

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 2026

10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

901 East Stroop Road

Kettering, Ohio 45429

(937) 298-0136

INTRODUCTION

The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

When a Yoke Means Freedom

Today's gospel reading contains iconic words from Jesus: "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30). Jesus offers a yoke to tired listeners and tells them that a yoke will give them rest. The yoke as a means to rest was a strange idea for the disciples, and it ought to sound strange to us as well. The early hearers of this biblical passage would have known a yoke to be a means of engaging the energy of oxen as heavy lifters in the enterprise of farming. Yokes are still employed in our world and they are still a burden and a way of harnessing animals' hard work. The first ancient readers or hearers of Matthew also viewed a yoke as a symbol of obedience to God's law and wisdom. Generally, our instinct is to resist yokes and laws, or at least not immediately connect them with the idea of freedom. Through the image of the yoke, however, Jesus invites us to think of God's law and wisdom as a means to surrender, give way, and accept something graceful and positive—rest, ease, lightness. Jesus reframes the idea of a yoke by telling us that a yoke will help us grow as disciples. The gospel links humility to freedom.

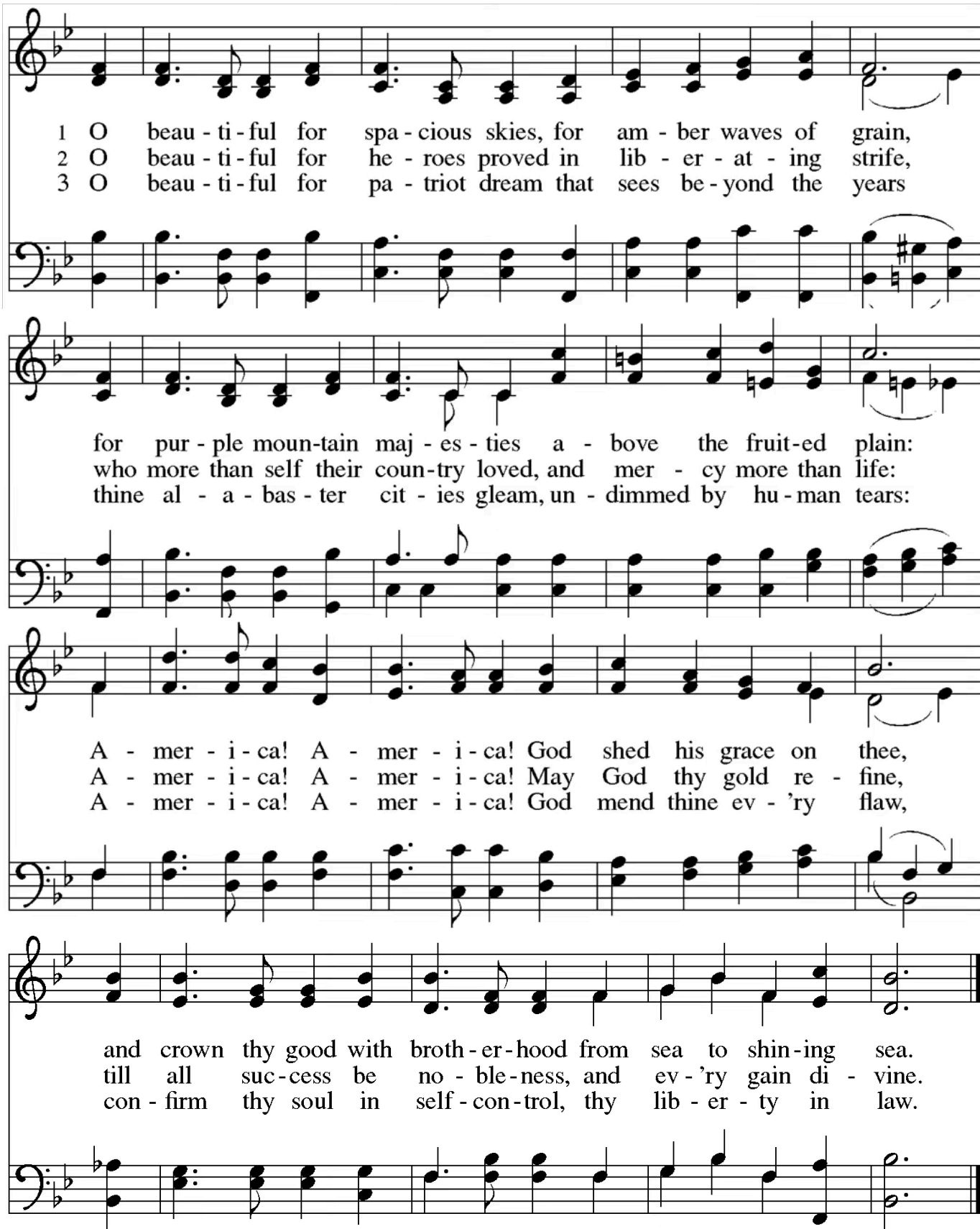
** *indicates to stand as you are able.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

