Bethlehem Lutheran Church—William Penn
Founded 1860—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2026
10:15 AM



Pastor
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Organist
Ann Sommer

Ushers
Daryl Dahman
Doyle Dahmann
Tyler Gandy
Glenn Foster

Acolyte
Amelia Kettler

Greeter
Billie Weidemann

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
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Bethlehem Lutheran Church · William Penn, Texas
Representing God's Love
To our Congregation,
Community, and the World

Divine Service: Setting III with Holy Communion

Order of Service: *Lutheran Service Book, pp 184-202*

Pre-Service Music

September Bible Verse

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble;
He knows those who take refuge in Him."
Nahum 1:7

Our Mission Statement

Representing God's Love to Our Congregation, Community, and the World!
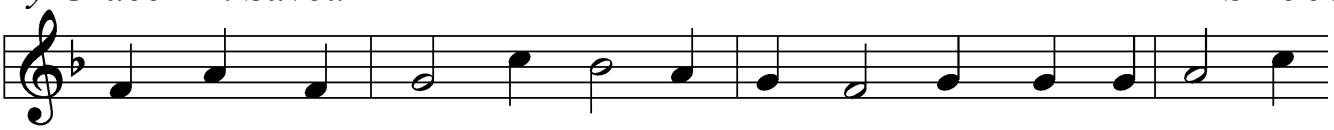


COMMUNION STATEMENT

In Light of 1 Cor. 11:23-26, Bethlehem Lutheran Church maintains the historical practice of "closed" communion in the belief that the Sacrament requires faith in Christ's words that His body and blood are truly present. Furthermore, participation in the Sacrament is a sign of our unity in the faith with all those who join us at the altar. *For that reason, we ask that those visitors desiring to commune be members in good standing of a congregation of the LCMS and speak to the pastor or an elder before the beginning of the service*. Our denial of admission to those who are members of another confession is not a judgment upon their faith but a recognition that we hold to different confessions concerning God, salvation, and the Sacrament itself. Such individuals are invited to speak with the pastor following the service.

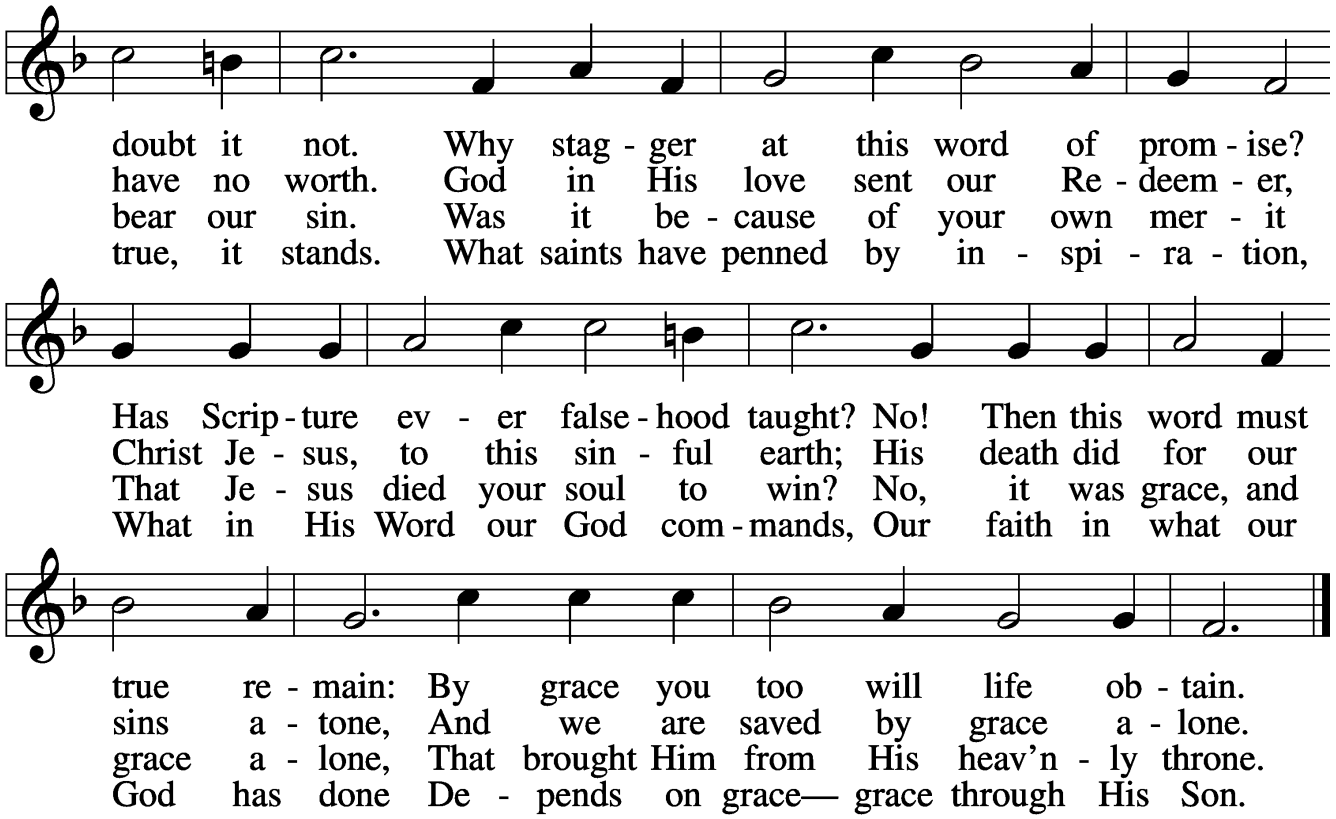
Ringing of the Church Bell

OPENING HYMN

By Grace I'm Saved *LSB 566*



1 By grace I'm saved, grace free and bound-less; My soul, be-lieve and
2 By grace! None dare lay claim to mer - it; Our works and con - duct
3 By grace God's Son, our on - ly Sav - ior, Came down to earth to
4 By grace! This ground of faith is cer - tain; As long as God is



5 By grace to timid hearts that tremble,
In tribulation's furnace tried,
By grace, in spite of fear and trouble,
The Father's heart is open wide.
Where could I help and strength secure
If grace were not my anchor sure?

6 By grace! On this I'll rest when dying;
In Jesus' promise I rejoice;
For though I know my heart's condition,
I also know my Savior's voice.
My heart is glad, all grief has flown
Since I am saved by grace alone.

Text: Christian Ludwig Scheidt, 1709–61; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt. Tune: Cornelius Heinrich Dretzel, 1697–1775. Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

The sign of the ✠ Cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

INVOCATION *LSB 184*

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *LSB 184*

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C who made heaven and earth.
P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

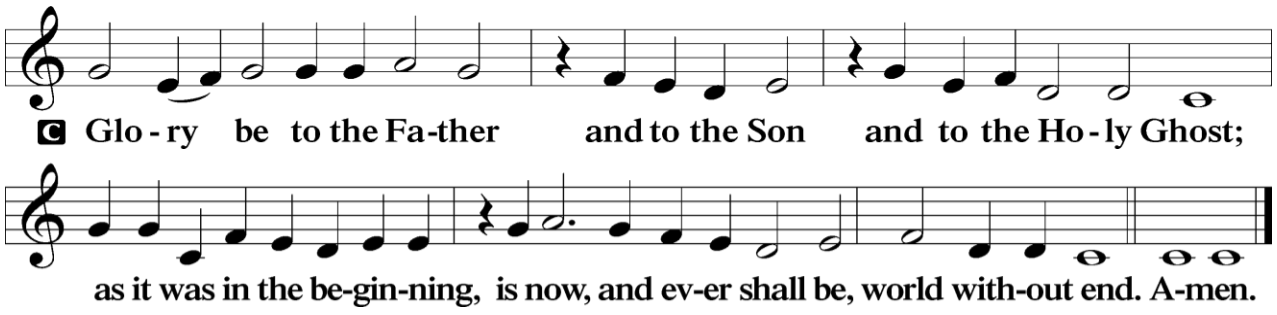
P O almighty God, merciful Father,
C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.
P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

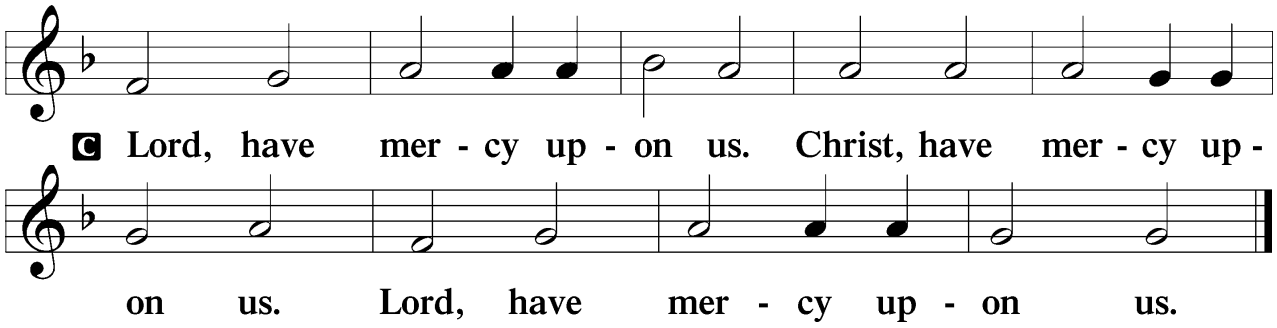
INTROIT *Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16; antiphon: v. 17*

I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of the LORD.
What shall I render to the LORD
for all his benefits to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD.
Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his saints.
O LORD, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the son of your maidservant. You have loosed my bonds.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.
I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of the LORD.

