.
Blessed are you.
Amen.

*The Gathering Song *ELW 890*

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory



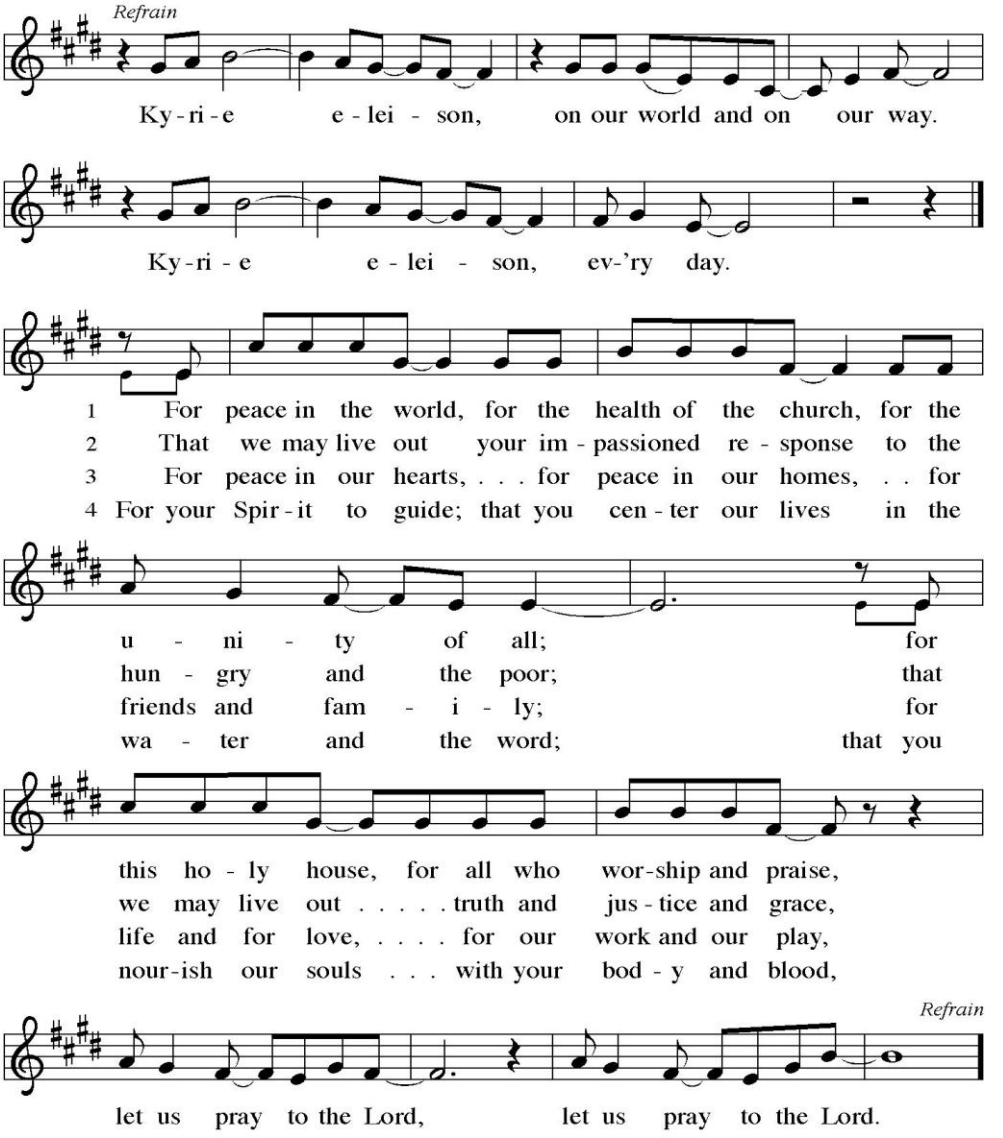
Text: Julia Ward Howe, 1819–1910
Music: BATTLE HYMN, North American, 19th cent

*The Pastoral Greeting

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

A: And also with you.

*Kyrie *ELW Setting 8*



*The Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

P: Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

A: Amen.

The First Reading — Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

7 Be silent before the Lord GOD,
for the day of the LORD is at hand!
The LORD has prepared a sacrifice;
he has consecrated his guests.

12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who settle like dregs in wine,
those who say in their hearts,
"The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm."
13 Their wealth shall be plundered
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.

