



The kingdom
of heaven
is like a
merchant
in search
of fine pearls

MATTHEW 13:45

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 26, 2026 - 9:30 a.m.



Grace Lutheran Church

313 S. Prospect Avenue, Champaign, IL 61820

(217) 356-6232 • office@glccu.org

www.glccu.org • Pastor: Chris Repp

Welcome to Grace!

At Grace Lutheran Church, we strive to be a community of acceptance, reconciliation and hope. Following in the way of Jesus, we welcome all people regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, or age. God's acceptance of all compels us to stand against racism, sexism and all forms of hate and prejudice. We welcome your questions, your gifts, and your being.

Connecting People to God, One Another, and the World

We believe that God is at work in this worship service, through Word and Sacrament, to create and sustain faith in God's promises of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation in Jesus Christ, and to bless us to be blessings. We use a rich, traditional pattern of worship that dates to the early days of Christianity. We recognize that it comes with a learning curve, but we're convinced that it's worth the effort. Don't feel like you have to get everything the first time. This way of worshipping may also include postures like standing and kneeling that may not be possible or comfortable for everyone. Please know that you are welcome to do what works for you.

KEY TO THE ORDER OF SERVICE:

Regular type: spoken by a leader

Bold type: spoken by the people

Regular Italics: sung/chanted by a leader

Bold Italics: sung/chanted by the people

Small Italics: liturgical directions and information

✙ the sign of the cross may be made

ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Red Hymnal)

ACS: All Creation Sings (Purple Hymnal)

♪ Favorite Hymn request

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR VISITORS:

- Restrooms are down the hall to the left of the entrance, opposite the elevator.
- Hand sanitizer is available on the sanctuary windowsills.
- Large print bulletins are available
- Please sign our guest book at the entrance.

As We Gather:

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

Gathering

Prelude

Welcome

The assembly stands.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God, who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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

The assembly kneels or is seated.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✙ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

The assembly stands.

Gathering Hymn

Gather Us In

ELW 532



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
now is the king - dom, and now is the day.



Gath - er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in, the
Gath - er us in, the rich and the haugh - ty, gath - er us in, the
Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the
Gath - er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath - er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,
bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.
 lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
 fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

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

(Sung by All)

Leader or All



Se - ñor, ten pie - dad de no-so - tros. Cris - to, ten pie - dad.
 O Lord, have . . . mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

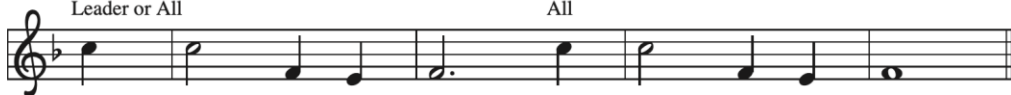
All



Se - ñor, ten pie - dad de no-so - tros. Cris - to, ten pie - dad.
 O Lord, have . . . mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

Leader or All

All



Se - ñor, ten pie - dad. Se - ñor, ten pie - dad.
 Have mer - cy, O Lord. Have mer - cy, O Lord.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

Word

Children's Sermon

Pastor Chris Repp

First Reading

1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalmody

Psalm 119:129-136

- ¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.
- ¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**
- ¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.
- ¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.**
- ¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.
- ¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.**
- ¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.
- ¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.**

Second Reading

Romans 8:26-39

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect?

It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

Gospel Acclamation



A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya. A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya. El Se - ñor re - su - ci - tó.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Christ is ris - en, ris'n in - deed.

Gospel

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

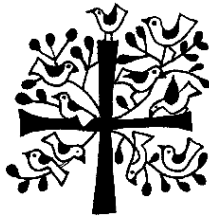
The assembly is seated.

Sermon

Pastor Chris Repp

The assembly stands.





Hymn of the Day

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

ELW 631

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Apostles' Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
 the ✚ resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus,
let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The assembly kneels or is seated. Each petition concludes:

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray,
Trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our savior.
Amen.

The assembly stands.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

After the Peace, the assembly is seated.

Meal

Offering

*Please place your offering in the plate on the table in the aisle as you leave.
You may also give online at <http://glccu.org/donate> or scan the QR code with
your photos app to connect to the donation page on the GLC website.*



Offertory

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

ACS 942

Refrain



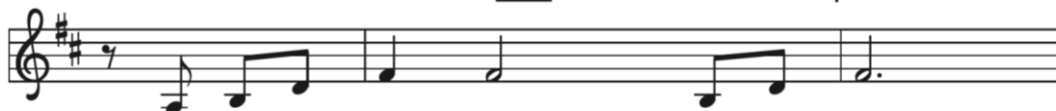
Ev - 'ry time I feel the spir - it mov - ing



in my heart, I will pray. Ev - 'ry time I feel the



spir - it mov - ing in my heart, I will pray.



1 Up - on the moun - tain my Lord spoke,
2 . . All a - round me looked so fine,
3 . . Jor - dan riv - er, chilly and cold,



out of his mouth came fire and smoke.
asked my Lord if all was mine.
chills the bod - y but not the soul.