GLORIA PATRI *LSB 186*



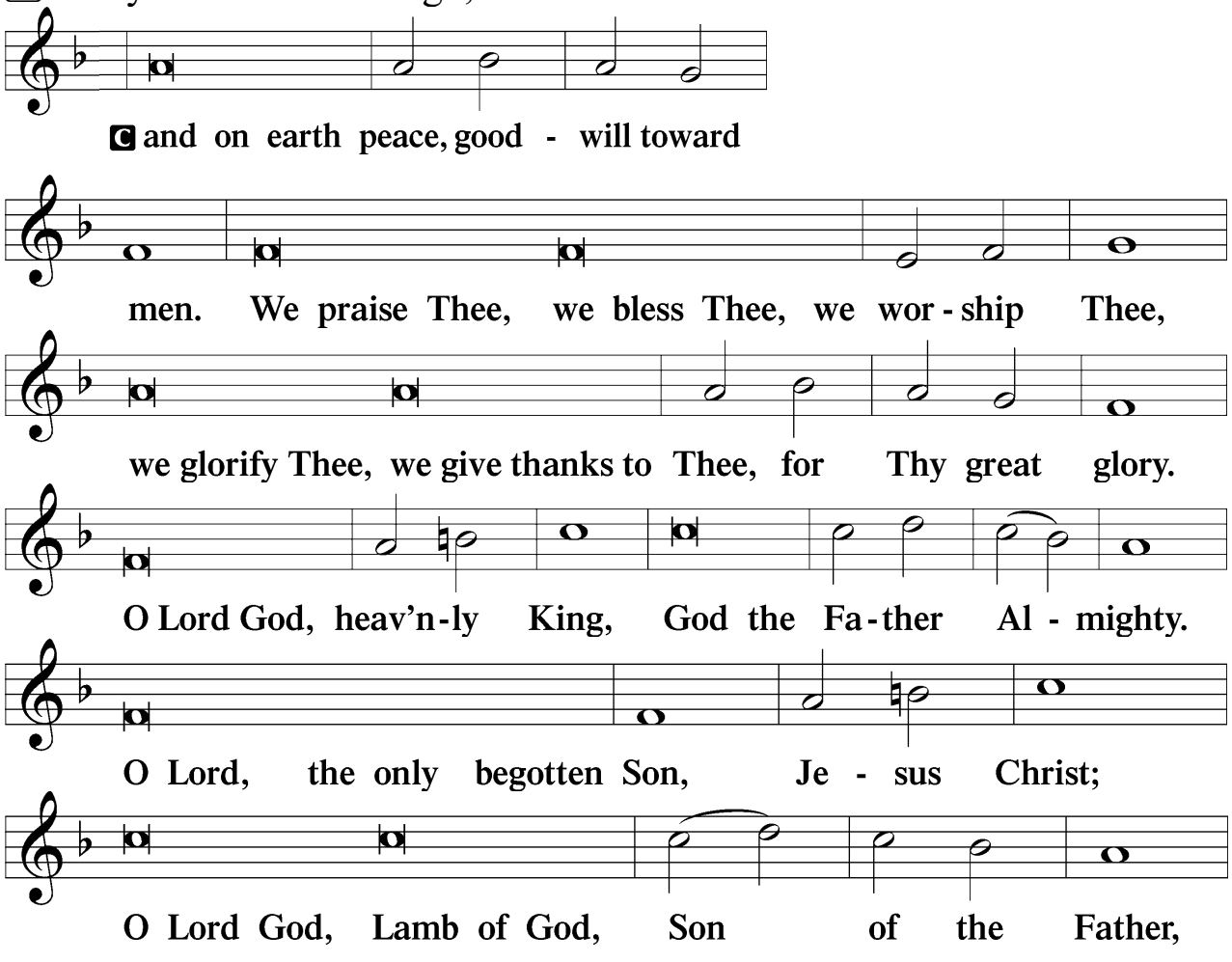
KYRIE *LSB 186*

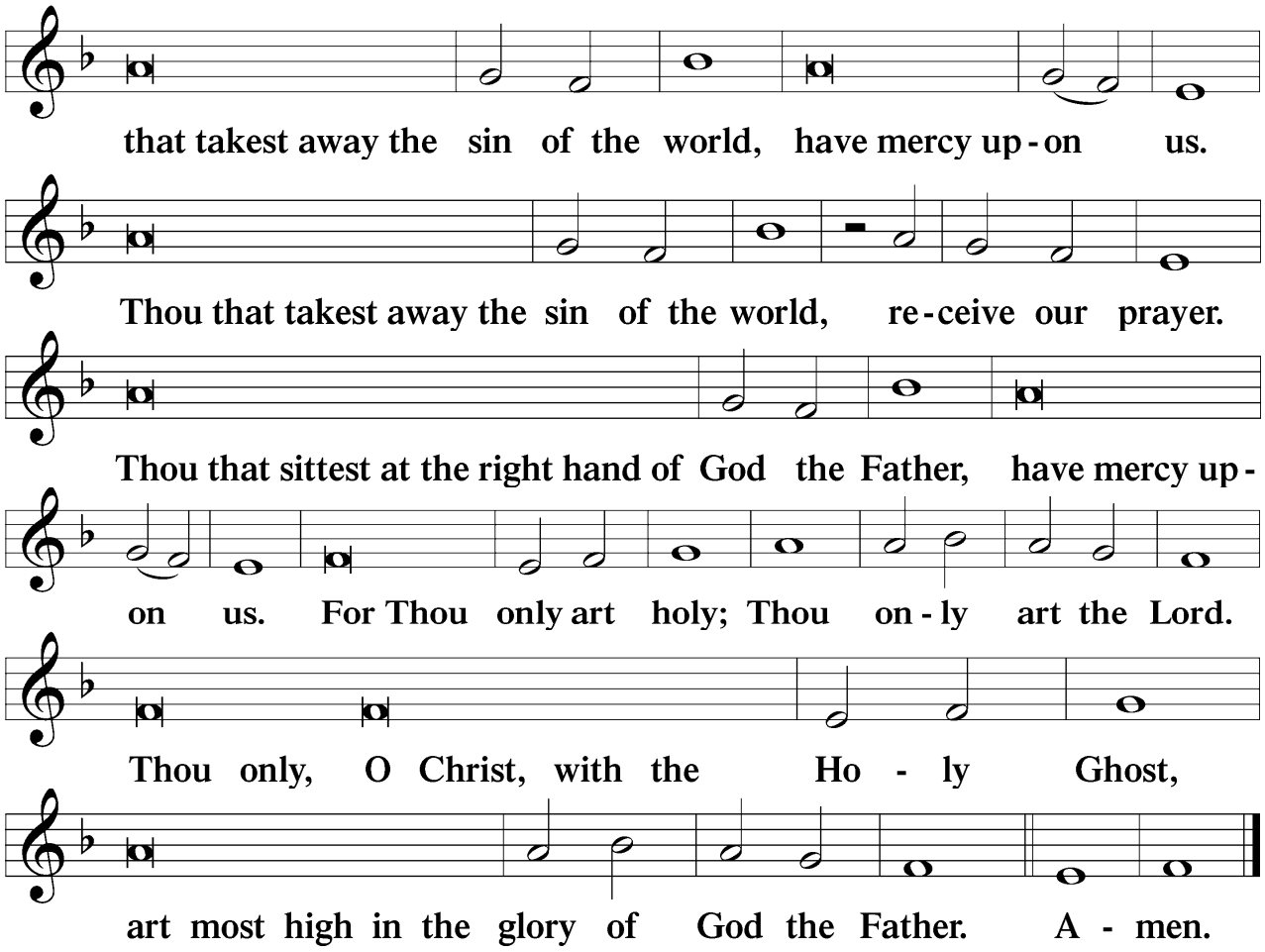


HYMN OF PRAISE

Gloria in Excelsis *LSB 187*
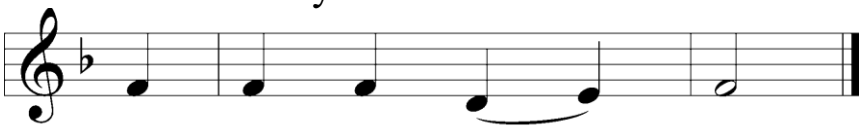
P Glory be to God on High,





SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.



P Let us pray.

C Lord God, heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before You relying on anything we have done, help us trust in Your abiding grace and live according to Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 55:6-9*

6"Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call upon him while he is near;
7let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
8For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.
9For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts."

P This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *Psalm 34:9, 19, alt.*

Fear the LORD, you his saints,
for those who fear him lack nothing!
Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

EPISTLE *Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30*

12I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. 14And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. . . .