14 The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter;
the warrior cries aloud there.

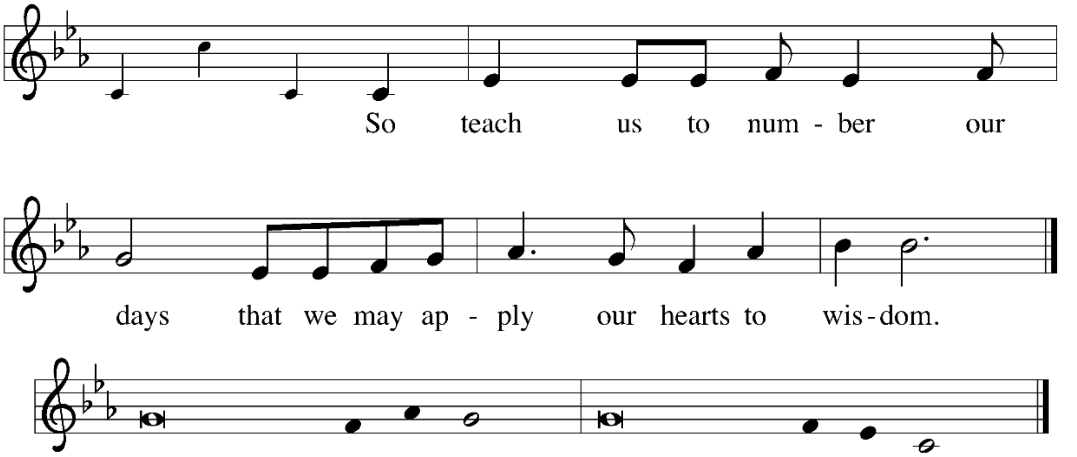
15 That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

17 I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust
and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed,
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

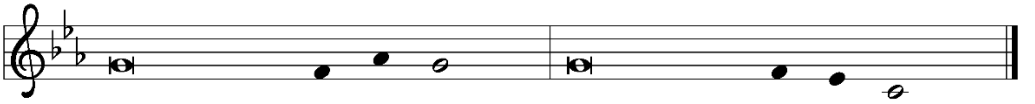
R: Word of God; Word of Life.
A: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 90:1-12 *(sung responsively)*

The accompanist will introduce the refrain, followed by the Cantor singing it once. Then the congregation sings it with the Cantor. R indicates repeat the refrain.



1 Lord, you have | been our refuge
from one generation | to another.
2 **Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land**
and the | earth were born,
from age to age | you are God.
3 You turn us back to the | dust and say,
"Turn back, O child- | ren of earth."
4 **For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when | it is past**
and like a watch | in the night; R
5 you sweep them away | like a dream,
they fade away suddenly | like the grass:
6 **in the morning it is | green and flourishes;**
in the evening it is dried | up and withered.
7 For we are consumed | by your anger;
we are afraid because | of your wrath.
8 **Our iniquities you have | set before you,**
and our secret sins in the light | of your countenance. R
9 When you are angry, all our | days are gone;
we bring our years to an end | like a sigh.



10 **The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength | even eighty;**
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly
and | we are gone.
11 Who regards the power | of your wrath?
Who rightly fears your | indignation?
12 **So teach us to num- | ber our days**
that we may apply our | hearts to wisdom. R

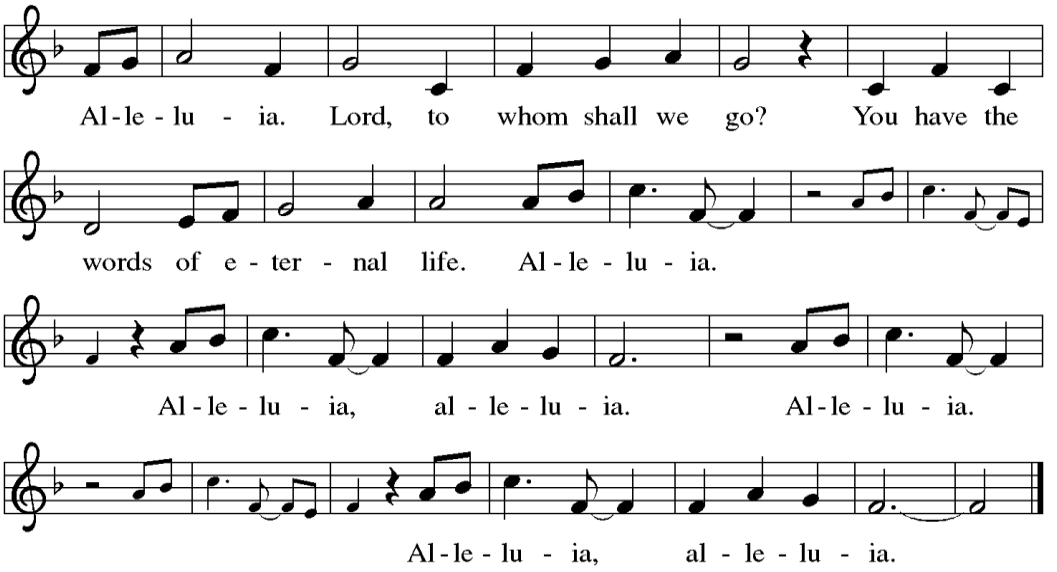
The Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need
to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of
the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 When they say, “There is peace and
security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon
a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are
not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5 for you are all children of
light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

