Christ Lutheran Church & The Bridge Campus Ministry

69 Mill Street • Athens, OH • (740) 593-3144
info@clcathens.org • www.clcathens.org

December 15, 2024 – Third Sunday of Advent

SERVING TODAY: *Presider/Preacher: Chad Huebner; Organist: George Weckman; Choir Director: Christian Yoder; Choir Accompanist: Donnalee Yoder; Pianist: Patricia Cambridge; Asst/Lector: Mim Almquist; Live Stream: Sam Hanson; Time with Children: Puppets!; Ushers: JoAnn Ball, Tim Prange; Greeter: Jeanne Hasaley; Acolyte: Rachel; Tray Server: Chad Kopenski*

WELCOME
Here in Athens, in SE Ohio, we are occupying the traditional homeland of the Shawnee people. Before the Shawnee, this land was occupied by the Osage people, and by the Adena, Hopewell and Fort Ancient cultures.

PRELUDE *Break Forth O Beauteous, Heavenly Light* **CLC Choir**

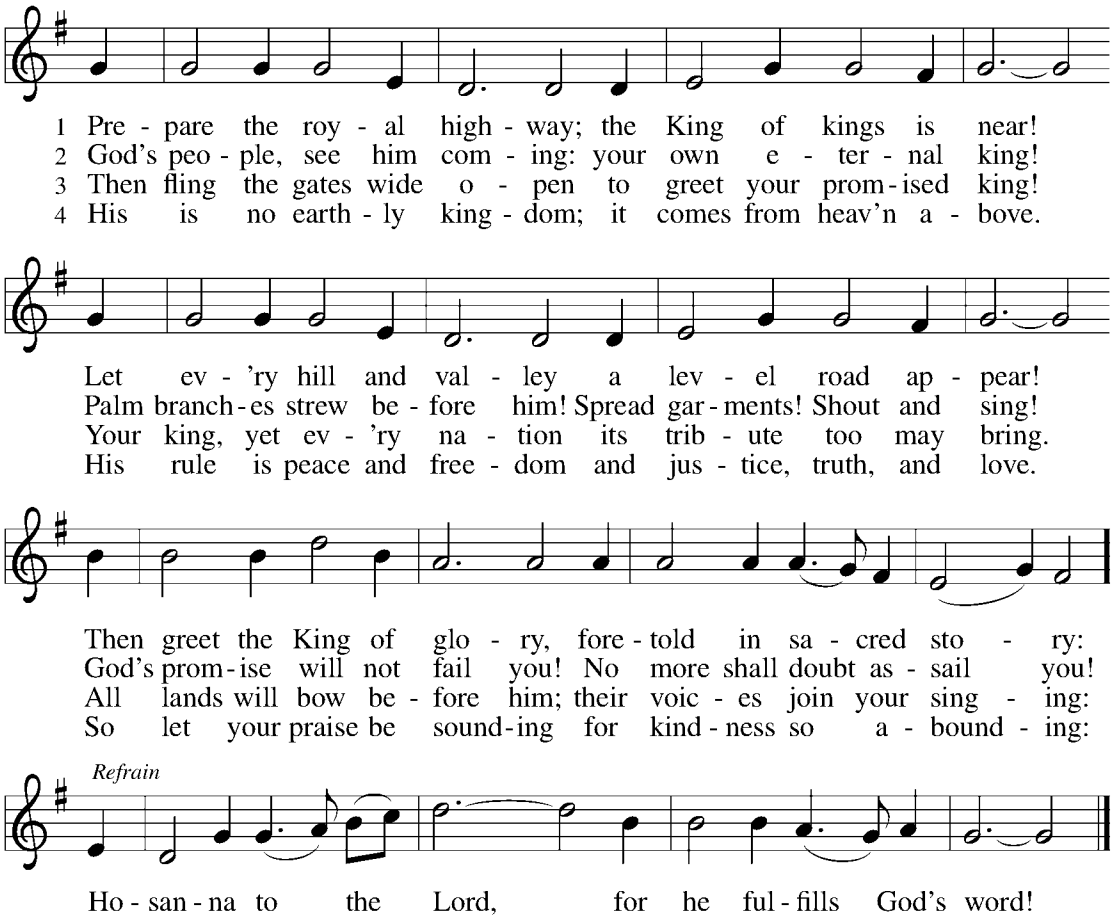
LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH
God of grace:
Return us to one another. To the broken, give wholeness.
To the mourning, give strength for dancing. To the grieving, give solace.
Fill us with your hope and be near us now.
May your eternal love spring forth from the pain and uncertainty of the world.
Fill us with your peace and release our grip of control and fear.
Lighten our hearts, clear our minds, burn away
all that does not bring life to your people and your whole creation.
Fill us with your joy and nourish us to bear good fruit in the world.
Renew our hearts in you, and help us look again to the day of restoration.
Fill us with your love and prepare us to welcome you.
O Christ who was and is and ever shall be:
Light the fire of hope in our hearts, open us to your call to peace, ground us in your love.
Stir up our hearts in joy, O God. Teach us the cycles of repentance, forgiveness, liberation, and change. Clear away that which does not give life to the world, so that we may live as your people, one Body of Christ. Through Jesus Christ, our joy and salvation. **Amen.**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel **(ELW 257)**
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain

Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow.
You bring water to parched ground and life out of death.
Bless us as this light grows,
and send sorrow and sighing to flee away.
Give us strength and patience,
trusting that you are true to your promises.
Transform the lives of all who suffer
with your wonders near at hand.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG ***Prepare the Royal Highway*** **(ELW 264)**

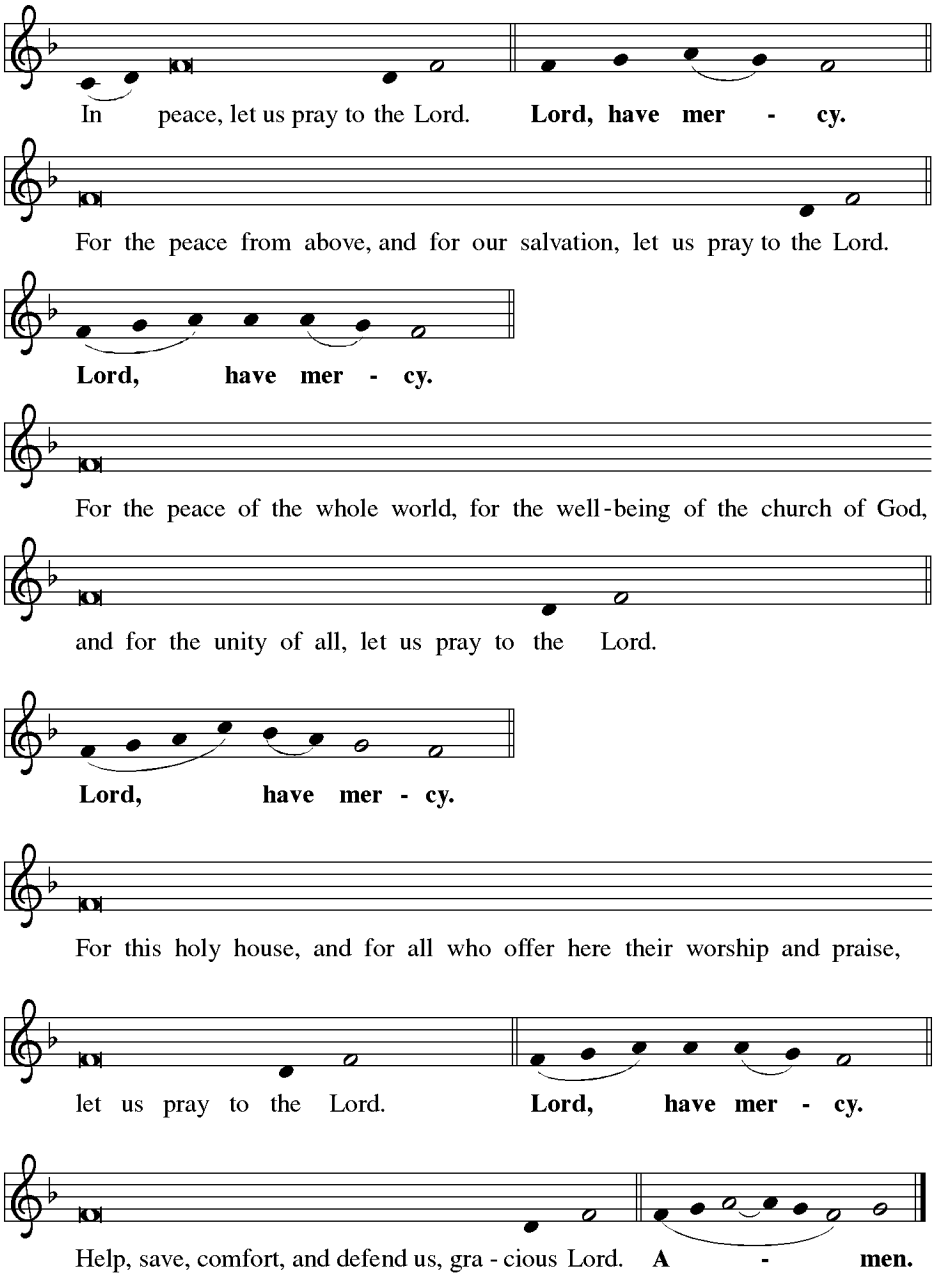


Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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 (ELW p. 138)



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

A reading from Zephaniah.

14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
15 The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
17 The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
18 as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
19 I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
20 At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

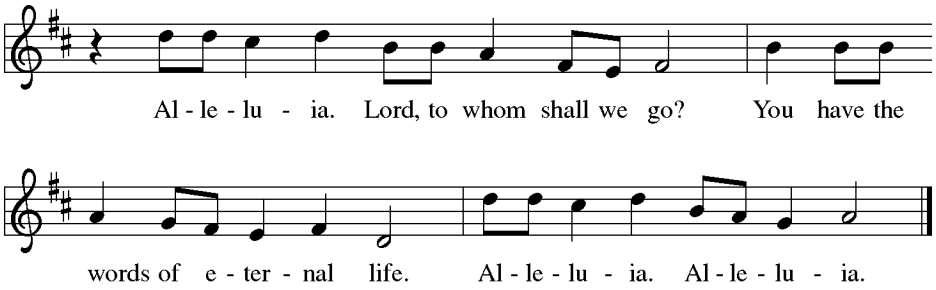
A reading from Philippians.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to
everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and
supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of
God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 142)



GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

7 John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who
warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to
say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these
stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every
tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" 11 In reply he said to them,
"Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do
likewise." 12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what
should we do?" 13 He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."
14 Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort
money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts
concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered all of them by saying, "I
baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to
untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing
fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the
chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

