APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN
7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061
(804) 693-9098 | apostles-elca.org | facebook.com/ApostlesELCA

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at j80j84@msn.com (preferred) or pastor.apostles@gmail.com. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. **We ask two things: 1) sit in the front pews near your children** and **2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon.** They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

Prelude and Silent Prayer

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to ***silence all cell phones.***

Welcome and Announcements

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ☩ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,

you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

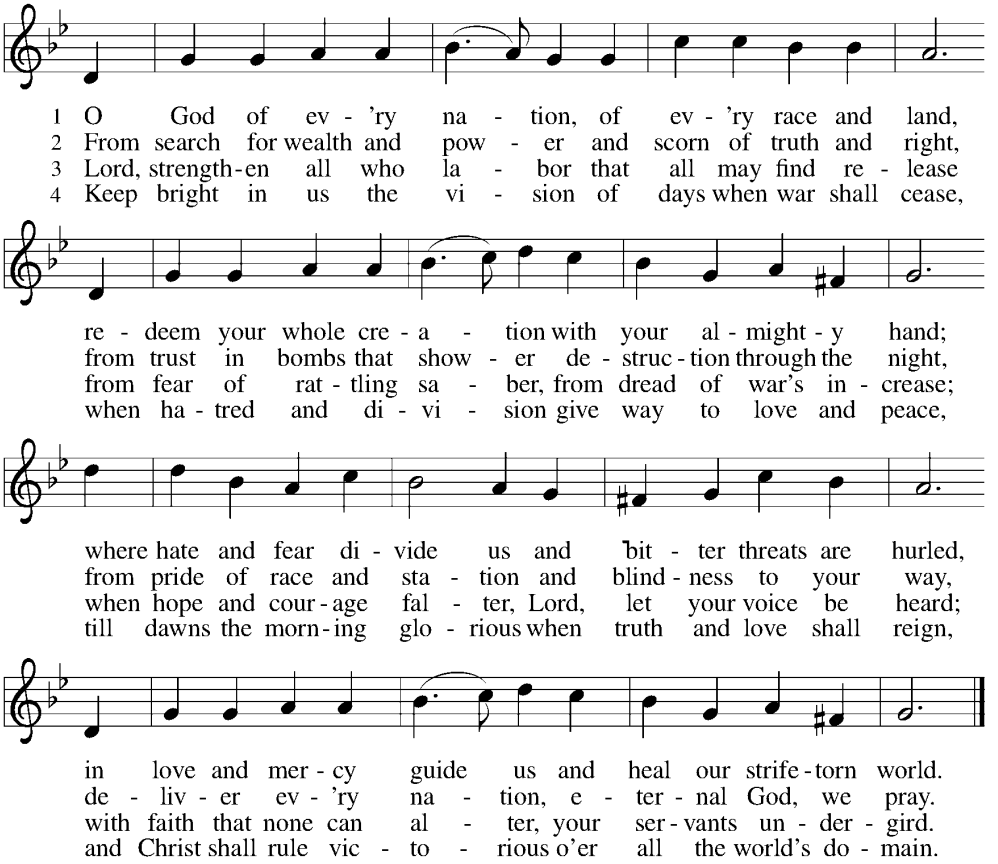
Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ☩ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

ELW #713

"O God of Every Nation"