6 So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober,
7 for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night.
8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith
and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has destined us not for
wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us,
so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. 11 Therefore
encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

R: Word of God; Word of Life.
A: Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation *ELW Setting 8*



P: The Holy Gospel according to St Matthew.

A: Glory to you, O Lord.

*The Reading of the Gospel Matthew 25:14-30

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned
his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to
another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At
once 16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and
made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made
two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a
hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with
them. 20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five
more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made
five more talents.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave;
you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things;

enter into the joy of your master.’ 22 And the one with the two talents also came
forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two
more talents.’ 23 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave;
you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things;
enter into the joy of your master.’

24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying,
‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and
gathering where you did not scatter, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your
talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ 26 But his master replied, ‘You
wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and
gather where I did not scatter? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with
the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with
interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.
29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance,
but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 30 As for
this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping
and gnashing of teeth.’ ”

P: The Gospel of our Lord.
A: Praise to you, O Christ.

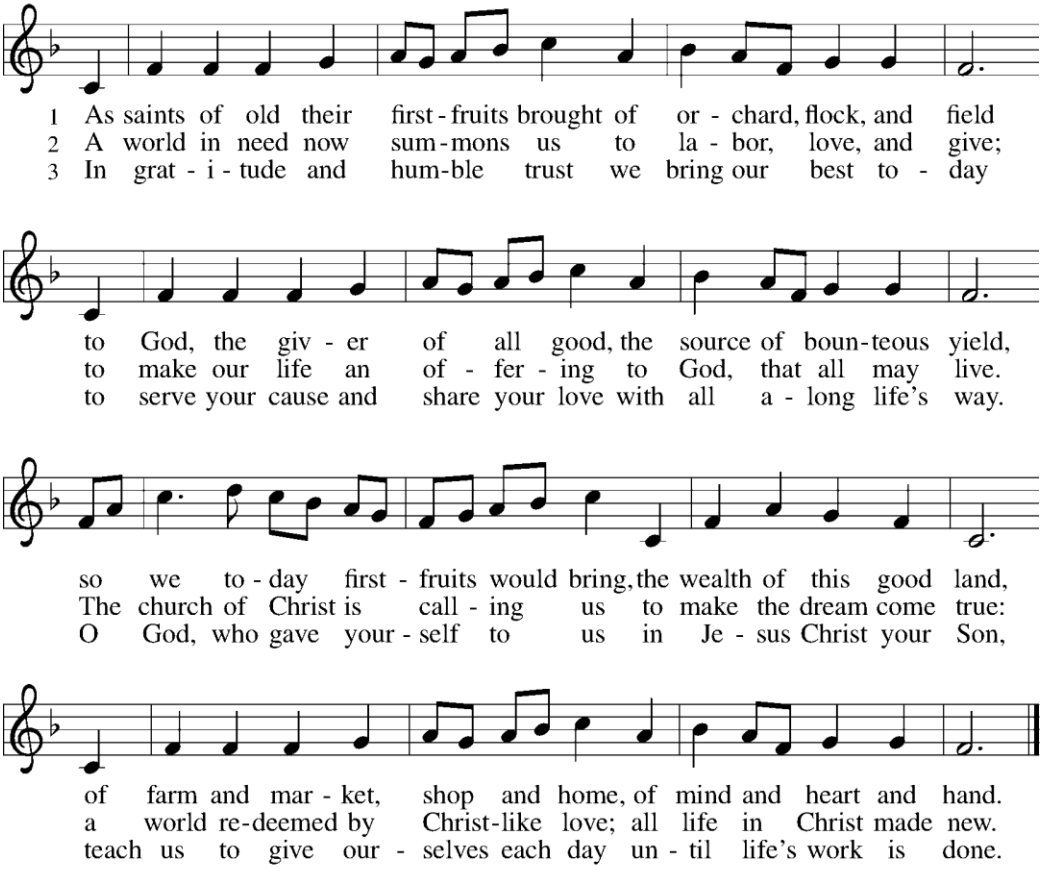
The Sermon

We observe a brief silence for reflection



*Hymn Of The Day *ELW 695*

As Saints of Old



Text: Frank von Christierson, 1900–1996, alt.
Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune
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*The Apostle's Creed

We now confess our faith with the whole Church in all times and places, using the words of the Apostle's 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.