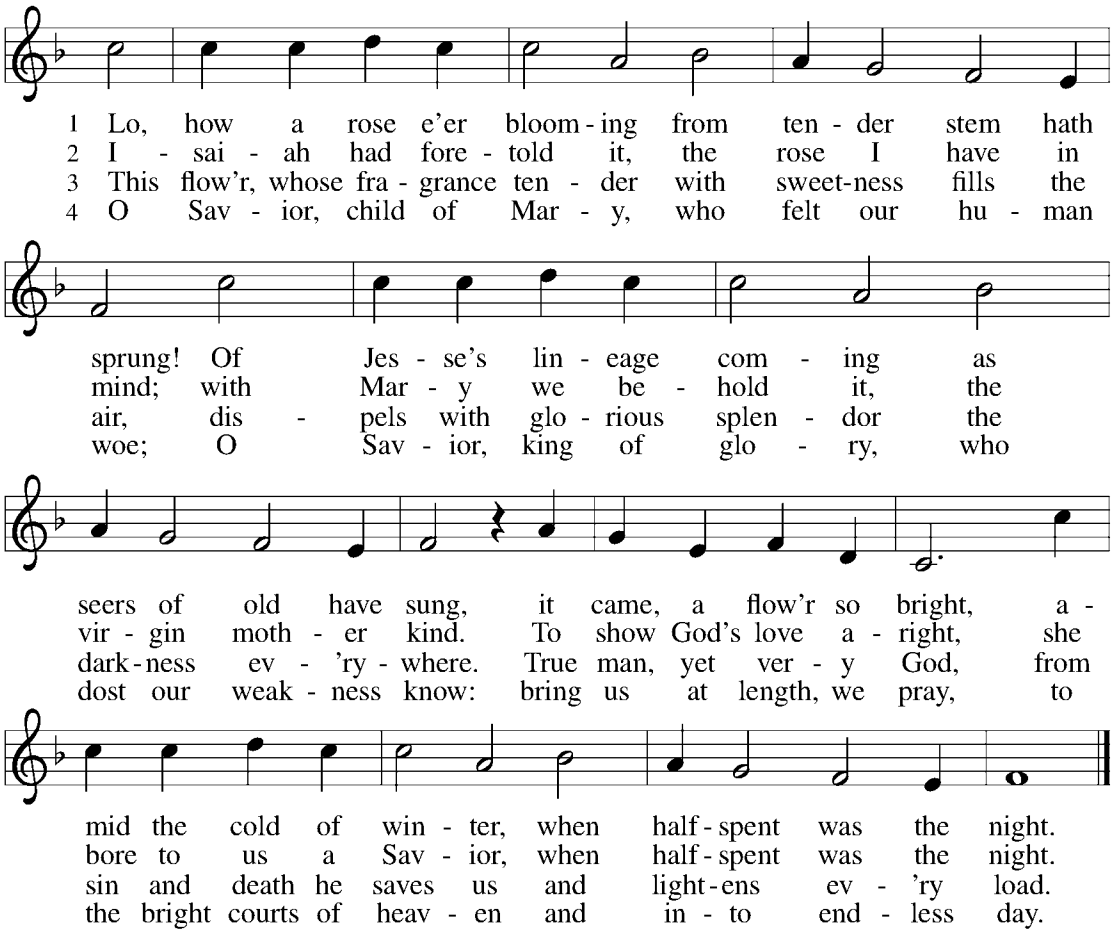
18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY ***Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*** **(ELW 272)**



Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, sts. 1–2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845–1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876–1948, st. 4
Music: ES IST EIN ROS, *Alte catholische geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1599

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Heavenly Father, on this third Sunday of Advent. as we once again prepare for Christmas, help us to find time in our busy lives for quiet and thought and prayer, that we may reflect upon the wonder of your love and allow the story of the Savior's birth to penetrate our hearts and minds, so that our joy may be deeper, our worship more real, and our lives worthier of all that you have done for us through the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

We pray for the church:

For those around the world who will be celebrating in so many different ways, and for those who dare not celebrate openly.

For our church family:

May your blessing be upon all who worship with us, give us grace to live as faithful members of your family, that we may learn each day afresh to love and serve you.
Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We pray for peace:
Give peace to the world
Give peace to the victims of war, the refugees, the widowed and the orphans.
Give peace to family and friends; to those who have quarreled and need to be reconciled.
We know that without justice there can be no peace. Let peace come so that all people are respected, regardless of race, religion, gender, or any other perceived differences. Let peace come so that the earth's resources are used wisely for the common good. Let peace come through the transformation of our lives so that we may do justice, love and kindness and walk humbly with our God.
Help us to be peacemakers in our own homes, at work or wherever we meet people, so that the peace and goodwill of Christmas can find a place in the hearts of all people.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

We pray for people in need:
We pray for the homeless and for refugees who have no country to call their own.
We pray for people who are lonely – those who are lonely because they have lost a partner, those who are lonely because no one seems to care, those who are lonely because of handicap or illness. Let your presence be with those who are alone at this season of friendship and may we take friendship and caring to those who we know will be alone this Christmas.
Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those who are ill:
We pray for friends and family who are ill at this time. Let us remember them now either aloud or in the quietness of our hearts…
We bring them to you in the confidence that you love them and know their every need. Bless all that is being done for their recovery and answer our prayers as you see best.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those who have died:
Jesus Christ is the light of the world, a light which no darkness can quench. We remember friends and family who have died. May the light of Christ shine on them eternally and bring us hope.