Text: William W. Reid Jr., b. 1923
Music: LLANGLOFFAN, Welsh tune, 19th cent.
Text © 1958, ren. 1986 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.
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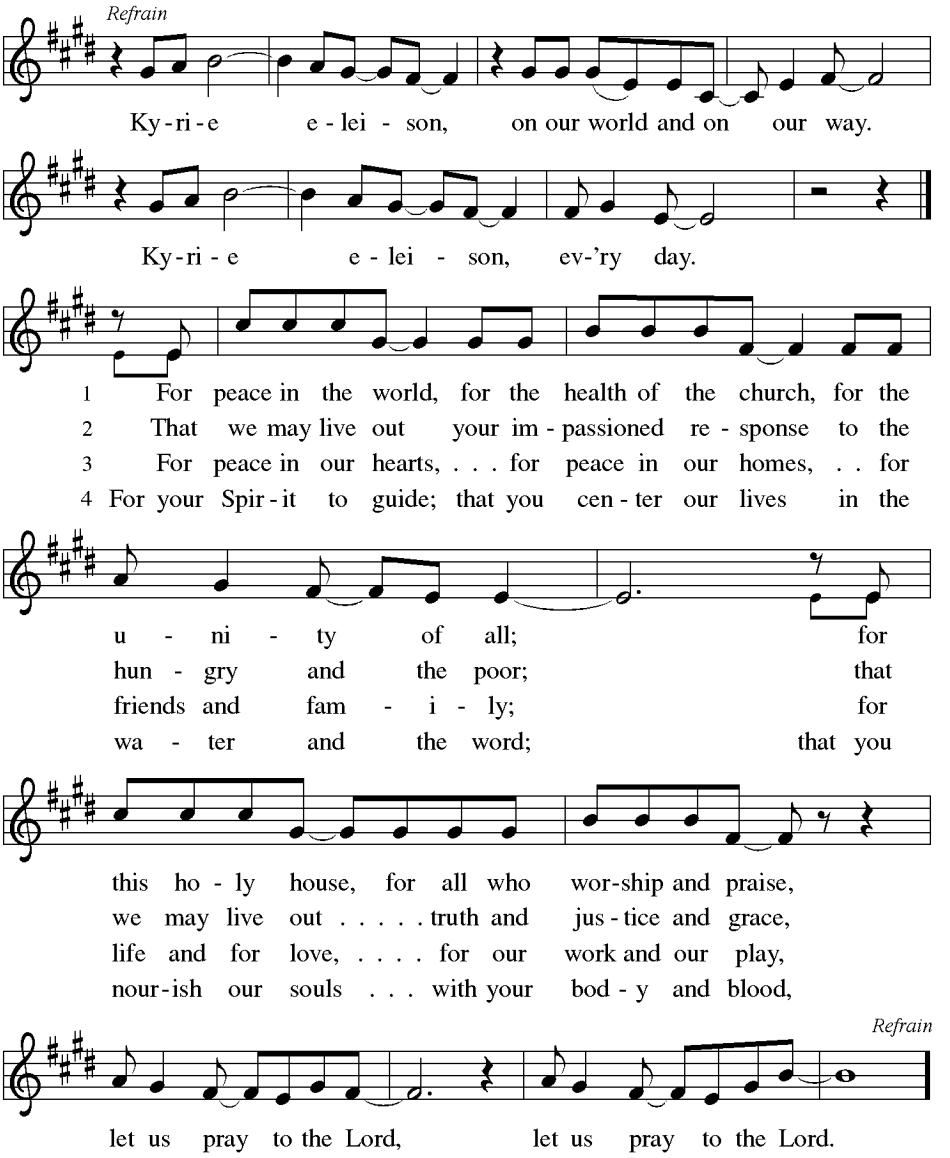
Apostolic Greeting

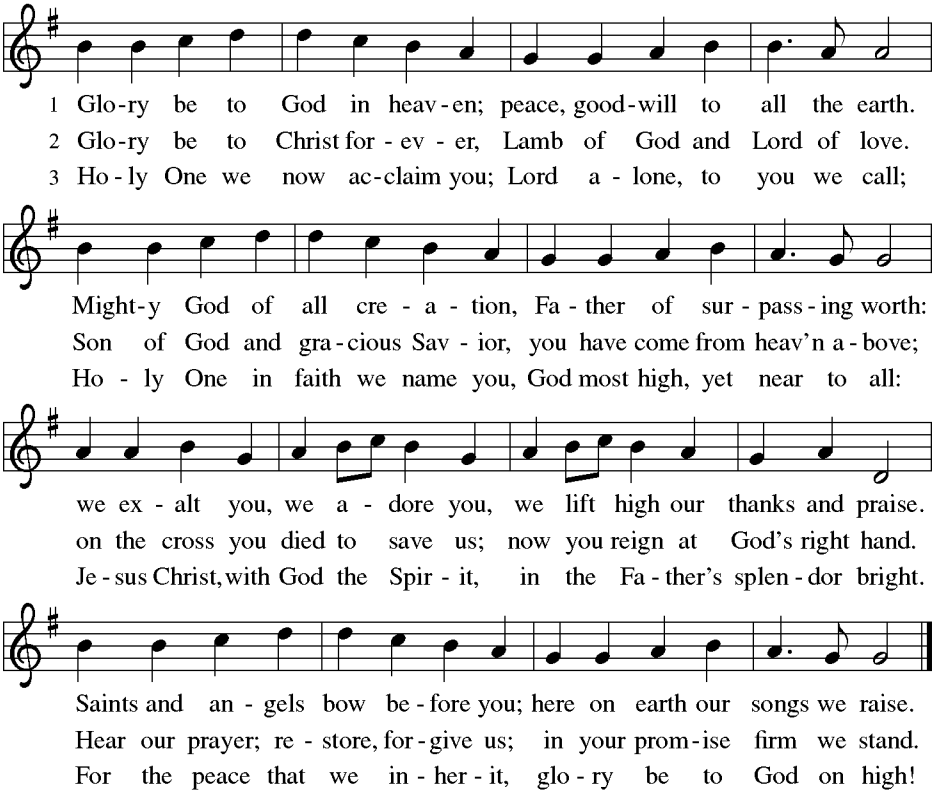
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Kyrie