19for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. 21For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, 26so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

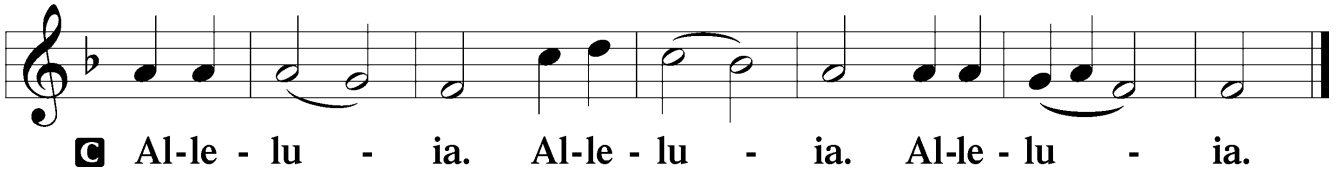
[27]Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, [28]and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. [29]For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, [30]engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

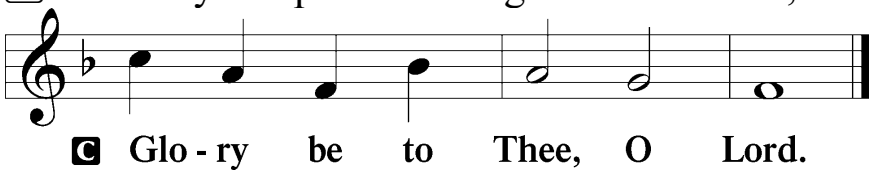
Stand

COMMON ALLELUIA *LSB 190*



HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 20:1-16*
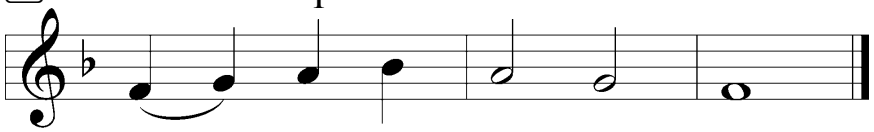
P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twentieth chapter.



[1][Jesus said:] "The kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. [2]After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. [3]And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, [4]and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' [5]So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. [6]And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' [7]They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' [8]And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' [9]And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. [10]Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius.

[11]And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, [12]saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ [13]But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? [14]Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. [15]Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ [16]So the last will be first, and the first last.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



NICENE CREED *LSB 191*

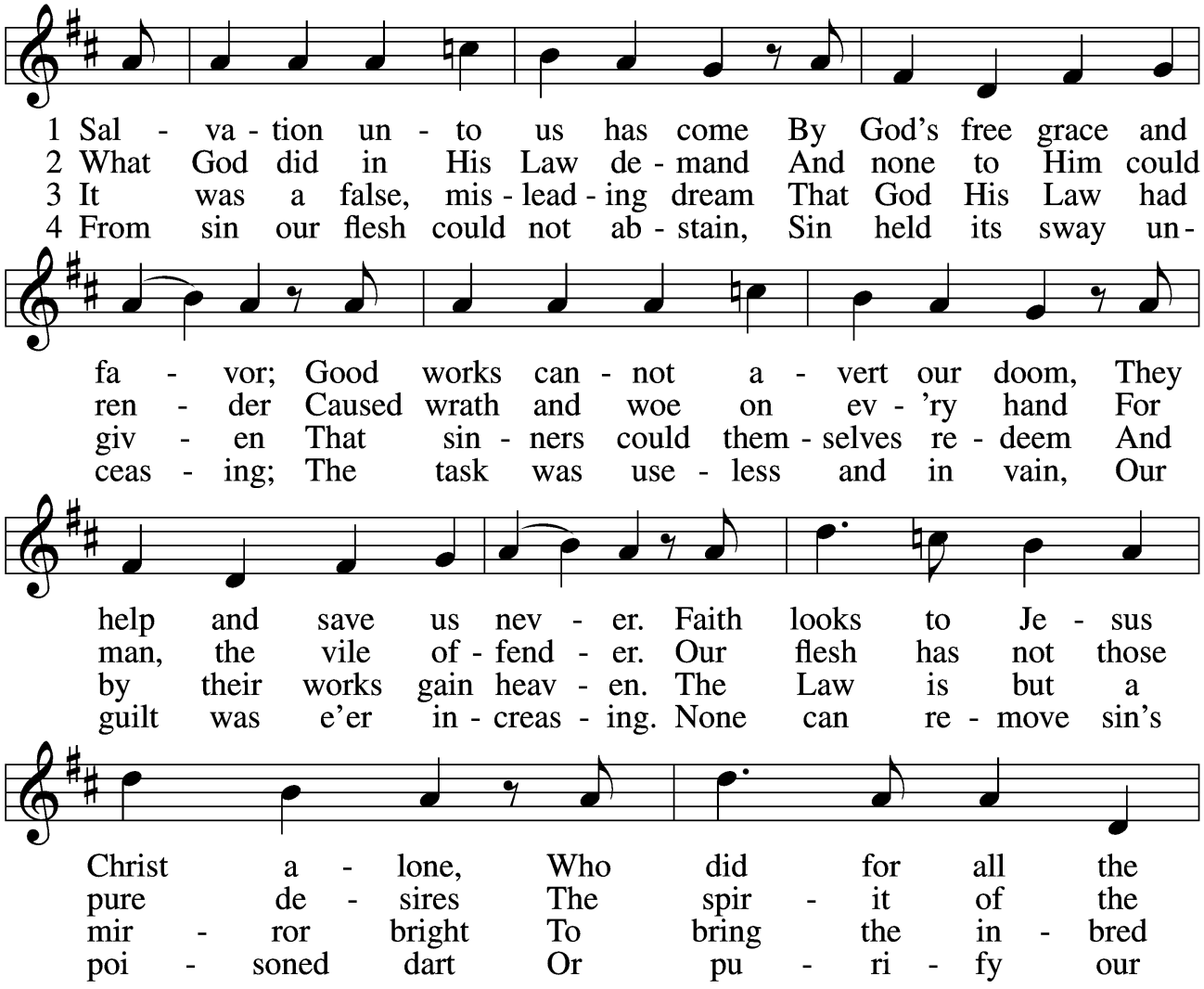
C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

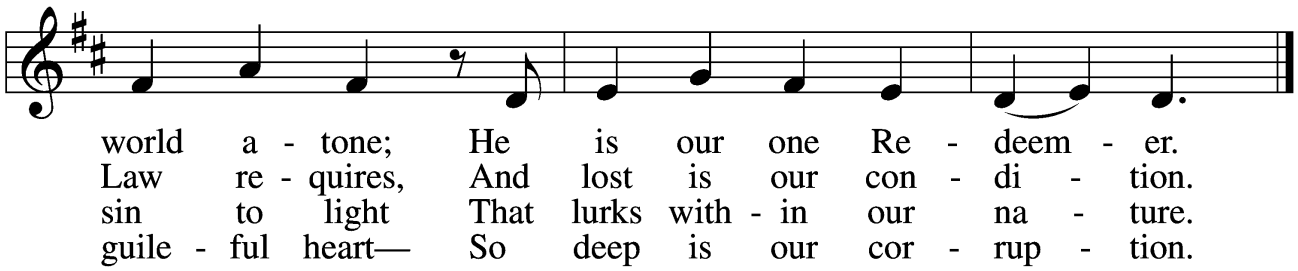
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY

Salvation unto Us Has Come *LSB 555*





5 Yet as the Law must be fulfilled
Or we must die despairing,
Christ came and has God's anger stilled,
Our human nature sharing.
He has for us the Law obeyed
And thus the Father's vengeance stayed
Which over us impended.

6 Since Christ has full atonement made
And brought to us salvation,
Each Christian therefore may be glad
And build on this foundation.
Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead,
Your death is now my life indeed,
For You have paid my ransom.

7 Let me not doubt, but truly see
Your Word cannot be broken;
Your call rings out, "Come unto Me!"
No falsehood have You spoken.
Baptized into Your precious name,
My faith cannot be put to shame,
And I shall never perish.

8 The Law reveals the guilt of sin
And makes us conscience-stricken;
But then the Gospel enters in
The sinful soul to quicken.
Come to the cross, trust Christ, and live;
The Law no peace can ever give,
No comfort and no blessing.

9 Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
For faith alone can justify;
Works serve our neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living.

△10 All blessing, honor, thanks, and praise
To Father, Son, and Spirit,
The God who saved us by His grace;
All glory to His merit.
O triune God in heav'n above,
You have revealed Your saving love;
Your blessèd name we hallow.

