ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
February 23, 2025

Whenever you see an asterisk (*), you are invited to stand as you are able.
You are invited to speak sans serif **Bolded type** with the congregation.

Introduction to the Day

Mercy. Mercy. Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is fractured and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of the life-giving Spirit. It is a reflection of God's glory revealed in Christ.

Prelude – *Out of consideration for our musicians, please refrain from talking during the prelude.*

Gathering

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ☩Son, and of the Holy Spirit. A: Amen.

P: Let us pray: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **A: Amen.**

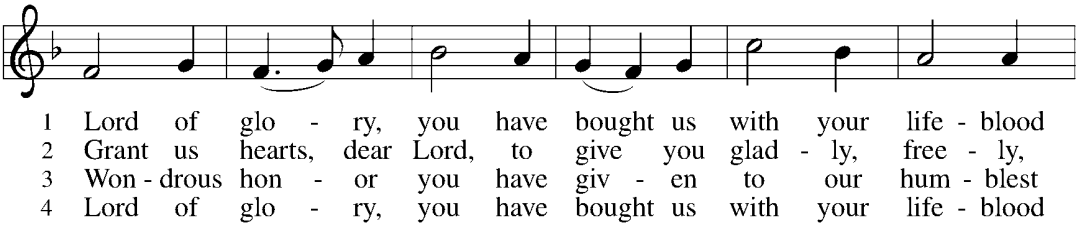
P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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

P: Merciful God, **you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your loving kindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. A: Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*Gathering Hymn *"Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us"* *(ELW 707)*

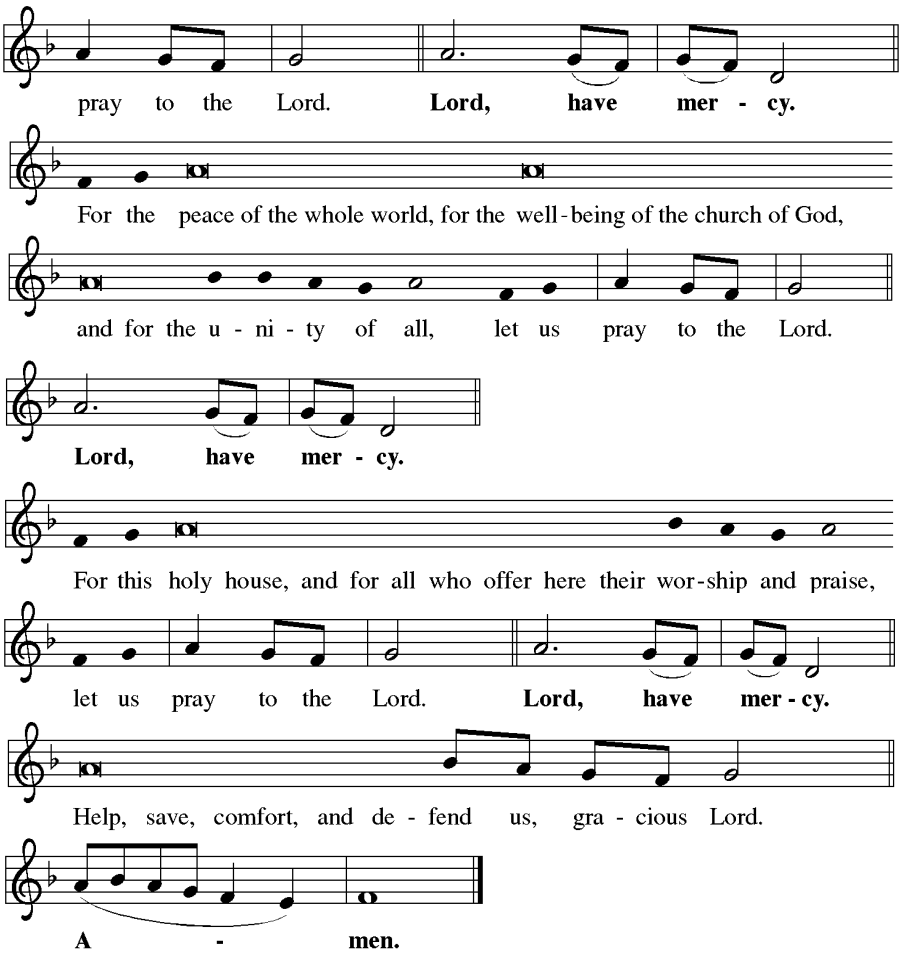


Text: Eliza S. Alderson, 1818–1889, alt.
Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887