Refrain
Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, on our world and on our way.
Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, ev-'ry day.
1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
2 That we may live out your im-passioned re-sponse to the
3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
4 For your Spir-it to guide; that you cen-ter our lives in the
u-ni-ty of all; for
hun-gry and the poor; that
friends and fam-i-ly; for
wa-ter and the word; that you
this ho-ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out . . . . . truth and jus-tice and grace,
life and for love, ... for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod-y and blood,
Refrain
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Canticle of Praise



Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

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

Sit

First Reading — Isaiah 45:1–7

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the Lord has anointed to end Israel's exile. The Lord makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this Lord as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the Lord claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

[1]Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue
nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him—and the gates
shall not be closed: [2]I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the
doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, [3]I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of
Israel, who call you by your name. [4]For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I
call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me. [5]I am the Lord, and
there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, [6]so
that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one
besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. [7]I form light and create darkness, I make
weal and create woe; I the Lord do all these things.

Response after the First Lesson

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm — Psalm 96:1-9[10-13]

[1]Sing to the Lord | a new song;
sing to the Lord, | all the earth.
[2]**Sing to the Lord, bless the name | of the Lord;**
proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.
[3]Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.

[4]**For great is the Lord and greatly | to be praised,**
more to be feared | than all gods. R

[5]As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;
but you, O Lord, have | made the heavens.
[6]**Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;**
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.
[7]Ascribe to the Lord, you families | of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord hon- | or and power.
[8]**Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the | holy name;**
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the Lord. R

[9]Worship the Lord in the beau- | ty of holiness;
tremble before the Lord, | all the earth.
[[10]**Tell it out among the nations: "The | Lord is king!**
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peo- | ples with equity."
[11]Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that | is therein.
[12]**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your com- | ing, O Lord,**
for you come to | judge the earth.
[13]You will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peoples | with your truth. **R**
]

Second Reading — 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

[1]Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

[2]We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly [3]remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. [4]For we know, brothers and sisters

beloved by God, that he has chosen you, [5]because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. [6]And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, [7]so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. [8]For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. [9]For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, [10]and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

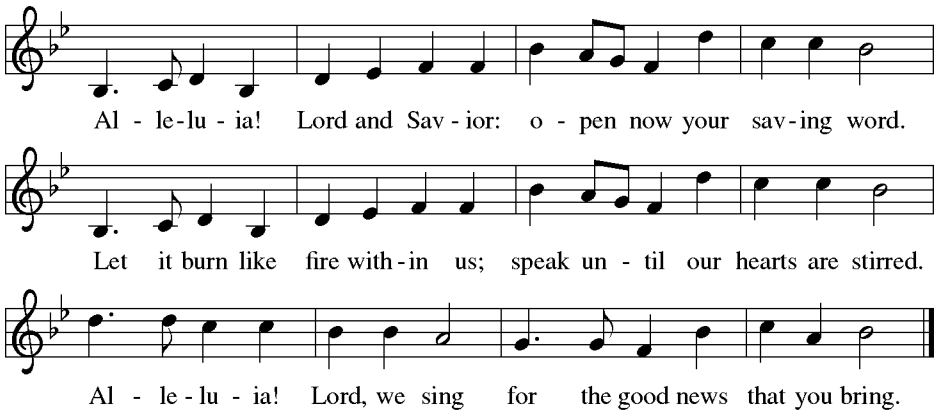
Response after the Second Lesson

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Gospel Acclamation



The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 22nd Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel — Matthew 22:15-22