The Prayers of the People

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You build up the church as a community of faithful witnesses throughout the generations. Enliven the worship, outreach, and service work of our congregations and ministries with the hope of your good news. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

As the nights grow longer in the northern hemisphere, make us mindful of the earth's need for rest. Provide for fallow fields and hibernating animals; show us how to curb human impact on vulnerable lands and species. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Rescue all nations and peoples from violence, displacement, or famine. Disrupt complacency among national and local leaders. Recommit our communities to transforming the systems that divide and oppress into those that empower and unite. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

In your embrace, we find refuge from all trials and troubles. Care for families who are separated or estranged, accompany all undergoing medical procedures or mental health treatment, and reassure any who are ill or despairing.
God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Bless all who serve in congregational leadership: council members, finance committees, volunteer coordinators, and property teams. Encourage healthy stewardship of time, talents, and resources for the mission of the gospel.
God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Hear now, O Lord, the prayers of your servants gathered here, both spoken and silent.

The faithful of every age trust in the hope of your saving grace. In thanksgiving for the ways our ancestors have journeyed before us, we remember all who have entered eternal life in you. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved.
Amen.

*The Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

A: And also with you.

P: Let us offer one another the sign of the Risen Christ's peace.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we welcome all because God welcomes all, and we recognize that our differences are gifts to our communal life.

Anthem *Abide With Me* *Arr: Clayton J. Foor*

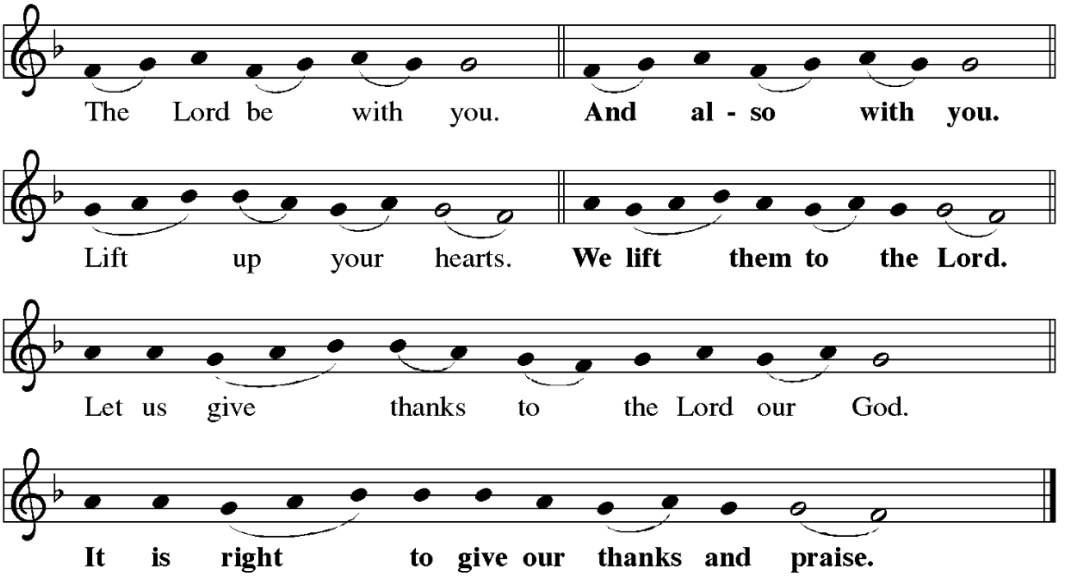
*The Offering Prayer

P: Eternal God,
our time, talents, and treasures are gifts from you.
Receive what we offer,
and all that you entrust to us,
until hungry no more, all the world is fed,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

A: Amen.