Text: Paul Speratus, 1484–1551; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt. Tune: Etlich Cristlich lider, 524, Wittenberg Text and tune: Public domain
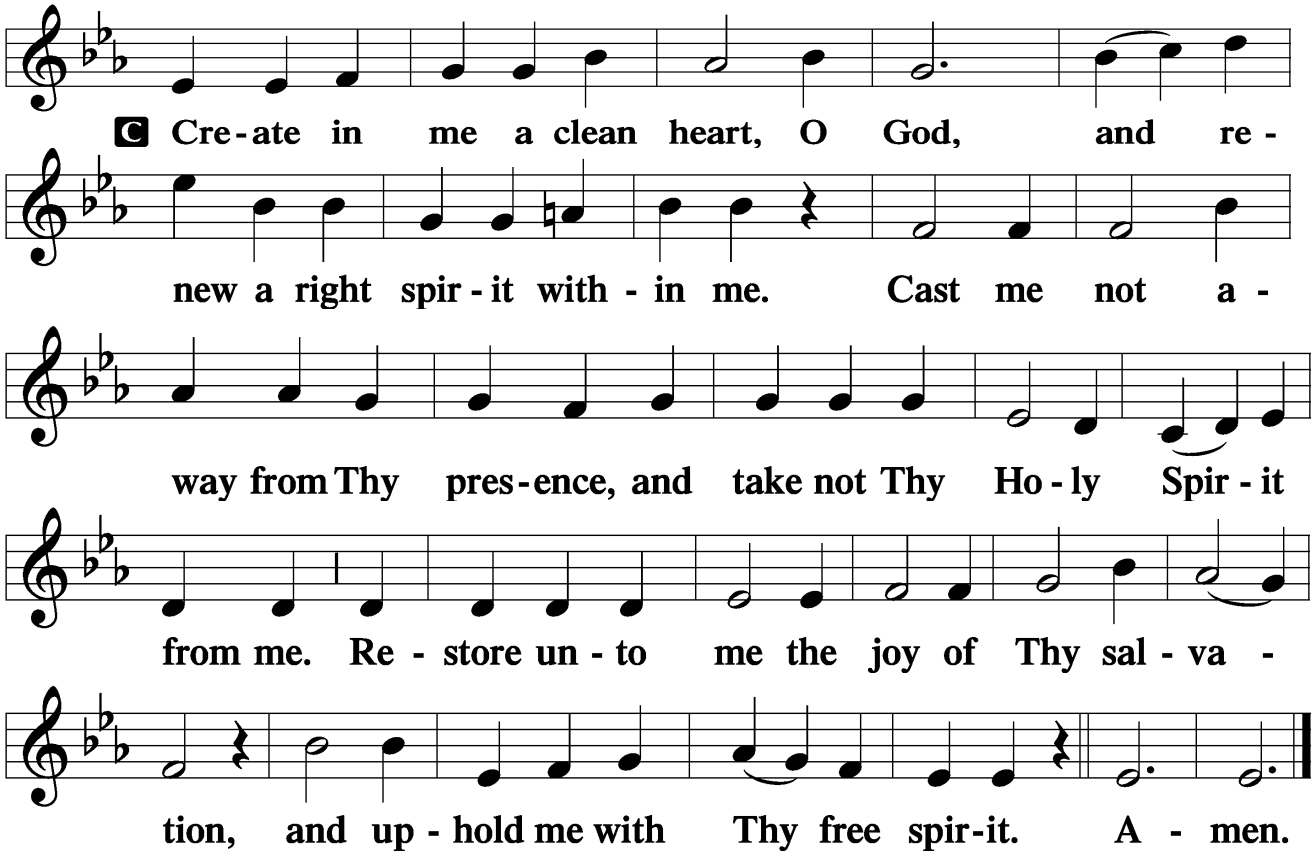
SERMON

The Scandal of Grace

Matthew 20:1-16

Stand

OFFERTORY *LSB 192*



OFFERING PRAYER

Sit

OFFERING
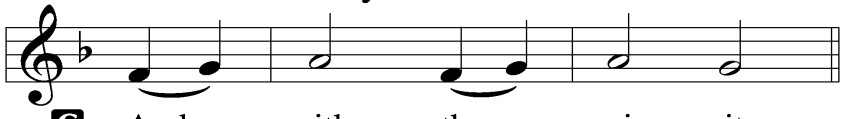
Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

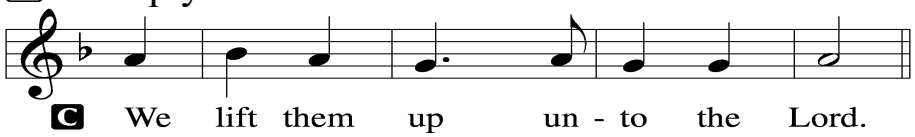
SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE *LSB 194*

P The Lord be with you.



P Lift up your hearts.

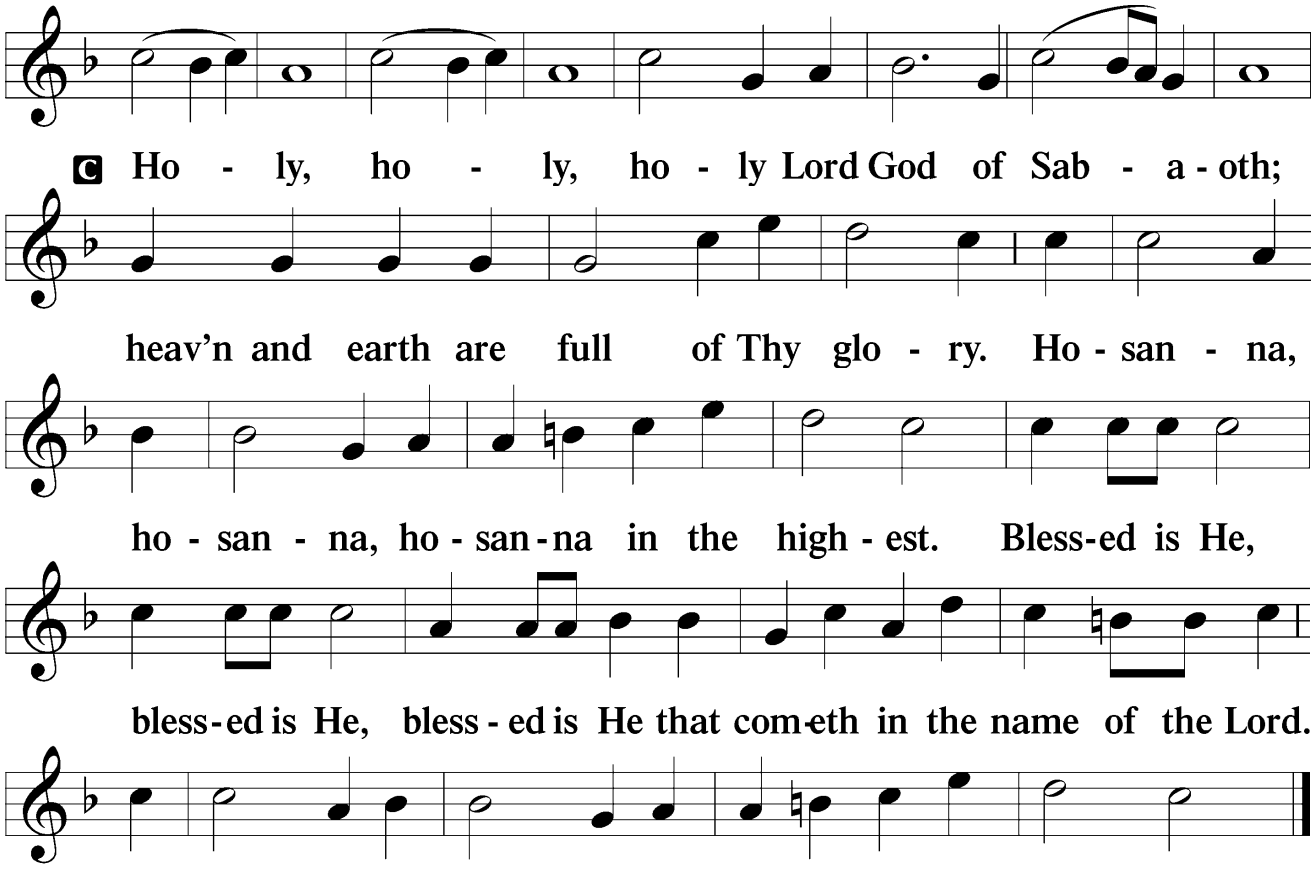


P Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.



P It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this day overcame death and the grave and by His glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

SANCTUS *LSB 195*



THE LORD'S PRAYER *LSB 196*

C 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.
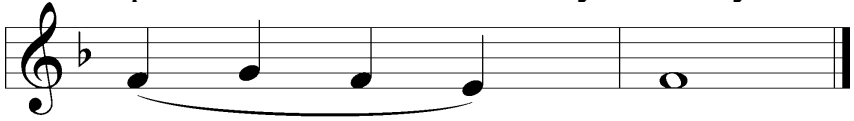
THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *LSB 197*

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✢ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✢ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