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

15Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. 16So they sent their
disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere,
and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you
do not regard people with partiality. 17Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to
the emperor, or not?" 18But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the
test, you hypocrites? 19Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a
denarius. 20Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" 21They answered,
"The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are
the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." 22When they heard this, they were
amazed; and they left him and went away.

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

Sit

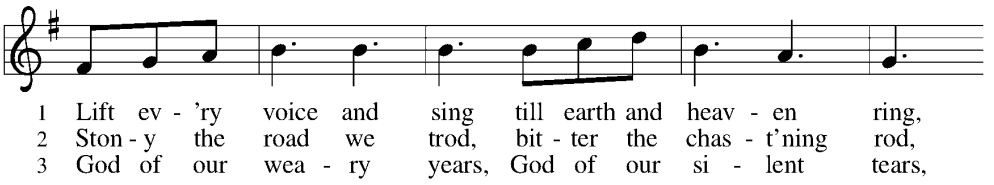
Sermon — Pastor Jay Serafin

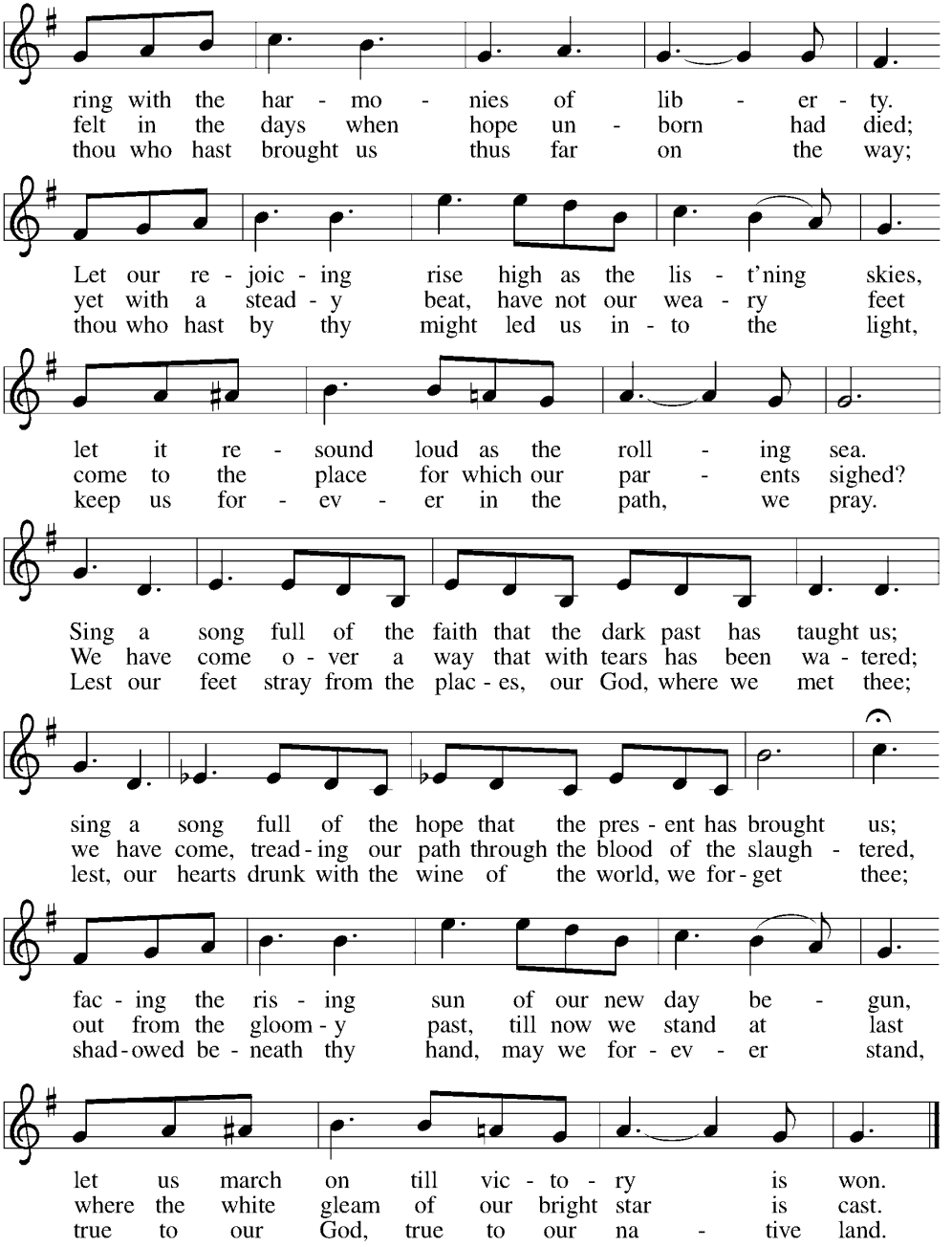
Silence is kept after the reflection.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Hymn of the Day — ELW #841