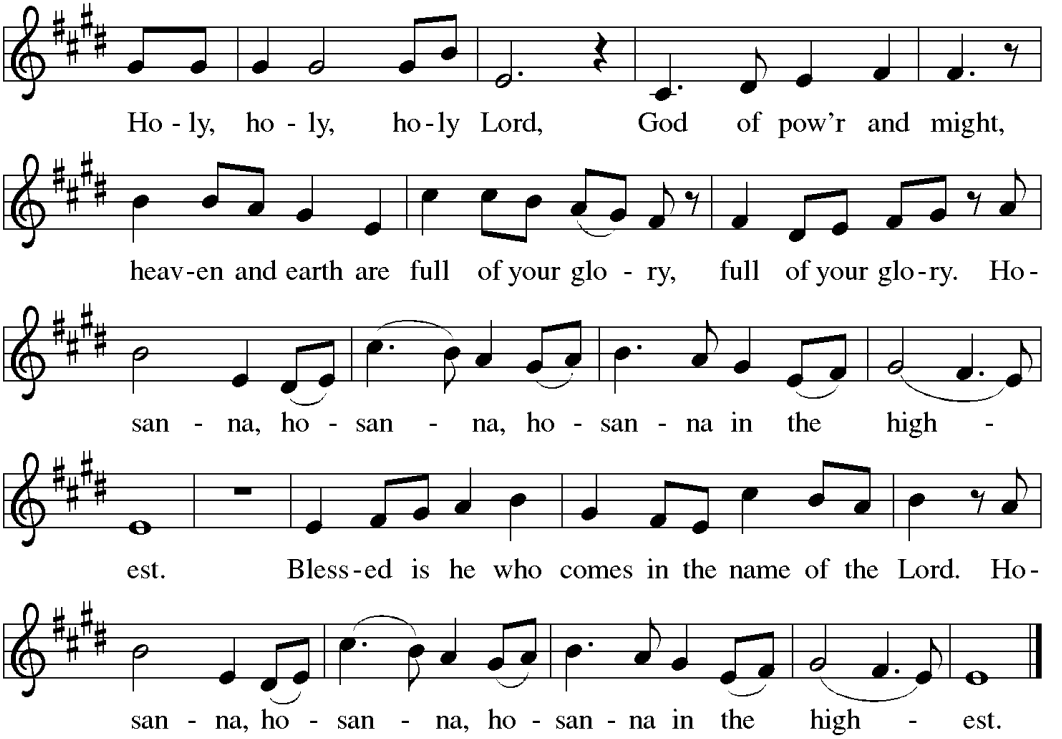
The offering plates will be available on the table in the Narthex.
Please place your offering there, as you leave.

*The Great Thanksgiving



P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*Holy, Holy, Holy *ELW Setting 8*



*Words of Institution

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

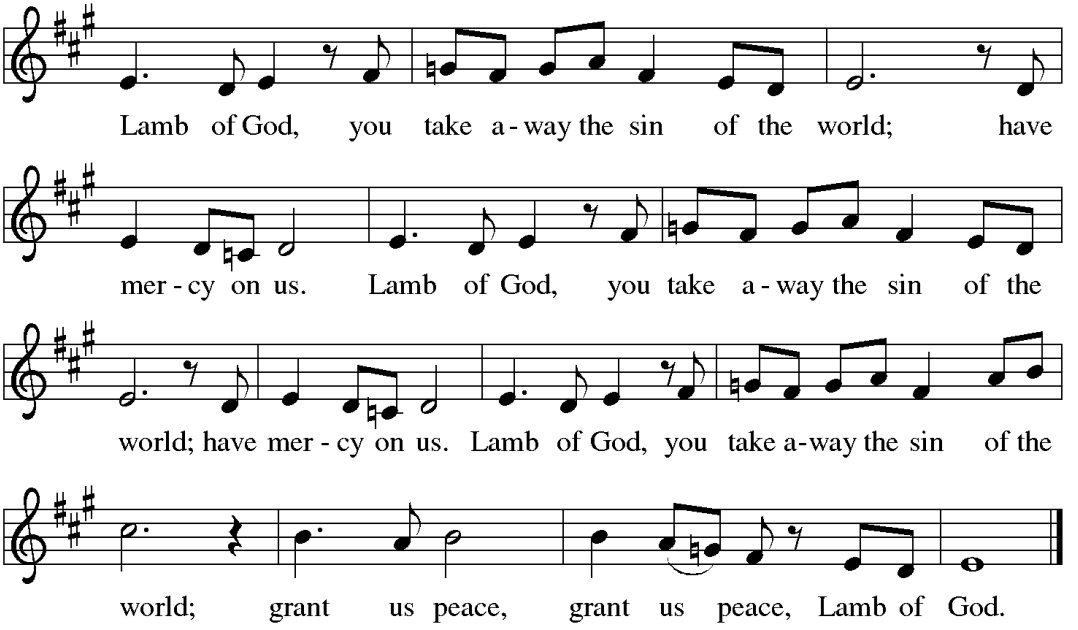
*Lord's Prayer

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

A: 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.