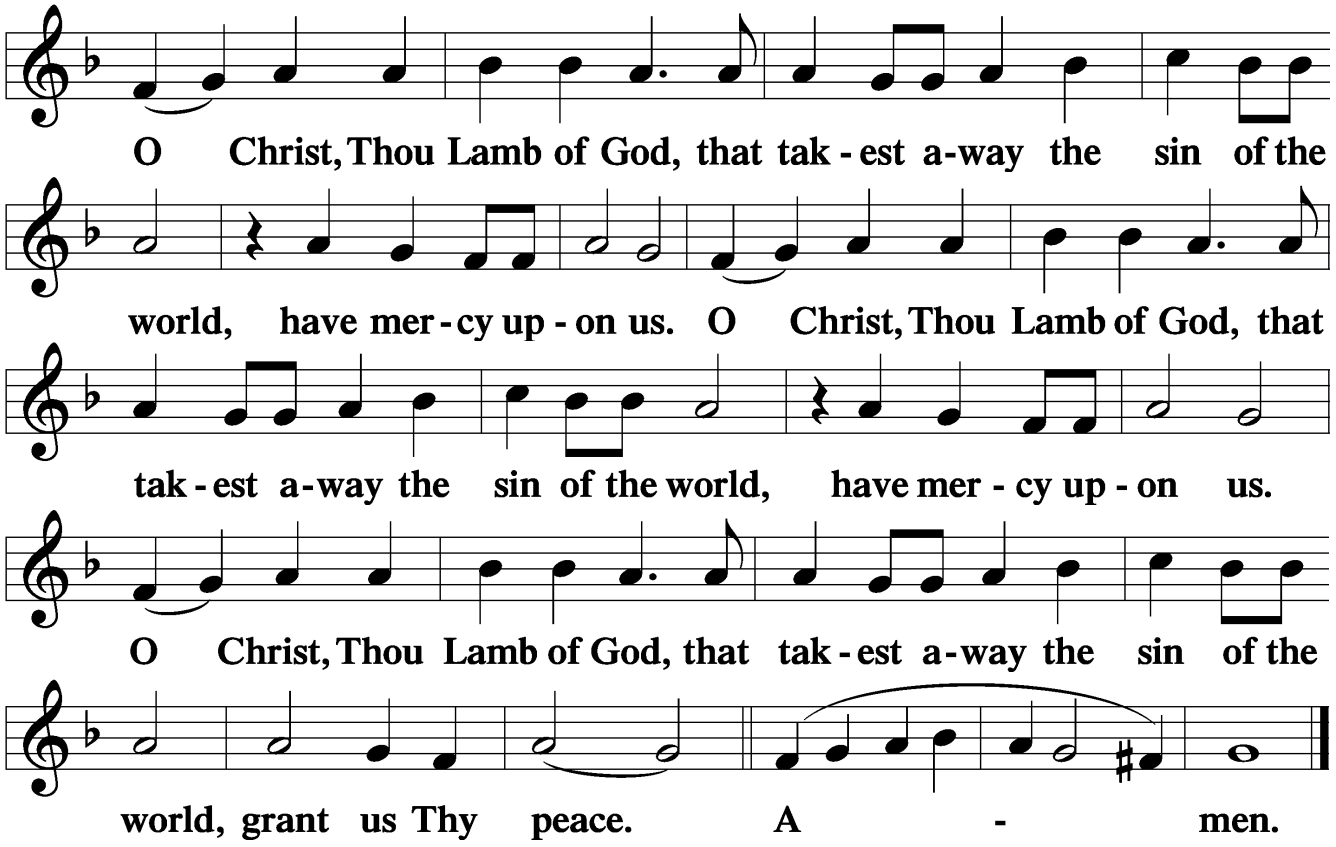
PAX DOMINI *LSB 197*

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C A - men.

AGNUS DEI *LSB 198*

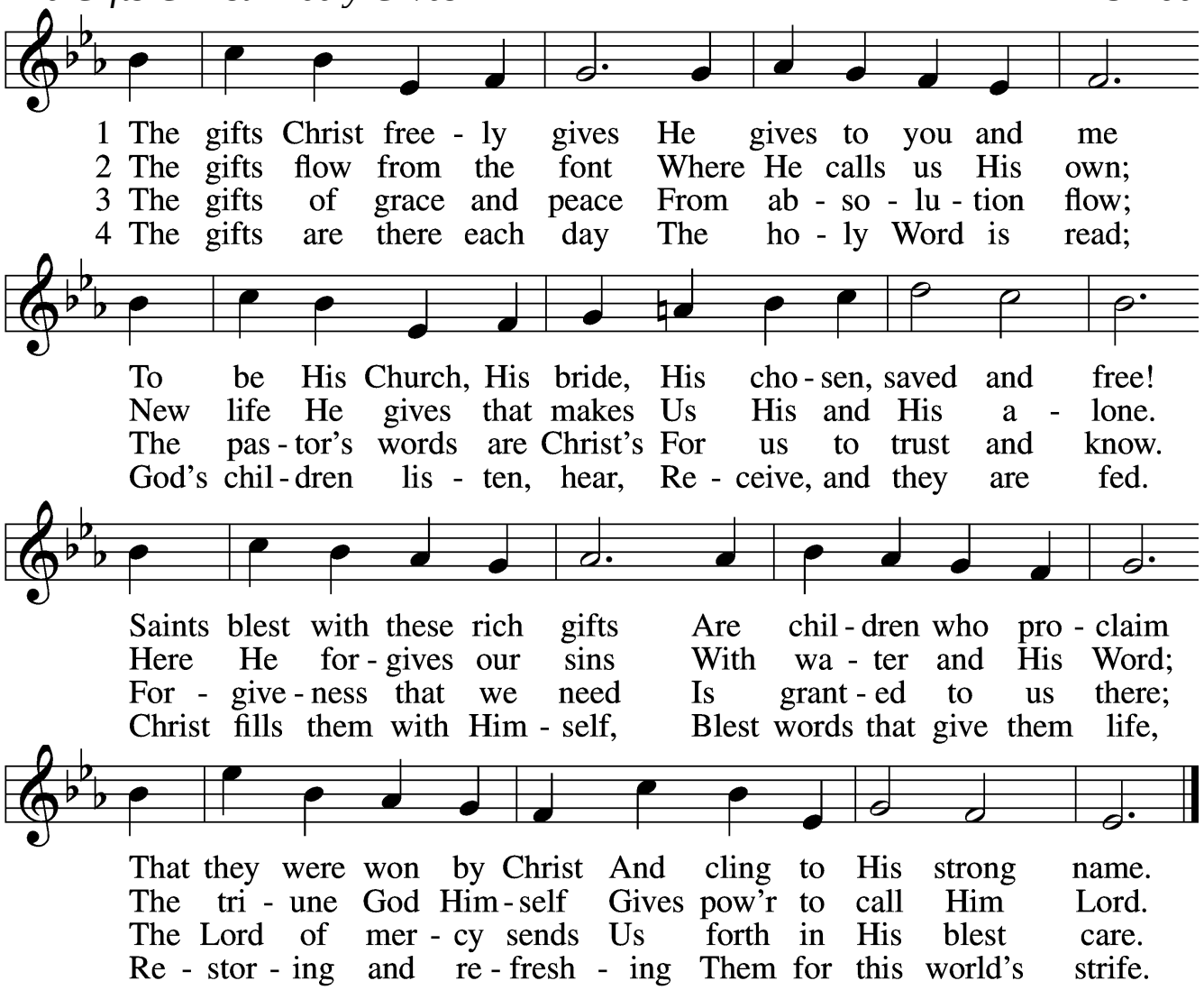


Sit



DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

The Gifts Christ Freely Gives *LSB 602*
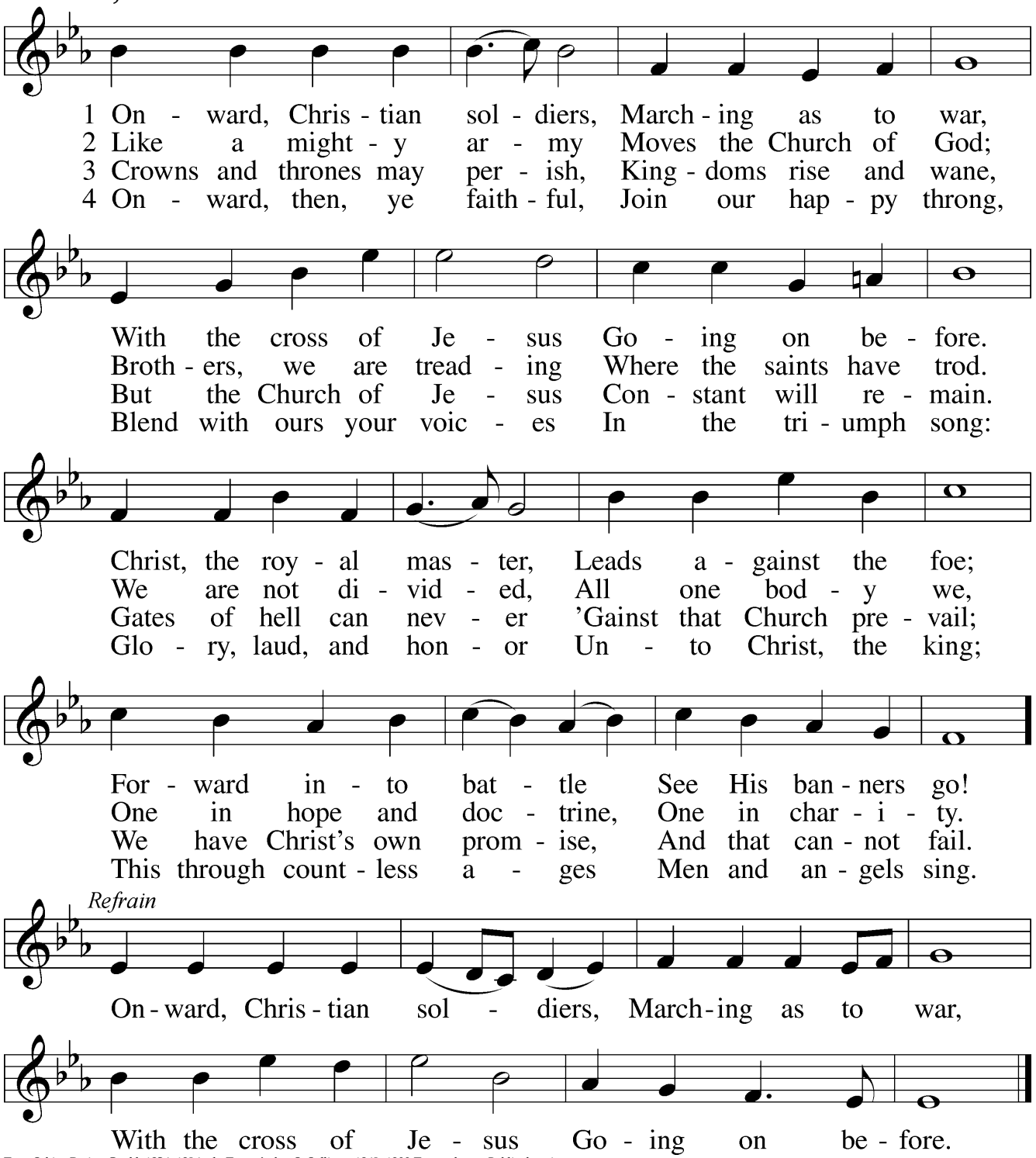


5 The gifts are in the feast,
Gifts far more than we see;
Beneath the bread and wine
Is food from Calvary.
The body and the blood
Remove our ev'ry sin;
We leave His presence in
His peace, renewed again.