Refrain

The assembly stands.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.



Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

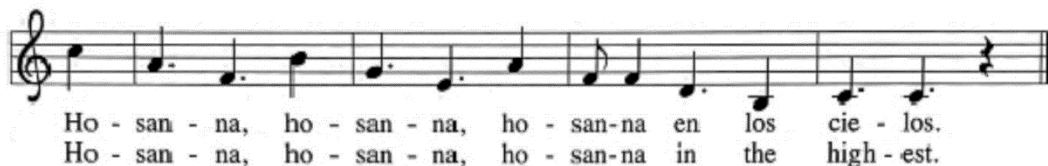
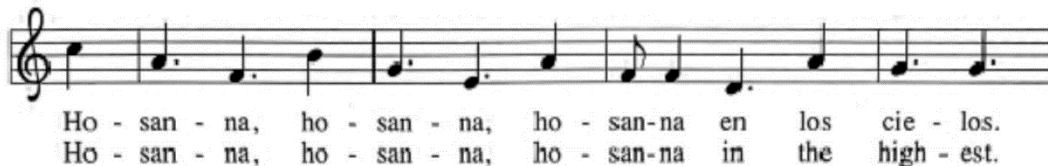
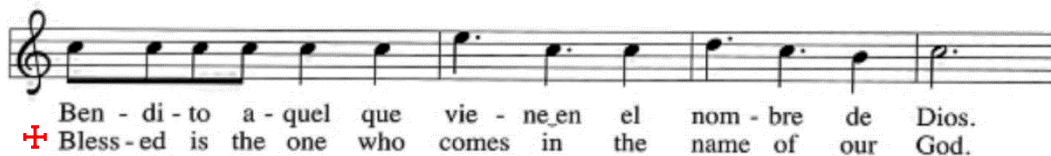
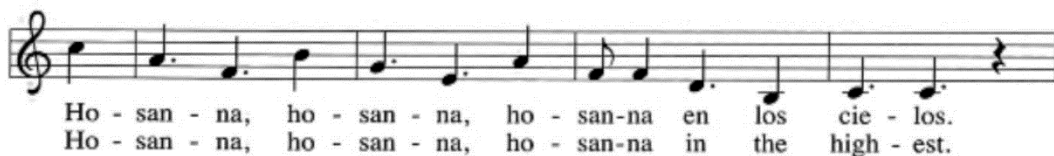
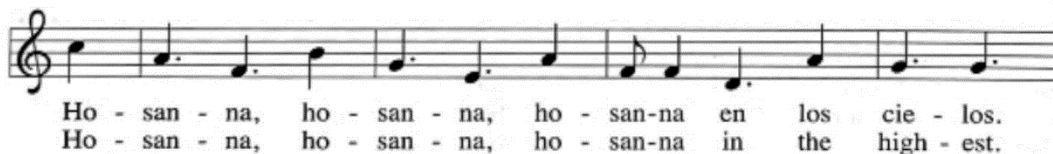
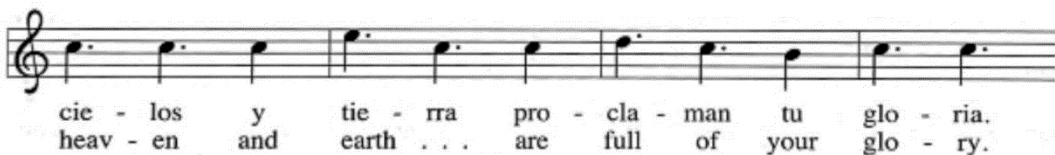
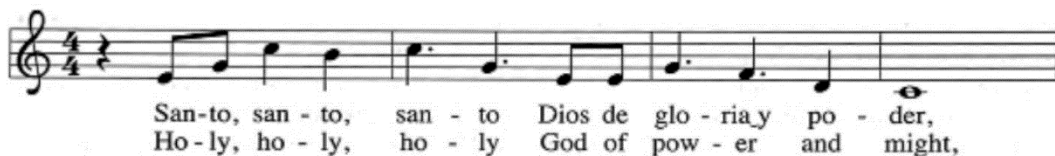
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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:



Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly is seated.

Communion

We believe that Christ is truly present for us in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, forming us into his body for the sake of the world. We welcome to the Lord's table all baptized Christians. Those who are not baptized we invite to explore with us the Christian faith and consider baptism. Those who do not commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Please hold this bulletin in your hands as a sign that you would like a blessing.

To receive communion, please join the line in the center aisle and proceed to the pastor. (Note: gluten-free wafers are available. Just ask the pastor.) After receiving the bread, proceed to your left or right to receive the wine, taking a pre-filled glass from the tray. (Grape juice is also available.) Place your used glass in the basket provided near the stairs on the side you leave.

Lamb of God



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so - tros, ten pie-dad de no - so - tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.