"Lift Every Voice and Sing"





Text: James W. Johnson, 1871–1938
Music: LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING, J. Rosamond Johnson, 1873–1954

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
power of 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

Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need. Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:
God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**.*

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

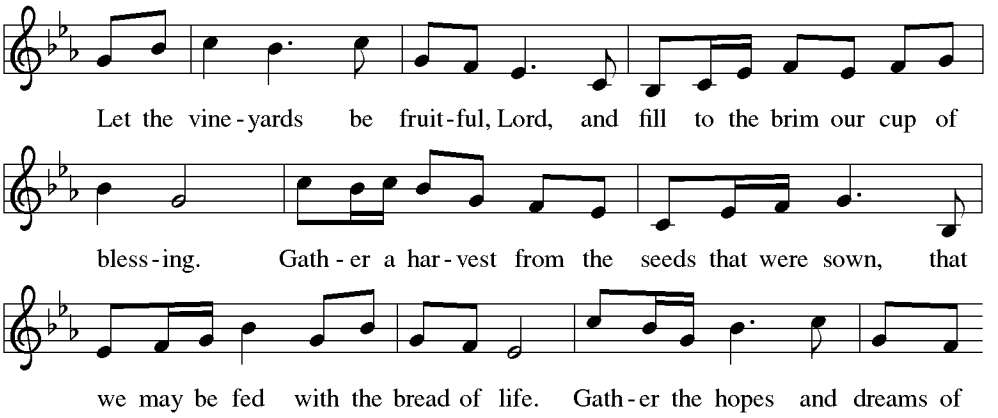
Sit

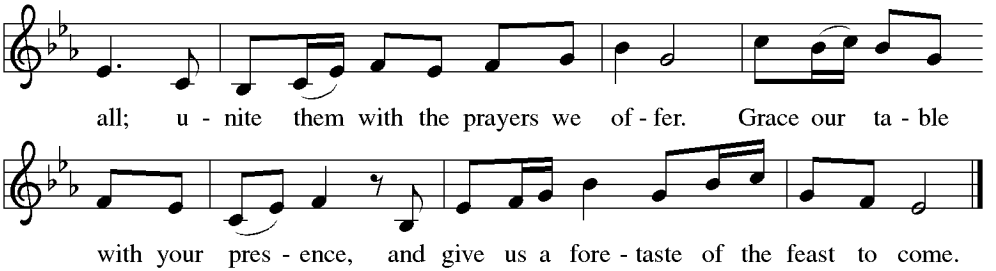
Offering

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. To give online:

- **Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions**
- **From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453**

Offertory Hymn — ELW #184





Please rise in body or in spirit

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

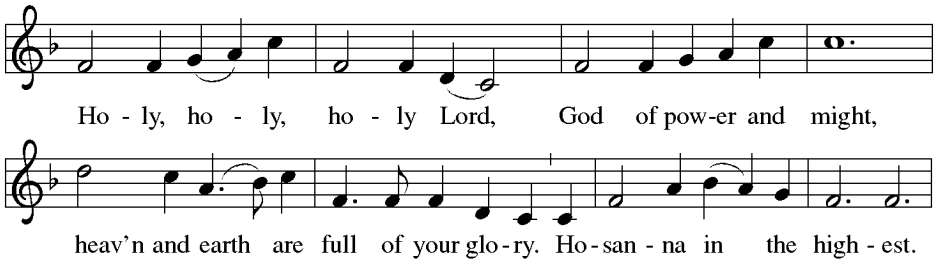
We lift them to the Lord.