6 All glory to the One
Who lavishes such love;
The triune God in love
Assures our life above.
His means of grace for us
Are gifts He loves to give;
All thanks and praise for His
Great love by which we live!

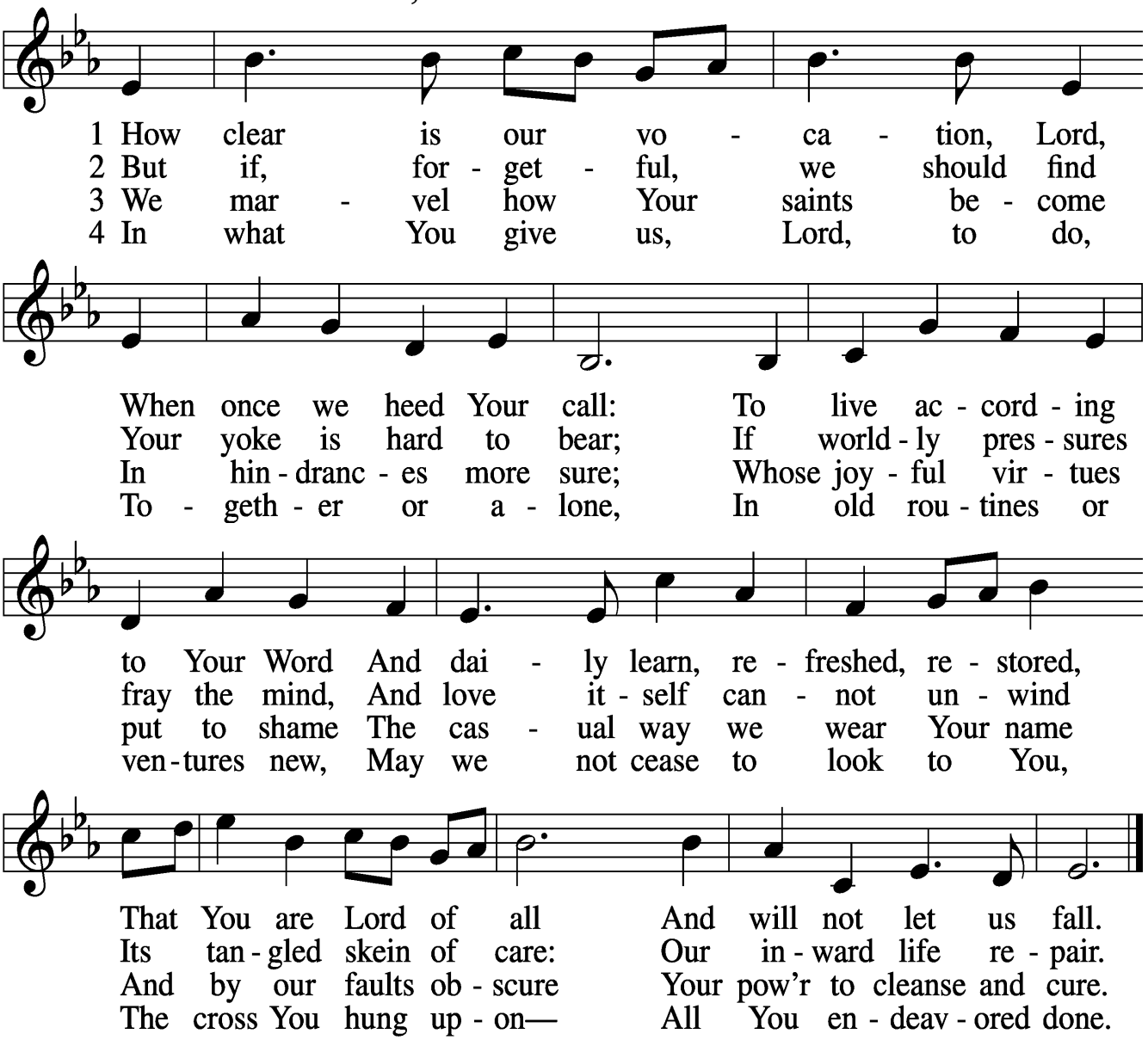
Text: Richard C. Resch, 1947. Tune: Charles J. Dale, 1842–1912, alt.. Text: © 2001 Richard C. Resch. Used by permission: LSB. Hymn License no. 110005013. Tune: Public domain

Onward, Christian Soldiers *LSB 662*



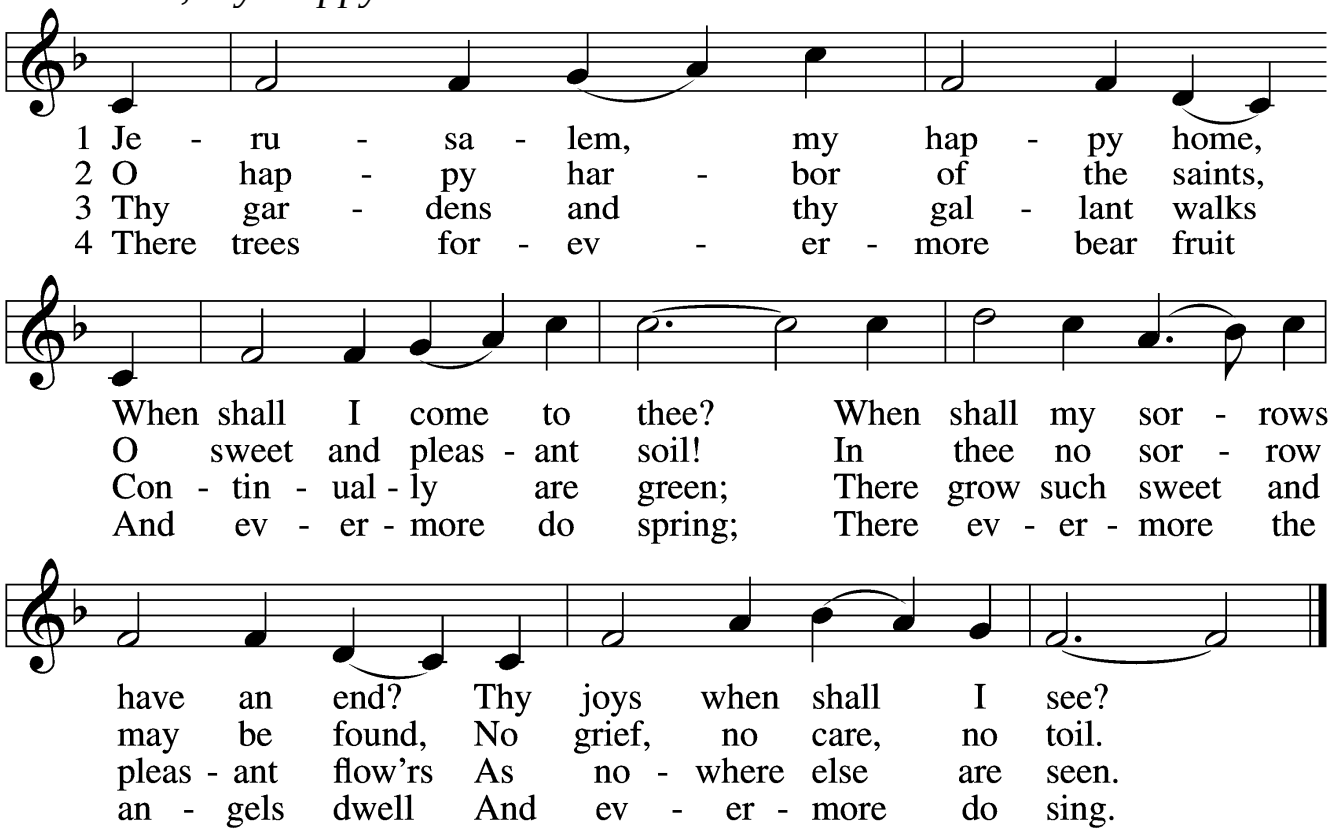
Text: Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924, alt. Tune: Arthur S. Sullivan, 1842–1900 Text and tune: Public domain