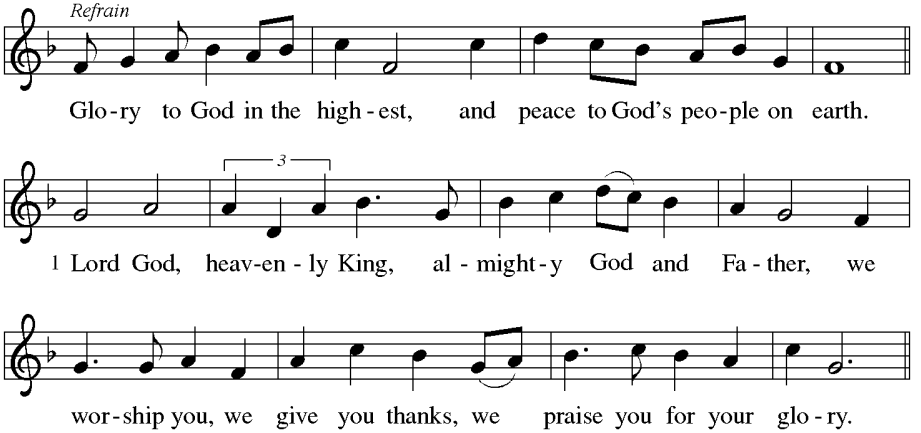
*GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **A: And also, with you.**

KYRIE



HYMN OF PRAISE



Refrain
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of
God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us; you are
seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.
Refrain
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.
3 For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,
you a-lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly
Spir-it, in the glo-ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.
Refrain
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

*Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also, with you.**
P: Let us pray. O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Word

First Reading: Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Years after Joseph's brothers had sold him into slavery, a famine drove them as beggars into Egypt, where Joseph had risen to become the Pharaoh's chief advisor; they do not recognize him. The story of Joseph revolves around the ability of God to bring good out of evil, and to fulfill the divine promises, even through the actions of those who try to thwart them.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not
answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.
4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I
am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 And now do not be distressed or angry
with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For
the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which
there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 God sent me before you to preserve for you a
remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me
here but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over
all the land of Egypt. 9 Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son
Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me; do not delay. 10 You shall
settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your
children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. 11 I will provide
for you there, since there are five more years of famine to come, so that you and your
household and all that you have will not come to poverty.' " 15 And he kissed all his brothers
and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God**.

Psalm: 37:1-11, 39-40 *(sung to the tune He Leadeth Me LBW 501)*

This psalm affirms what the story of Joseph does: that, despite appearances, God's intention will win through.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

During this season we are reading through the last part of 1 Corinthians. One of the reasons Paul is writing to the Christians at Corinth is that some have decided that fully mature Christians (like them) are not only spiritually gifted in superior ways, but also immortal. According to them, only inferior Christians will die. Paul has affirmed that God does not promise immortality, but resurrection – and that Jesus, who died and was raised, is our guide and our pattern.

35 But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they
come?" 36 Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And as for what you sow,
you do not sow the body that is to be but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other
grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen and to each kind of seed its own body.

42 So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is

imperishable. [43] It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. [44] It is sown a physical body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. [45] Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. [46] But it is not the spiritual that is first but the physical and then the spiritual. [47] The first man was from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven. [48] As one of dust, so are those who are of the dust, and as one of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. [49] Just as we have borne the image of the one of dust, we will also bear the image of the one of heaven.

[50] What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation

*Gospel Reading: Luke 6:27-38

While crowds have been following Jesus, this speech is addressed specifically to his disciples. These commandments follow, and depend upon, the affirmations known as the Beatitudes.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the sixth chapter. **A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] [27] "But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; [28] bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. [29] If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. [30] Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. [31] Do to others as you would have them do to you.

[32] "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. [33] If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. [34] If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment,

what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. [35] Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. [36] Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

[37] "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; [38] give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

" P: The gospel of the Lord. **A: Praise to you, O Christ**.