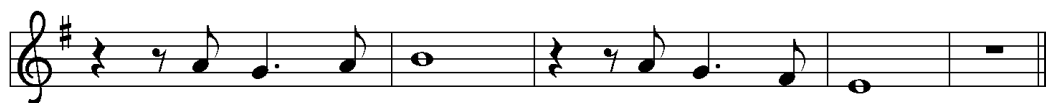
Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so - tros, ten pie-dad de no - so - tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.



Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



da - nos tu paz, da - nos tu paz.
grant us your peace, grant us your peace.

Communion Hymn

Be Thou My Vision

ELW 793



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

The assembly stands.

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

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Sending

(Sending Of Communion)

A prayer may be said for the sending of communion to those who are absent.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

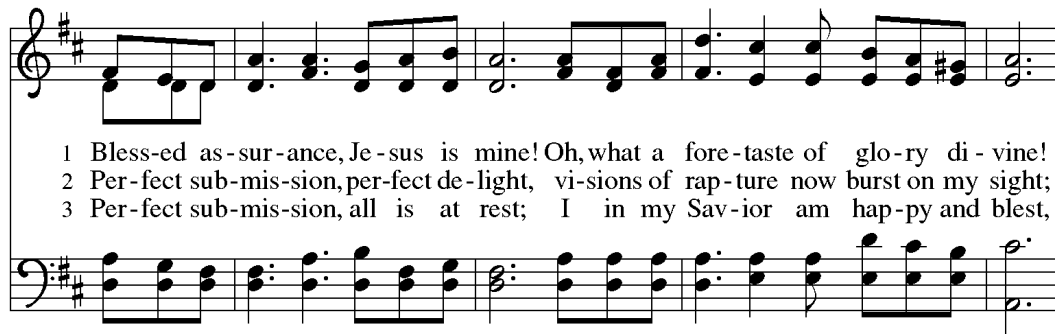
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

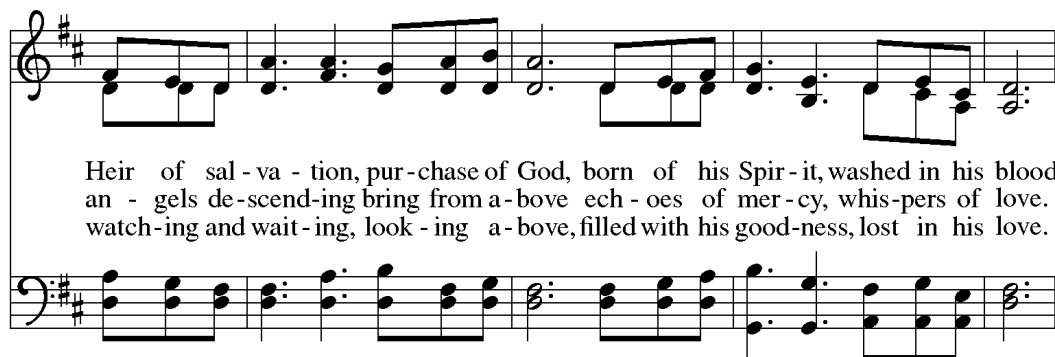
Sending Hymn

Blessed Assurance

ELW 638

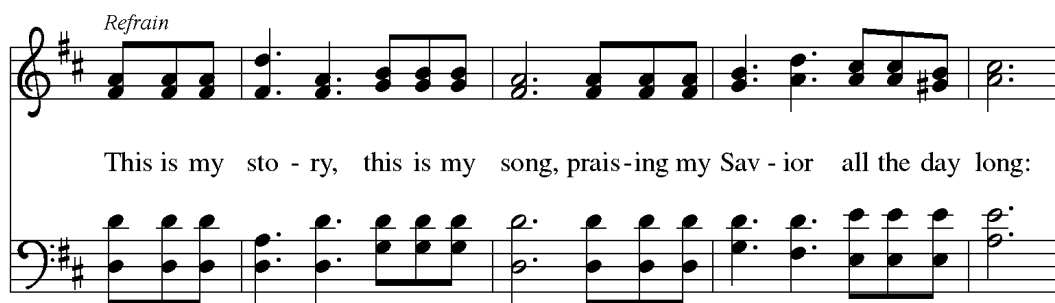


1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
 an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
 watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Announcements

Dismissal

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

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Worship Support

The ministry of the church is carried out by all of its people, and Christian worship is a communal activity of the whole assembly. We give thanks to the following for their worship leadership and support today.

Presiding Minister: **Pastor Chris Repp**

Assisting Minister: **Helen Repp**

Reader: **Eileen Herrstrom**

Deacon: **Gail Hug**

Greeters: **Dennis & Allison Archer**

Ushers: **Dave & Carol Larson**

Livestream: **Jim Anderson**

Sound Technician: **Kevin Vail**

Organist: **Mike Keeley**

Music Director: **Kyle Schrage**

Office Assistant: **Karen Maher**

Coffee Hour: **Kathy & Van Bowersox**

Musicians: **Dave Brown, Alma Dorsey**

**Michael Miller, Pastor Chris Repp,
Helen Repp, and Jack Wilkie**

✧ Chancel flowers are given by **Nancy Johnson** ✧
In memory of loved ones

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