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord *LSB 853*



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Jerusalem, My Happy Home *LSB 673*
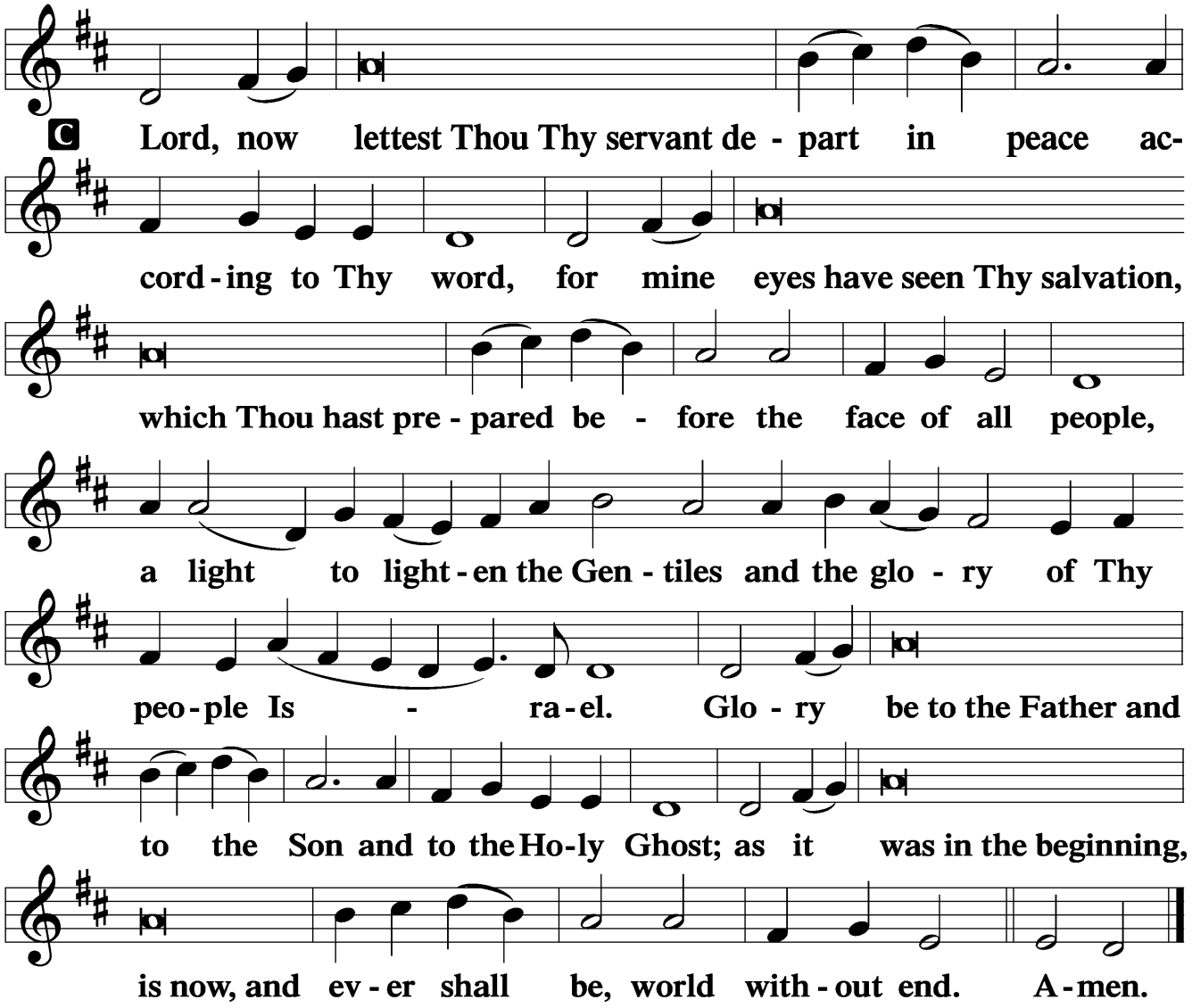


5 Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there
Around my Savior stand;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

6 O Christ, do Thou my soul prepare
For that bright home of love
That I may see Thee and adore
With all Thy saints above.

Tune and text: Public domain

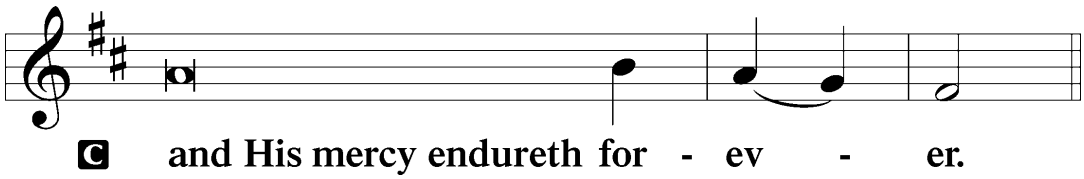
Stand

NUNC DIMITTIS *LSB 199*
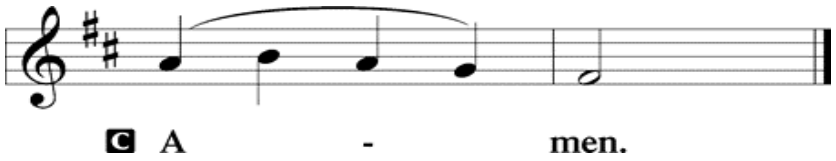


THANKSGIVING *LSB 200*

P O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



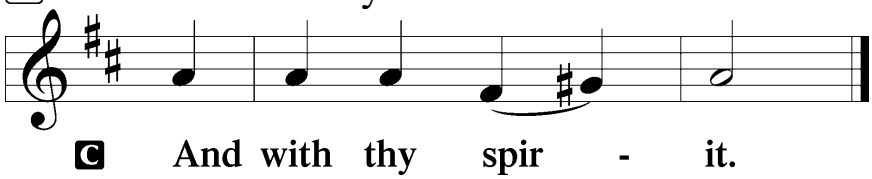
P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
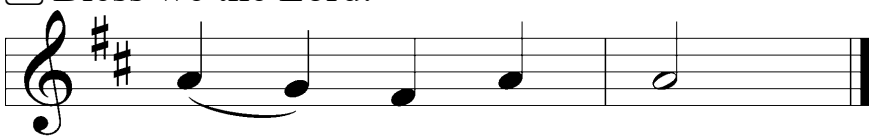


SALUTATION AND BENEDICAMUS *LSB 201*

P The Lord be with you.
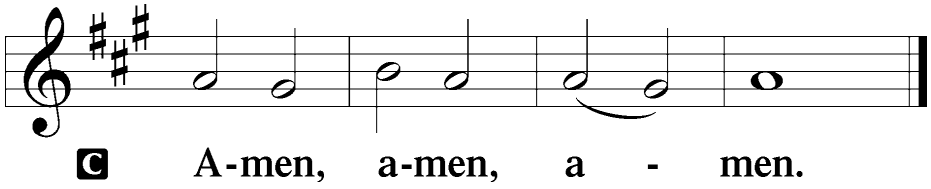


P Bless we the Lord.



BENEDICTION *LSB 202*

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

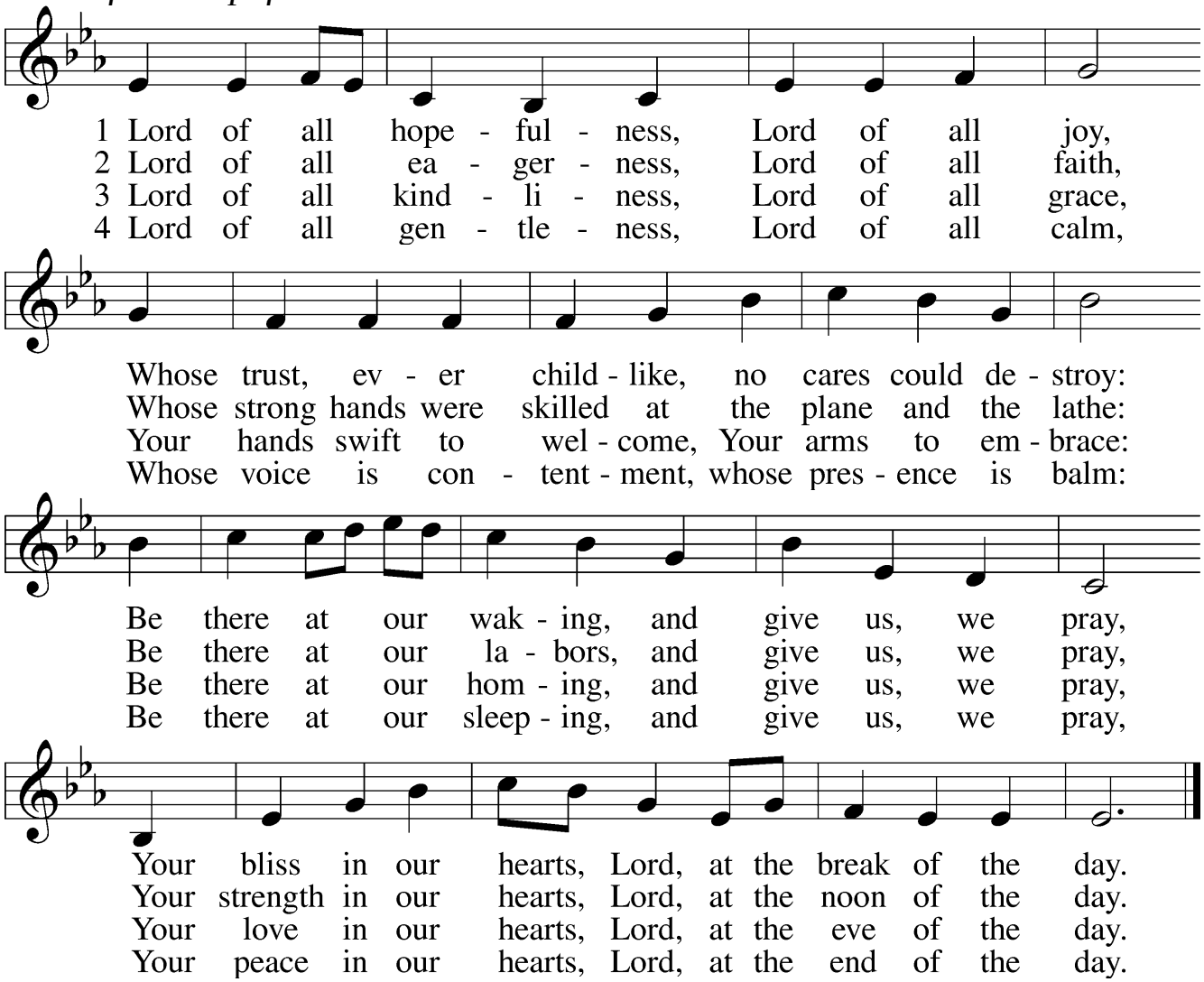


Sit



CLOSING HYMN

Lord of All Hopefulness *LSB 738*



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POSTLUDE

Welcome to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, where we worship in the name of the crucified and risen Lamb of God, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Blessings to you as you worship with us today.