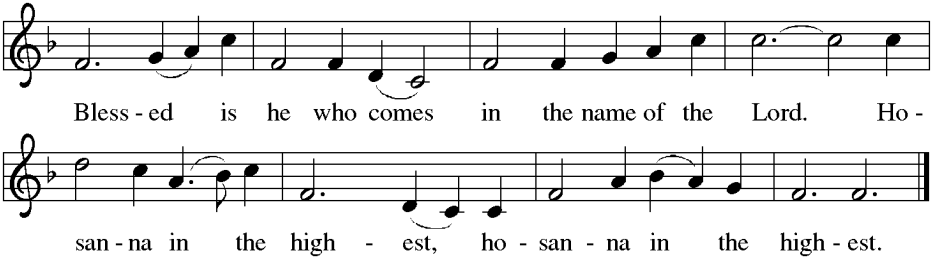
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The thanksgiving continues with the preface.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:





The thanksgiving continues.
… as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

The great thanksgiving continues.
… Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving continues.
… Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving concludes.
…we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

Jesus invites you to this table.
Come, eat and live.

Sit

Communion

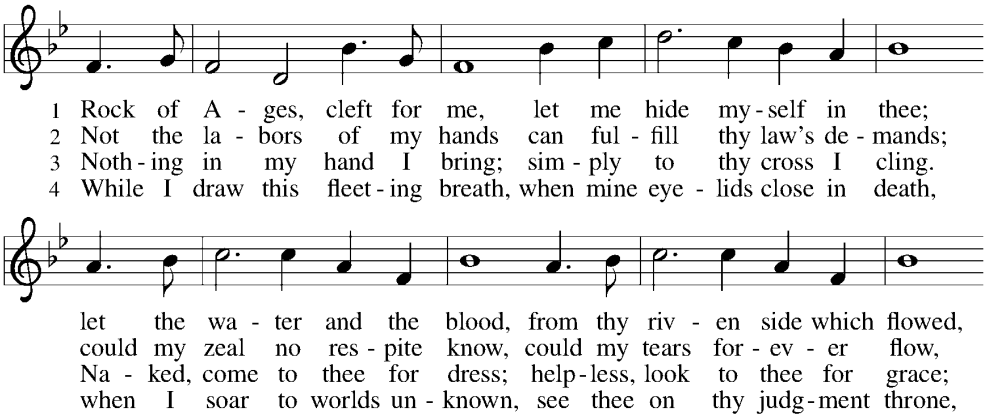
All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

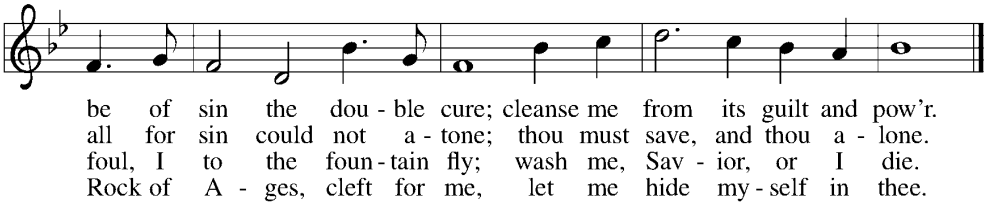
You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

Lamb of God

Hymn During Communion ELW #623

"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"





Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740–1778
Music: TOPLADY, Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872

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

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

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

Blessing

The God of glory, ☩ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

ELW #705

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878–1969
Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873–1932

Dismissal

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

****

Worship Leaders

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Accompanist	Janet Gomez	Janet Gomez
Acolyte	Reagan Jay	Ray Scholz
Altar Care	Christina Badger	Janet Gomez
Communion Bread	Ellen Quirk	Janet Gomez
Greeter/Usher	Besty Liljeberg	Jason Lowe
Lay Assisting Minister	David Leunig	Sue Turner
Lector	Christina Badger	Irene Albert
Technology	Chris Hawkins	Doug Dalager