Sermon

*Hymn of the Day: "*How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord*" (ELW 580)

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918
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*Invitation to Baptism

*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 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 Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

L: Surprising God, you call us to love our enemies and to show kindness in the face of cruelty. Let our actions be a shining witness of your overwhelming grace for all. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: As animals hibernate and fields lay dormant, let them be a reminder that life and faith are not static but always changing and growing. May we, with all creation, trust that the ending of one thing promises life in a new way. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: We pray for leaders and policymakers who work to reduce violence in our nations, cities, and towns. Give your wisdom and discernment amid heated arguments and differing viewpoints. God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: We pray for the victims of abuse and violence. Provide safe shelter and new beginnings to those experiencing domestic violence and dangerous situations. Enfold with love all who seek your healing care (*especially*). God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: Empower our faith communities to be signs of your gracious love. Bless the local ministries of parish nursing and caregiving, that they will be a voice for those in need in our communities (*other ministries may be named*). God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.**

L: Blessed are those who delight in the meditation of your Word and world. Guide Susquehanna University's search for a chaplain. Grant wisdom to the committee and prepare the heart of the one called to serve that they may inspire faith, foster belonging, and lead with love. God of Grace. **A: hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: We give thanks for the enduring witness of those who have died before us especially Leona Olenik, Anne Harpster, Anne Kline Corl, and Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who the greater church remembers today. May their lives in you provide a witness of your everlasting grace. God of grace,
A: hear our prayer.

L: We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.
A: Amen.

*Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also with you.**

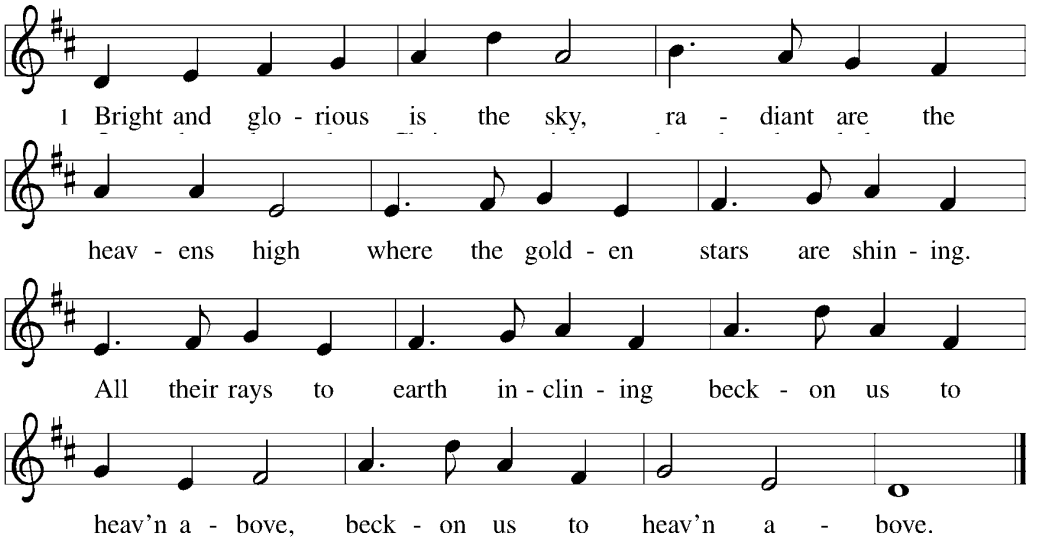
Meal

Offering

*Offerings can be made online at **stpaulpgm.org/give**, mailed to St. Paul Lutheran Church, PO Box 200, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, placed in the mail slot (outside door to Pastor Paul's office), or in the offering plate located in the lobby/narthex near the entrance of the sanctuary.*

Musical Offering

*Offertory: *"Bright and Glorious Is the Sky" vs. 1* *(ELW 301)*



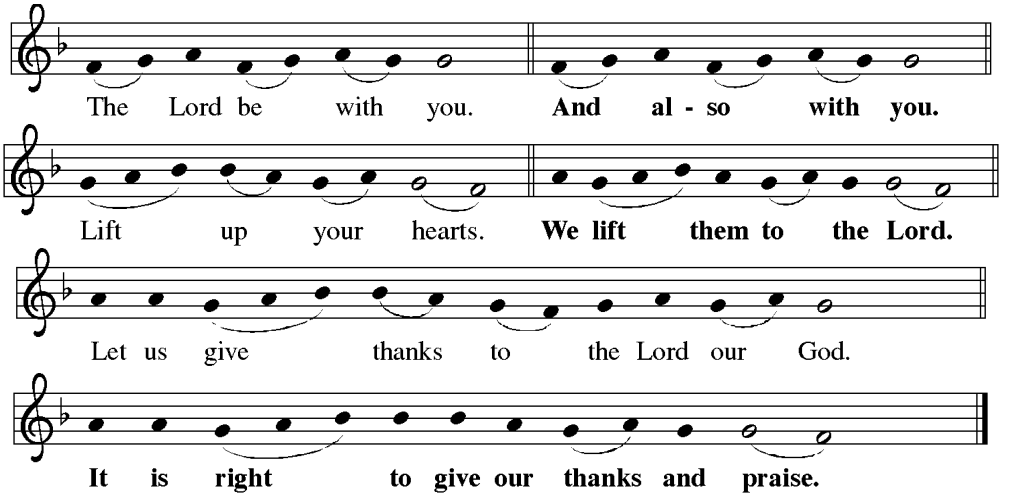
Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877–1970, alt.
Music: DEJLIG ER DEN HIMMEL BLÅ, Danish, 19th cent.
Text © 1958 Service Book and Hymnal, admin. Augsburg Fortress

*Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

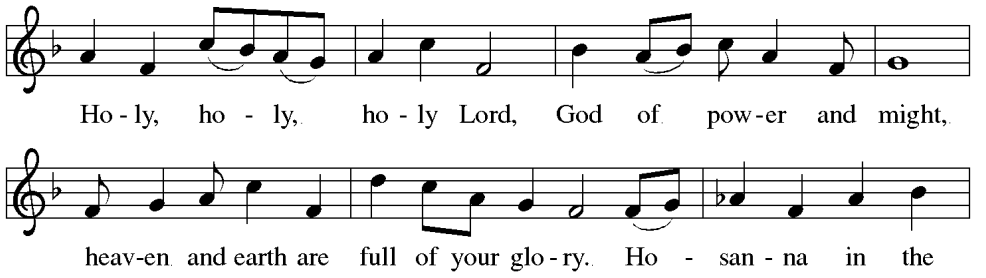
* DIALOGUE

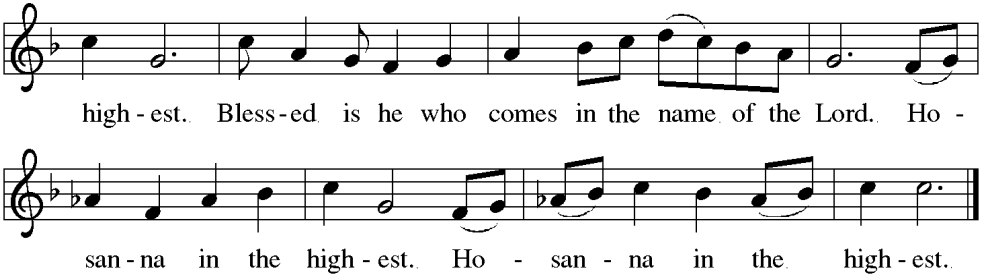


*PREFACE

P: 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:

*SANCTUS





*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: P: Blessed are you, O holy God:
you are the Life and Light of all.
By your powerful word you created all things.

Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son.
He is your Light, shining in our darkness
and revealing to us your mercy and might.

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.

Until his great Epiphany, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:
A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore,
his preaching and healing,
his dying and rising, and his promise to come again,
we await that day when all the universe
will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.
A: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal,
that, refreshed with this heavenly food,
we may be light for the world,
revealing the brilliance of your Son.

A: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

A: Amen

*Lord's Prayer

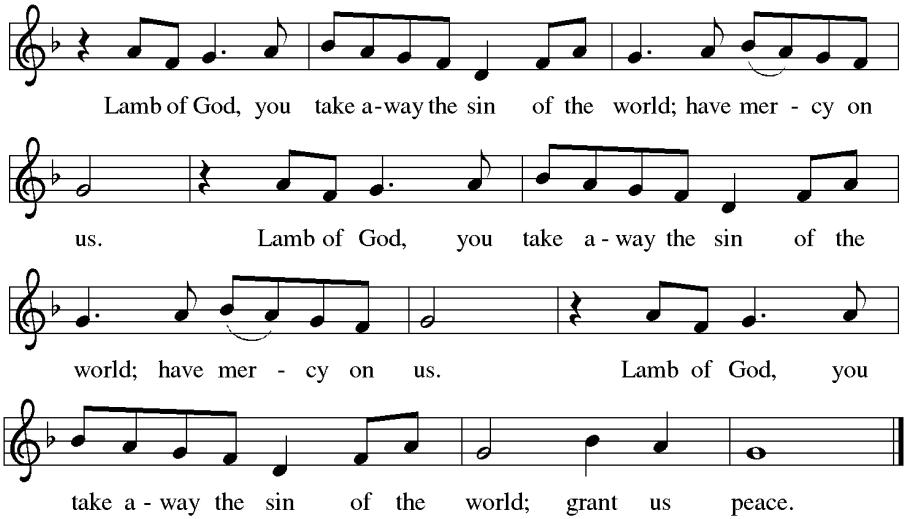
P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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

P: The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

*Lamb of God



A note on Communion Wafers

To topple barriers that prevent participation in worship, we want to make it possible for individuals with Celiac Disease or gluten intolerant to be able to eat the Body of our Lord. Our default wafers are made by Parish Crossroads and are known as "Low Gluten Wafers" because they contain trace amounts of gluten. However, the wafers are tested at least once a year for how much gluten is in them. Since 2020, the wafers have routinely tested to contain 15ppm gluten or less (The US FDA defines most food products with 20ppm or less as "gluten free"). Use the QR Code and look for the link that gives the most recent test results.