** PRELUDE

“America, the Beautiful”



1 O beau-ti-ful for spa-cious skies, for am-ber waves of grain,
2 O beau-ti-ful for he-roes proved in lib-er-at-ing strife,
3 O beau-ti-ful for pa-triot dream that sees be-yond the years

for pur-ple moun-tain maj-es-ties a-bove the fruit-ed plain:
who more than self their coun-try loved, and mer-cy more than life:
thine al-a-bas-ter cit-ies gleam, un-dimmed by hu-man tears:

A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca! God shed his grace on thee,
A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca! May God thy gold re-fine,
A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca! God mend thine ev-'ry flaw,

and crown thy good with broth-er-hood from sea to shin-ing sea.
till all suc-cess be no-ble-ness, and ev-'ry gain di-vine.
con-firm thy soul in self-con-trol, thy lib-er-ty in law.

**** OPENING LITANY**

God of the Nations, as we gather to worship, we stop to acknowledge this moment in the history of these United States.

As many celebrate the nation's 250 years, we pray that this year and always, you **make us a nation as good as its promise.**

We thank you for the dream the dreamers dreamed.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We thank you for sustaining us through years that asked questions.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We thank you for providing us with years that answer.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We lament the ways the blessings in which we this day rejoice are not enjoyed in common.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We confess that for too many America never was America to them.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

Forgive our failures to ensure liberty and justice for all.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

And so we pray Liberty is crowned with no false patriotic wreath.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We pray earth and heaven ring with Liberty's harmonies.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We pray for the land that never has been yet—and yet must be.

Make us a nation as good as its promise.

We ask this today and always in the one who truly brings liberty & justice for all, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

** GATHERING HYMN

"In Christ There Is No East or West"

1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
2 In Christ shall true hearts ev-'ry-where their high com - mu - nion find;
3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;

but one com - mu - ni - ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser - vice is the gold - en cord close bind - ing hu - man - kind.
All chil - dren of the liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
all Christ - ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

** 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.**

** KYRIE

Leader

O Lord, have . . . mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

All

O Lord, have . . . mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

Leader All

Have mer - cy, O Lord. Have mer - cy, O Lord.

**** CANTICLE OF PRAISE**



1 Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!
2 Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to Christ Je - sus!
3 Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to the Spir - it!



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!
Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to Je - sus Christ!
Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to the Spir - it!



To God be glo-ry for - ev - er! To God be glo-ry for - ev - er!



Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Assisting Minister

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. **You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

WORD

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

FIRST READING

Zechariah 9:9-12

The coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope."

A reading from Zechariah, the ninth chapter.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 145:8-14

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion. (Ps. 145:8)

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**Lord, you are good to all,
and your compassion is over all your works.**

All your works shall praise you, O Lord,
and your faithful ones shall bless you.

**They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your power,**

that all people may know of your power
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures throughout all ages.

You, Lord, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.

The Lord upholds all those who fall
and lifts up those who are bowed down.

SECOND READING

Romans 7:15-25a

Life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence.

A reading from Romans, the seventh chapter.

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. For I know that the good does not dwell within me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do the good lies close at hand, but not the ability. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that, when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

**** GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Christ is ris - en, ris'n in - deed.

**** GOSPEL READING**

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Jesus chides people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist. He thanks God that wisdom and intelligence are not needed to receive what God has to offer.

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus spoke to the crowd saying: "To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

"For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?

No, you will be brought down to Hades.

"For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you."

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The gospel of the Lord.