Servants for the Week

	This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Scholz/Ambrose	TBD
Tellers	Ray Scholz/Ben Grimes	Barbara Runk/Chris Hawkins

Readings For Next Sunday

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34
I will write my law in their hearts, says the Lord

Psalm 46
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold

Second Reading: Romans 3:19-28
Justified by God's grace as a gift

Gospel: John 8:31-36
Jesus says, Continue in my word and you will know the truth

Bulletin Sponsorships

Does someone in your family have a special birthday coming up? Is your parents' anniversary date in the near future? Is there someone special you would like to honor or remember? Apostles Lutheran would be happy to help you share a message honoring or remembering someone special through bulletin sponsorship. Much like altar flower sponsors, bulletin sponsors are able to pick the week they would like to sponsor the bulletins, and on that Sunday we will share your special date and commemoration with the congregation as a bulletin note. This sponsorship is a way to celebrate/honor/remember the special people in our lives and dates which we hold important. As the congregation's cost for printing full worship service bulletins increases, this also will help Apostles to continue to make available the entire liturgy for each Sunday self-contained in the bulletin. If you would like to sponsor an upcoming bulletin, please look for the signup sheet in the narthex near the entrance. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Pastor Jay.

God's Work, Our Hands – Rescheduled!

The outdoor portion of God's Work, Our Hands has been rescheduled for next Sunday after the worship service, October 29th – Pete Liljeberg will provide pizza and then we will go out to do the work – anyone is welcome to come and help!!

New Book Study!!

We will start a new book study on Thursday, November 9th!! "Left Behind and Loving It" by D. Mark Davis is a cheeky critique of popular writings about end times. Rather than presenting a steroid buffed Jesus wrapped in an American flag and "coming again in clouds of gunfire," Left Behind and Loving it invites readers to approach some of the most controversial and scary portions of the Scriptures with the utter confidence that "God's steadfast love endures forever "" Come and learn and laugh with us as we explore this confusing and controversial part of our theology! We will begin on Thursday, November 9th at 6:30 PM in the fellowship hall with a time of food (bring your own sandwich) and fellowship followed by the book study at 7. Be there or be raptured!

Thoughts for Today...

What's In Your Wallet? Not Enough.

Say the word stewardship in some congregations and people are protectively guarding their wallets faster than you can say "pledge card!" Unfortunately, too often we associate stewardship exclusively with issues of money. The good news is that God has little interest in our wallets. God wants our whole lives, wallets and all! Nevertheless, this week is prime time for stewardship campaigns in congregations around the country. The stewardship theme is reflected in our announcements, our prayers, our songs, and our readings. Today's gospel provides an ideal time to reflect on stewardship of all sorts—time, talent, and financial treasures.

The Pharisees approach Jesus in a thinly veiled attempt to trap him on issues of financial obligations to the Roman government. Their question of Jesus, simplified to the extreme, is "who gets your wallet?" If Jesus answered one way, he would be guilty of treason. If he answered the other way, he would have been considered guilty of heresy in the eyes of the religious leaders. Jesus responds by issuing a challenge of his own—give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God. This statement challenges us to ponder: if God created the world and everything in it, what doesn't belong to God? God wants a whole lot more than just your wallet. God wants your life, wallet and all!

Comments from a Cloud of Witnesses

We are accepted and affirmed by God and so do not need to prove ourselves to him. We have been set free, and our liberation is total and comprehensive—it includes being set free from political, social and economic structures that are oppressive and unjust, since these would enslave us and make us less than God intends us to be. There is little about "pie in the sky when you die" in the gospel of Jesus Christ, for Christianity is the most materialistic of the major religions. There is nowhere that the writ of God does not run, for everything belongs to him. Caesar must be accorded what is appropriate for him, and God must have all—including Caesar's domain; otherwise there would be a part of the universe, of life, that did not fall under God's control.

—Desmond Tutu

[Desmond Mpilo Tutu, *Hope and Suffering*, ed. John Webster (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 58-59.]