The Celebration of Holy Communion

*Lamb of God *ELW Setting 8*



The Invitation to Communion

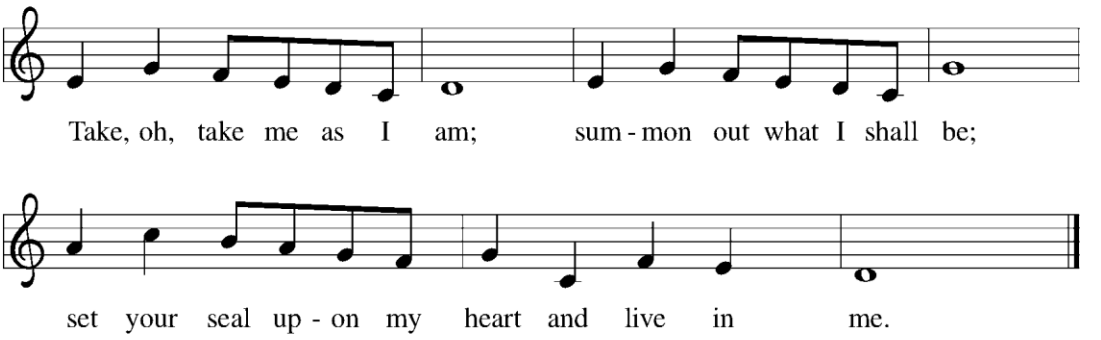
P: In bread and cup the reign of Christ is breaking in.
Come, receive what Christ has prepared.

Please come to the communion rail and kneel (or stand). We will receive communion by intinction. Receive the (all gluten-free) bread, dip it into the wine or white grape juice, then take and eat.

The Communion Music *ELW 814*

**Sing four times*

Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am



Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949
Music: TAKE ME AS I AM, John L. Bell
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*The Communion Blessing

P: God of grace and mercy, in this holy meal you have fed us with wisdom, forgiveness, and grace, and we are full. By your Spirit send us out to become what we have received–new life in Christ–for the world.

A: Amen

*The Prayer After Communion

P: Holy God,
we have received your never-ending mercy in this meal.
You continuously seek the lost,
bind the injured,
and feed your people abundantly.
Now send us out,
awake to your presence,
now and forever.

A: Amen.

Please be seated

Community Updates

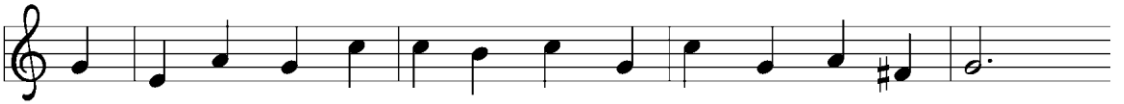
*The Blessing

P: The holy Trinity,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you with wisdom to welcome the reign of God,
today and always.

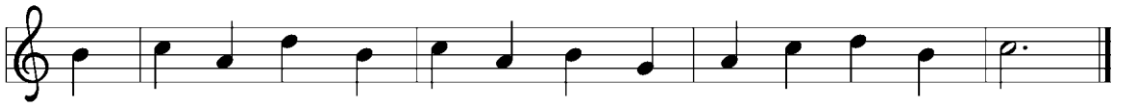
A: Amen.

*The Sending Song *ELW 632*

O God, Our Help in Ages Past



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
still be our guard while troubles last
and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
Music: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1678–1727

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*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Encourage one another.
A: Thanks be to God.

Postlude *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart* *Arr: Clayton J. Foor*

Worship Assistants

Reader & Communion Assistant: *Bob Moody*

Crucifer: *Bruce Torkelson* Usher(s): *Bruce & Nat Torkelson*

Music Director: *Clayton Foor*

Cantor: Jeni Lipe

The Eternal Candle for November is given by Joel & Rona Erickson, to the glory of God in honor of their 53rd Wedding Anniversary & in Thanksgiving for our First Lutheran family.

The Altar Flowers are given by Bruce & Nat Torkelson to the glory of God, with gratitude for their many blessings.

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