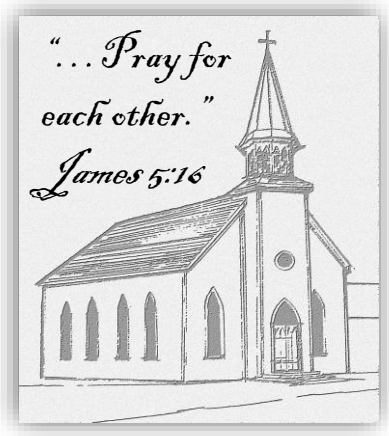


<u>Congregation</u>: strength and healing for Mr. Thomas Scholz (Amy Schroeder's uncle) as he recovers from a broken vertebra; strength and healing for Donna Hinze as she goes through cancer treatment; healing for Terry and Becky Lueckemeyer; for Tom Hayden's recovery after surgery and continued healing; for Adeline Platt's health; and Deloris Griffin; for our shut-in members: Renee Brinkmann, Elvera Schroeder, and others who are unable to come to church.

<u>Community</u>: blessings on William and Skylar Killinger as he prepares for his Holy Ministry; for Grace Lutheran School, that they may continue to be a place for the children of our community and congregation to learn and grow in their faith and knowledge of God's world; may our Lord continue to deliver to us favorable weather; for Brenham Pregnancy Center and those whose lives they touched; Faith Mission; families and individuals cared for by Child Protective Services.

<u>World</u>: for all those suffering through war, may God watch over and protect His children, and by His Holy Spirit, may they all come to know Christ as their Savior and thus enjoy eternity with Him, for those who have been led astray into false belief; for those facing crisis pregnancies, that they would find the strength to choose life for their unborn child; for the leaders of the nations, that they would make godly decisions for their people and countries.

<u>Bethlehem at Prayer</u>



Prayer is a vital part of our life together in Christ. To that end, *Bethlehem at Prayer* is a means to encourage more intentional prayer for one another. This is an opportunity for us to support one another in faith, lifting up each household by name before our gracious God. While members can always request prayers at any time, this effort ensures that every family at Bethlehem is prayed for regularly. We invite you to join us in encouragement and intercession, praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ each week.

Please remember these families in your prayers this week:

- Fisher - Laura
- Flisowski – Albin, Brenda
- Klussmann – Corey, Amy, Caleb
- Klussmann – Karlton, Artie
- Schroeder – Shane, Jessy, Emersyn, Nolan
- Schroeder – Elvera

May the Lord bless and strengthen them in faith and life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Week's Schedule

September 20 – September 27



Today: ***Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost***

9:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class

10:15 AM Divine Service: Setting III with Holy Communion
Acolyte: Amelia Kettler
Greeter: Billie Weidemann
Ushers: Daryl Dahman, Doyle Dahmann, Tyler Gandy, Glenn Foster



Wednesday:

4:30 PM Confirmation Class 7th/8th Grades



Thursday:

6:30 PM Ladies Bible Study



Saturday:

8:30 AM Sisters in Christ Bible Study

Next Sunday: ***St. Michael and All Angels (Observed)***



8:00 AM Outdoor Amphitheater Worship

9:00 AM Sunday School & Adult Bible Class

10:15 AM Divine Service: Setting I with Holy Communion
Acolyte: Dillion Nowicki
Crucifer: Norman Krieg
Greeter: Shirley Ashorn
Ushers: Delwin Gaskamp, Kevin Goessler, Keith Huber, Stanley Haferkamp

Serving in September: Elder – Chris Smitherman / **Trustee** – Michael Schroeder

If you have a question or thought concerning spiritual care or the church property, please contact the appropriate elder or trustee.

The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God in honor of the birthdays of Brad and Tricia Molitor.

Updated Choice Dollars® rules

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have designated Thrivent Choice Dollars® have until December 31, 2026 to direct any remaining 2026 Choice Dollars®.



Under the updated program rules, 2026 Choice Dollars® are now available up front so you can direct the entire amount anytime until December 31, 2026.

Key program updates for 2026 are a new timeline and expanded eligibility. Unlike previous years, funds accrued gradually and ran through March 31st of the following year. All 2026 Choice Dollars® became available in full at the beginning of the year and may be directed anytime until December 31, 2026. All Thrivent clients with membership are eligible to participate.

Eligible Thrivent members can assign their Choice Dollars® online via the Thrivent Choice location and portal or by calling 1-800-847-4836 and saying "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. If you have questions, call an area associate @ 979-836-0693.

Grant Funding from Thrivent Financial through its Thrivent Choice Dollar program can help support Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Don't let your designated Thrivent Choice Dollars expire!

LWML Bluebonnet Zone Gathering will be held on **Sunday, October 4th at:**

Bethel Lutheran Church
4221 Boonville RD
Bryan, TX 77802

Attendance cost is $12.00 which includes supper at 5 PM. Check-in time is 1:30 PM. The program is from 2 PM to 5 PM. **Please RSVP no later than Sunday, September 27th by calling Joyce Sutherland at 979-224-1349 or by email throughfaith2016@gmail.com.** The offering to be collected is for Mites Mission Grants.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Members, if you are using Vanco and would like to go back to using envelopes or if you do not want envelopes and want to use Vanco, please let Jackie Kankel know **by October 4th** via cell (979-251-2136) or email cjkan84@gmail.com



St. Paul Lutheran Church in Austin is hosting a Young Adult Conference October 2nd – 4th for ages 18-35. Tickets are $10.00. Join fellow Lutheran young adults for a weekend of fellowship. For more information and/or to register, scan the QR code.



St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Houston is hosting "HAYAL:" a new LCMS group for Houston Area Young Adult Lutherans. They will be promoting multiple events over the next two months and invite all 18+ confessional Lutheran young adults to join them for fun fellowship events. For more information, please visit the websites listed.

Lutheran Education Scholarship Announcement

If you would like to support the LESF and help encourage faithful Lutheran education, you may contribute by placing your gift in the offering plate and designating it for the *Lutheran Education Scholarship Fund*. For more information, please see Pastor Krieg.

Adopt a Seminarian

Through our congregation's participation in the Adopt-a-Seminarian program, we have been blessed to be paired with seminarian William Killinger and his wife, Skylar. We will continue to collect gifts all year long, sending them each quarter. Simply place your gift in the offering plate and designate it for "Seminarian William Killinger".

Sunday School Corner



Our Fall unit begins a deeper study of the Old Testament. The unit begins with creation, and the last lesson falls during the reign of King David. Today in Sunday School, the kids studied the lesson "A Call to Action - Abraham." Abram responds to God's calling as he leaves his idolatry and homeland to follow the true God. Abram takes his wife, Sarai, and nephew Lot as they journey to the land of Canaan. The Lord's appearance prompts Abram to build an altar, celebrating God's promise to give this land to his descendants. To reinforce this lesson for your kids, as a family, discuss: When you're playing follow-the-leader, is there ever a time when you stop following that leader? How do you know whether you can trust the leader? How did Abram know that he could trust God? How do we know that we can trust God? How do we follow Jesus? Who helps us? Is it ever hard to follow Jesus? When? What do you do when it's hard? Also, parents, you can join Pastor Krieg in the adult Sunday School class. See you next week!

Adult Sunday School Lesson



Join us as we begin a new Adult Sunday School study: One Truth, Many Lies

New Adult Bible Study — Join Us!

We invite you to join us as we begin our new Adult Bible Study exploring some of the ancient heresies that challenged the Christian Church in its earliest centuries, and why those same errors still matter today. We'll examine what the Church confessed in response to false teaching and learn how to recognize similar distortions of God's Word today.

Come strengthen your understanding of the truth of Holy Scripture and grow in your ability to recognize and confess the faith once delivered to the saints.

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

September 20 – Pentecost 17 – Thanks be to God for faithful servants of God who have lifted up the truth of God's Word in their times. Believers who recognize the difficulties of this life often yearn to be with the Lord as Paul says, "…for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). So, today, we need not fear death or any enemy, but we can rejoice and stand firm in the Holy Spirit, speaking the truth about God's gifts of life, eternity, and forgiveness. The Lord's Word makes clear that He wants people everywhere to repent and be cleansed of their sins that they may dwell with Him forever (Psalm 27:4).)

Online Giving

You may give tithes and offerings online by clicking the "Give" tab on our website (https://www.bethlehemwmpenn.org/), or just scan the QR code to the left.

Last Week at Bethlehem

Date	Service	Attendance	Gifts in Response to the Gospel
Sept. 13	Sunday School Youth Bible Class Adult Bible Class	16 0 27	$66.00
Sept. 13	Worship Service	115	$5,729.06 Memorials: Mildred Holle $600.00 Clarence Gaskamp $25.00