Apostles needs your help!

Apostles' spending plan is very similar to a family budget. It depends on income coming in at a steady rate so that bills and ministries can be paid and maintained respectively. Over the summer months Apostles' income tends to decline due to vacations and attendance being down. We need your help in continuing your financial commitments to the church while you might be away.

There are several ways that you can ensure that your donations are received while you are away.

- **Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions**
- **From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453**

Donating via our website also allows for your giving to be scheduled so it will still be sent while you are away. You can also set up a payment with your bank's Bill pay option. **Please consider utilizing these giving options so your contributions continue while you are away!**

September 2023		
Planned Income	*$*	*10,001*
Actual Income	*$*	*7,547*
Delta	***$***	***(2,454)***

Year to Date		
Planned Income	*$*	*90,009*
Actual Income	*$*	*76,834*
Delta	***$***	***(13.175)***

Still Taking Requests for Hymns

We are still taking requests for your favorite hymns – just fill out a sheet and put it in the basket.

Please Keep in Your Prayers

Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Keith & Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue & George Turner, and **Jerry & Lena Woodlief**

Our Family and Friends

Patricia Armentor, family of Sharon Bagley (friends of Judy Wright), **Paul Bauer**, **Darlene Bayline, Karen Bell** (Pam Moore's sister), **Jim Bible** (friend of Nancy Wagner), **Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, the Clements family, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Family of Kimberly Conine, Ben Davis** (friend of Donna Ambrose), **Tommy & Kathie Davis, Mary Divelbiss, Colton Elliot** (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), **Bob Ely, Emily, Laura Fleige** (Janet Gomez's sister)**, Teresa Floersheim-Miller** (Ingrid Peterson's mother), **Suzanne Gibson, Steven Godwin** (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), **Jimmy & Fay Gray** (Chris Hawkins' family), **Mori Green** (friend of Nancy Wagner), **Shirley Grimes** (Ben Grimes' mother), **Mike Hall, Melvin Hawkins** (Chris Hawkins' father), **Chaneice Hayden** (Daniel Hayden), **Carl & Kaleb Hess, Adam Hewko** (nephew of the Hansons), **Aris Hibbs** (friend of Ray Scholz), **Suzanne Kinkade** (friend of Ellen Quirk), **the Little Family, Marion Lucier, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, Jean McKee** (Lilly Frost's grandmother), **Sylvia Midgette** (grandmother of Krystle McMahan), **Keith Morgan, Carol Pascale** (Lynn Jaeger's mother), **Brad Person** (Lilly Frost's uncle), **Dick Peterson & his brother, Joan Ritter, Carol Schlemmer, James Schollian** (friend of Nancy Wagner), **Michael Scholz** (nephew of Ray Scholz), **Scott, Erin Seamonson** (Lara Jaeger), **Joseph Serafin** (Pastor Jay's father), **Kathy Shackleford, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Susie, Dave Wagner** (husband of Nancy), **Cathy Walker** (friend of Linda Hodges), **Jake McWaters** (son of Teresa & Dan Grantham), **Chuck Webb** (Tina Britt's father), **Makenzie Webb** (niece of Tina Britt), **Elizabeth & Steven White, Kitty Witty, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright** (Judy Wright's husband), **Logan and Shannon Wymer, Greg Yvonovich** (friend of Margaret & Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

Our sponsored children in Guatemala

Amayra, **Hugolino** and **Manuela**

Prayer Requests

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

OCTOBER 22, 2023 – OCTOBER 29, 2023

TODAY	10:00 AM	Worship Service
	11:00 AM	Coffee Fellowship
MONDAY	**4:00 PM – 8:00 PM**	**Pastor Jay in the office**
	7:00 PM	Worship Ministry Team
	7:00 PM	AA
TUESDAY	7:00 PM	Al-Anon/AA
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	Choir Practice
SATURDAY	6:30 PM	Young and Sober
SUNDAY	10:00 AM	Worship Service
	11:00 AM	Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 AM	God's Work, Our Hands

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Sarah Anby – October 22nd |
Lilly Frost, Michael Schlemmer and **Betty Hanson** – October 23rd |
Roy Ryman, Alice and **Henry Blittle,** and **Lynn Jaeger** – October 28th

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