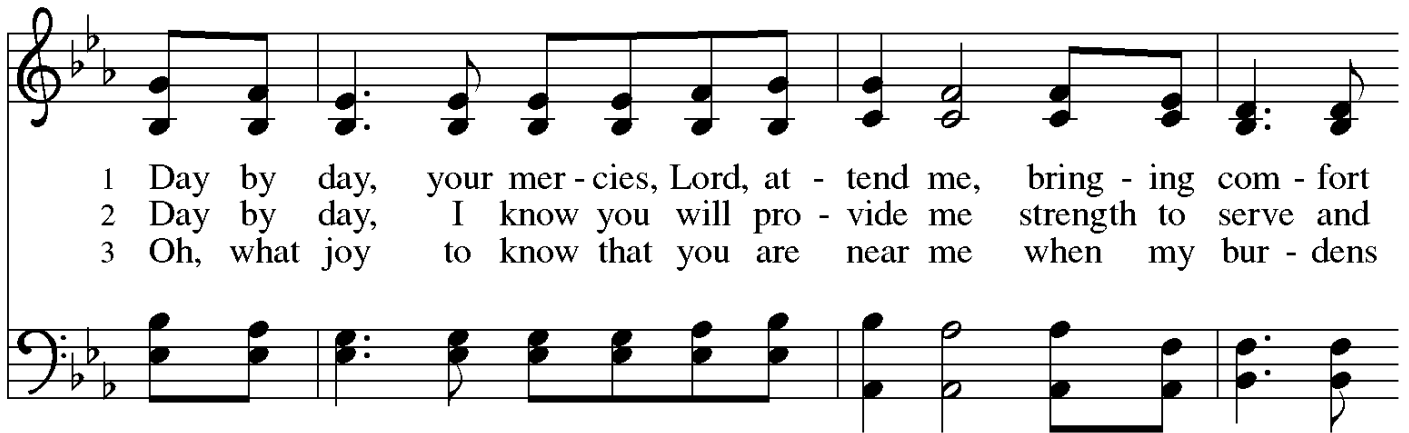
Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

** HYMN OF THE DAY

"Day by Day"



1 Day by day, your mer - cies, Lord, at - tend me, bring - ing com - fort
2 Day by day, I know you will pro - vide me strength to serve and
3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my bur - dens



to my anx-ious soul. Day by day, the bless-ings, Lord, you send me
wis - dom to o - bey; I will seek your lov - ing will to guide me
grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will hear me



draw me near - er to my heav'n-ly goal. Love di - vine, be - yond all
o'er the paths I strug - gle day by day. I will fear no e - vil
when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer. Day by day, no mat - ter

mor - tal mea - sure, brings to naught the bur - dens of my quest; Sav - ior,
 of the mor - row, I will trust in your en - dur - ing grace. Sav - ior,
 what be - tide me, you will hold me ev - er in your hand. Sav - ior,

lead me to the home I trea - sure, where at last I'll find e - ter - nal rest.
 help me bear life's pain and sor - row till in glo - ry I be - hold your face.
 with your pres - ence here to guide me, I will reach at last the prom - ised land.

**** 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended into hell.
 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 OF INTERCESSION**

Assisting Minister

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Each petition concludes:

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY

"American Anthem"

by Gene Scheer; arr. John Purifoy

Lisa Donovan, mezzo-soprano

All we've been given by those who came before,
The dream of a nation where freedom would endure.
The work and prayers of centuries have brought us to this day.
What shall be our legacy? What will our children say?

Let them say of me I was one who believed
In sharing the blessings I received.
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,
America, I gave my best to you.

Each generation from the plains to distant shore
With the gifts that they were given were determined to leave more,
Valiant battles fought together, acts of conscience fought alone,
These are the seeds from which America has grown.

For those who think they have nothing to share,
Who fear in their hearts there is no hero there.
Know each quiet act of dignity is that which fortifies
The seed of a nation that never dies.

OFFERING PRAYER

Assisting Minister

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

** 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 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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly 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.



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



Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of our God.



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



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

**** THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Blessed are you, O God, creator of heaven and earth.
You rescued your covenant people, led them on all their journeys,
and taught them by the prophets.
You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish but may have eternal life.

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.

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit in this meal,
and make us one in this community of faith
and with your people throughout the world.

Glory and praise to you, O God,
Author of life, Word made flesh,
Power of the Most High, now and forever. **Amen.**

**** LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us 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

Heaven has come near.
Come, share in the feast!

For those communing at home or in the pew:

COMMUNION — *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence*

The body of Christ given for you.

The blood of Christ shed for you.

Each person may respond: **Amen.**

Communion Statement ~ We believe that the communion table is not Pr. Mallory's table, Good Shepherd Lutheran's table, or even the ELCA's table. This is God's table. And because this is God's table, we believe that anyone who wishes to receive communion can come forward and do so without condition or qualification.

Please note that we provide a non-alcoholic option (white) for those who do not want to partake of the communion wine (red). We also have gluten-free wafers available for those who need them. Simply let Pr. Mallory and the communion assistants know that you need something different when they come to you.