If you still have concerns, we have some truly gluten-free wafers available upon request.

Communion

P: The body of Christ, given for you. L: The blood of Christ, shed for you. **A: Amen.**

Communion Hymn: "*I Come with Joy*" *(ELW 482)*

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936
Music: DOVE OF PEACE, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835
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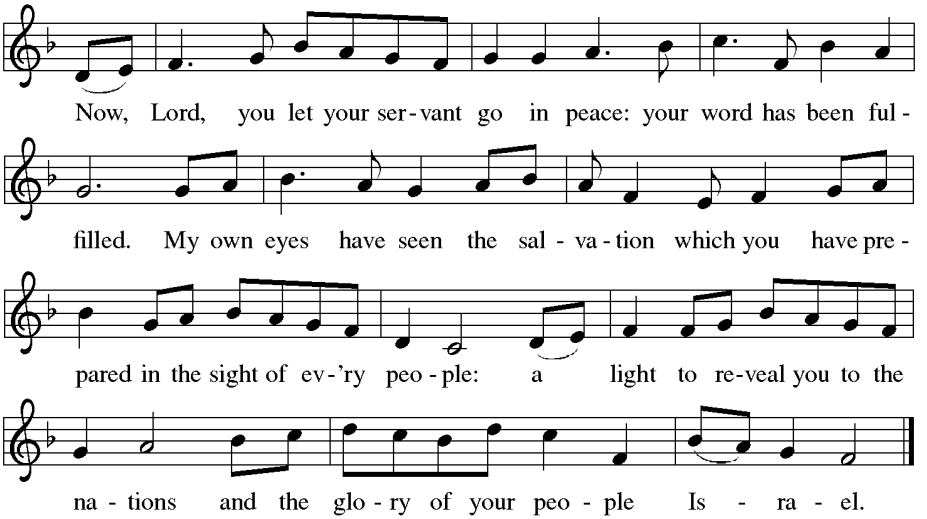
*Post-Communion Blessing

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

*Post-Communion Canticle – *Nunc Dimittis* (*Now, Lord)*



*Post-Communion Prayer

L: Let us pray. Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray, **A: Amen.**

Sending

*Sending of Communion

Announcements

You may be seated.

*Charge to the People

*Blessing

P: 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. In the name of the Father, and the Son, ☩ and the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*SENDING HYMN: *"Lord, You Give the Great Commission"* *(ELW 579)*

Text: Jeffery Rowthorn, b. 1934
Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1991
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*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Live in hope. **A: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Daily Readings for the week

Sunday, February 23
Genesis 43:3-11, 15
Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 (11)
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50
Luke 6:27-38

Monday, February 24
Genesis 33:1-17
1 Corinthians 11:2-16
Psalm 38

Tuesday, February 25
1 Samuel 24:1-22
1 Corinthians 11:17-22,27-33
Psalm 38

Wednesday, February 26
Leviticus 5:1-13
Luke 17:1-4
Psalm 38

Thursday, February 27
Deuteronomy 9:1-5
Acts 3:11-16
Psalm 99

Friday, February 28
Deuteronomy 9:6-14
Acts 10:1-8
Psalm 99

Saturday, March 1
Deuteronomy 9:15-24
Luke 10:21-24
Psalm 99

ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Serving Today

Worship Leader.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister.....Lauren Tingle
Pianist..... Michelle McMullen
Sacristan.....Karen Magnuson
Reader.....Jeff Muthler

About St. Paul

Purpose

We are a beacon, boldly sharing the light of Jesus' grace and love.

Mission

Guided by Jesus, we strengthen faith, deepen compassion, extend generosity, and serve community.

Core Values

Faith ❧ Compassion ❧ Generosity ❧ Community

Our Bible Verses

As Paul was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [Jesus said,] 'Paul is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the nations.'– Acts 9:3,15

Land Acknowledgement

St. Paul is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock people, where we gather for worship this morning. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, Lenne Lenape, as well as all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it their home.

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