Help us to experience the comfort of the Holy Spirit within us, and the fellowship of the church family around us until we are reunited once more in your heavenly kingdom.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

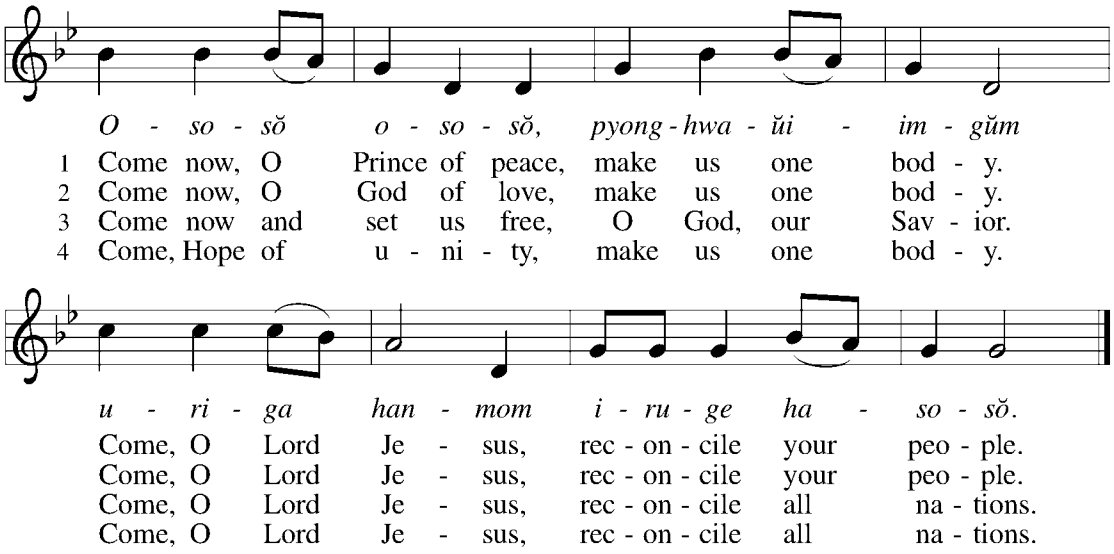
God of hope, who brought love into this world, be the love that dwells among us
God of hope, who brought peace into this world, be the peace that dwells among us
God of hope, who brought joy into this world, be the joy that dwells among us
God of hope, the rock we stand upon, be the center, the focus of our lives always.
AMEN

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

OFFERING – THANK YOU! YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES OUR MINISTRY POSSIBLE.
Giving is easy online through our website at https://www.clcathens.org/give
There you will also find instructions for how you can text to give or by downloading our church app!