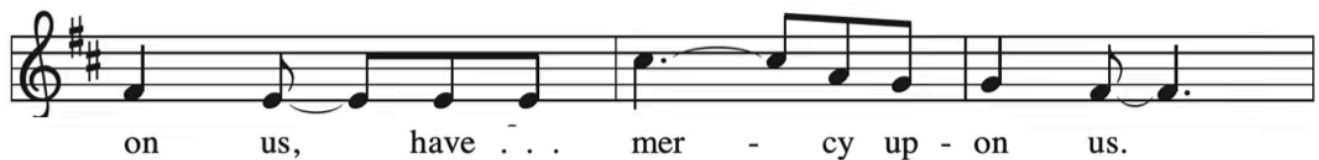
If anyone wishes to come forward and receive a blessing instead of communion elements, you are welcome to come forward to the communion rails with your arms crossed over your chest in the shape of an "X" instead.

If mobility concerns make it difficult to come forward for communion, you can alert the ushers, and they will let Pr. Mallory know to come to you.

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ and ponder the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work in us and through us each and every day.

LAMB OF GOD



** COMMUNION HYMN

"Bind Us Together"



Bind us to - geth - er, Lord; Bind us to - geth - er with cords that



can-not be bro - ken. Bind us to-geth-er, Lord, bind us to -



-geth-er, Lord; Bind us to-geth-er with love.

1. There is
2. Made for the
3. You are the



on - ly one God, there is on - ly one King.
glo - ry of God, pur-chased by His pre - cious Son.
fam-'ly of God, you are the pro-mise di - vine.



There is on - ly one bod-y; That is why we can
Born with the right to be clean, for Je-sus the vic-t'ry has
You are God's cho-sen de - sire. You are the glo-rious new



sing:
won.
wine.

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

**** HYMN AFTER COMMUNION**

Canticle of Simeon



At last, Lord, your word of prom-ise ful - fill - ing, you let your



ser - vant go forth in free-dom and peace. With my own



eyes I have seen the sal - va - tion you have pre -



pared . . in the sight of all of the peo - ples: a



light that will re - veal you to the na - tions, and the



glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

**** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Assisting Minister

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

**** SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent. The presiding minister may lead this prayer of sending.

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, and imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**** BLESSING**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,
‡ one God,
bless, heal, and hold you
today and always. **Amen.**

** SENDING HYMN

"Lift Every Voice and Sing"

1 Lift ev - 'ry voice and sing till earth and heav - en ring,
 2 Ston - y the road we trod, bit - ter the chas - t'ning rod,
 3 God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears,

ring with the har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty.
 felt in the days when hope un - born had died;
 thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;

Let our re - joic - ing rise high as the lis - t'ning skies,
 yet with a stead - y beat, have not our wea - ry feet
 thou who hast by thy might led us in - to the light,

let it re - sound loud as the roll - ing sea.
 come to the place for which our par - ents sighed?
 keep us for - ev - er in the path, we pray.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
 We have come o - ver a way that with tears has been wa - tered;
 Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met thee;

sing a song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought us;
 we have come, tread - ing our path through the blood of the slaugh - tered,
 lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get thee;

fac - ing the ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun,
 out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at last
 shad - owed be - neath thy hand, may we for - ev - er stand,

let us march on till vic - to - ry is won.
 where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
 true to our God, true to our na - tive land.

**** DISMISSAL**

Assisting Minister

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Created, saved and gifted by god,

we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = WORSHIP PLUS TWO

**MAKE A COMMITMENT NOT ONLY TO WORSHIP EACH WEEK,
BUT ALSO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO SERVE IN THE CONGREGATION
AND SEEK OUT A WAY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.**

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Catherine Winkworth, died 1878;

John Mason Neale, died 1866;

hymn translators

Wednesday, July 1, 2026

Neale was an English priest who specialized in the translation of Latin and Greek hymns into English. Winkworth lived in Manchester, England, and devoted herself to translating German hymns. Almost all English-speaking hymnals include many of their translations.

Thomas, Apostle

Friday, July 3, 2026

Though frequently remembered as "doubting Thomas," this apostle also demonstrated a willingness to suffer and die with Jesus (John 11:16), and finally claimed the risen Christ as "my Lord and my God!" By tradition, he later worked as a missionary in India. Long commemorated on December 21, Thomas's celebration is moved to July 3 in agreement with ecumenical calendars.

Jan Hus, martyr, died 1415

Monday, July 6, 2026

Hus was a Bohemian (present-day Czech Republic) priest who spoke against abuses in the church, and was seen by Martin Luther as his predecessor in the reforming movement. He was found guilty of heresy by a council of the church, and burned at the stake.

Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Cassino, died around 540

Saturday, July 11, 2026

Benedict is known as the father of the Western monastic movement. Educated in Rome, he went to live as a hermit, and eventually gathered a community of monks around him. He wrote a rule for living in monasteries that is used by Benedictines and adapted by others.