OFFERTORY *Lord of All Being* **CLC Choir**

OFFERING ***Come Now, O Prince of Peace: Ososŏ, ososŏ*** **(ELW 247)**

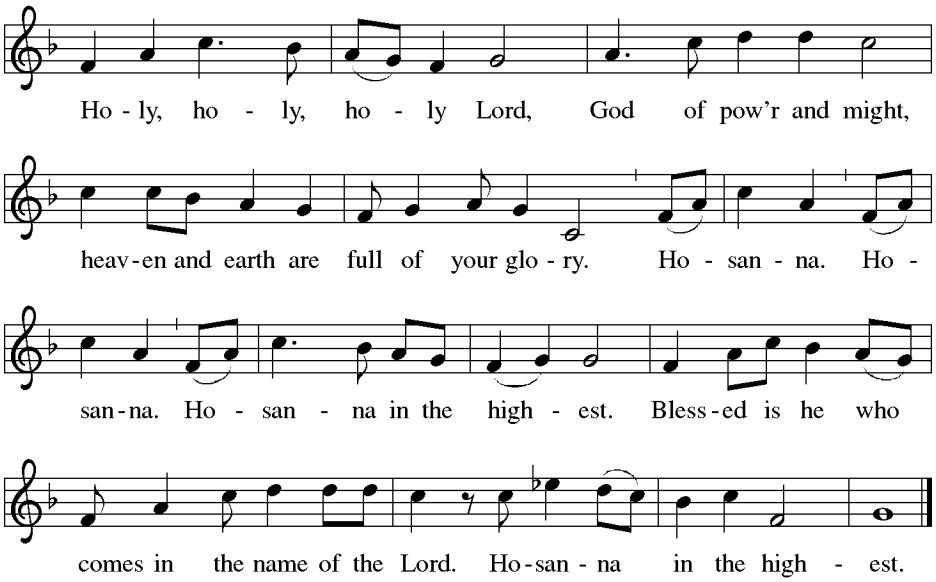


Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope
Music: OSOSŎ, Geonyong Lee, b. 1947
Text and music © Geonyong Lee

OFFERING PRAYER
Let us pray.
God of hope, you fill the hungry with good things. Give us hopeful hearts and open hands to receive your love and share our abundance, that all may be fed. In the name of the one who sustains all life, Jesus Christ, our love. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE
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.

PREFACE
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.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
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 God, the one who was and is and is to come,
we praise you, we bless you, we thank you

for your presence among us
in your Son Jesus, the bringer of peace.

Hear us when we cry.
Make all things new.
Heal the nations.
Widen and deepen the imagination of our hearts.
Give us rest in you.

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.

Place in our hearts the thrill of hope, O God,
you who are Alpha and Omega, beginning and end,
that we may all know your restoration and love
in this world and the next, now and forever.
Amen.

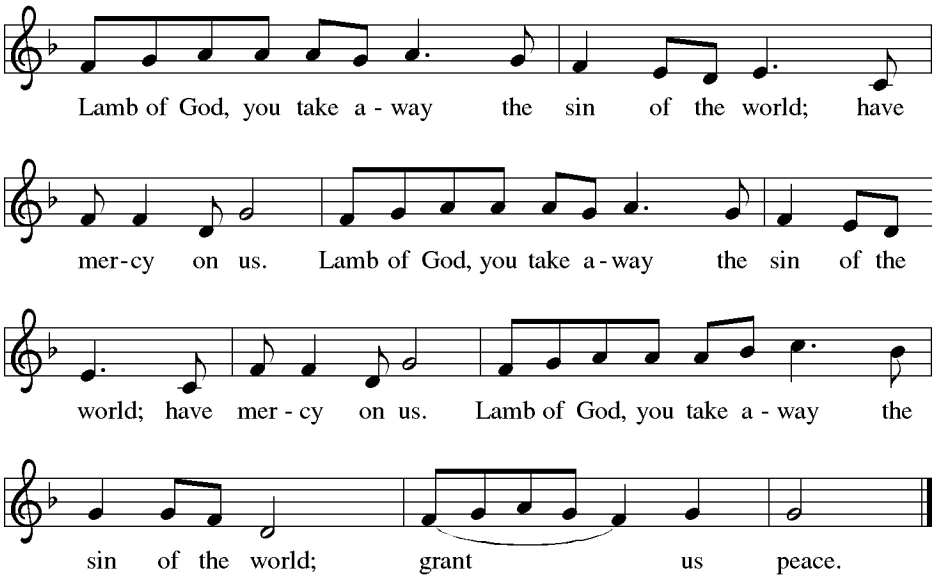
LORD'S PRAYER
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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
God feeds us with tender mercy.
Come to the table.
Thanks be to God.

(All are invited to the Lord's table. To receive communion come forward at the direction of the ushers and take a place at the altar rail. You may stand or kneel as you wish. You will first receive the bread and then may choose to receive either red wine or white grape juice by small glass, or by sipping wine from the chalice. If you choose a small glass you will place it in the empty tray carried by the acolyte. After receiving the bread and wine you will return to your seat. Tell the communion server if you need gluten free bread.)

COMMUNION



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION
Let us pray.
God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING
God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
✢ bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG ***Comfort, Comfort Now My People*** **(ELW 256)**

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Thanks be to God.