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

Ascension of Our Lord

(observed)

June 1, 2025

Midweek Evening Prayer, Wednesdays 6PM

Welcome to Saint Paul!

We are happy to have you here!

How to know when to stand, sit, or speak

Whenever you see an asterisk (*) at a heading, you are invited to stand as you are able. You are not required to stand, so if, for health or emotional reasons you cannot or do not wish to stand, that is okay.
You are invited to speak the words printed in **bold type**.

We are an Open Communion Congregation

This means that any Christian who has received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is invited to receive Holy Communion.

How to financially support us

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.

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.

Gathering

The Gathering for worship began when you started readying yourself for worship

An Introduction to the day

In today's readings the risen Christ ascends into heaven and his followers are assured that the Spirit will empower them to be witnesses throughout the earth. The disciples are told to not gaze up into heaven to look for Jesus (Acts 1:11); we find his presence among us as we proclaim the word and share the Easter feast. We too long for the Spirit to enliven our faith and invigorate our mission.

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

Paschal Greeting

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
A: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

*Confession and forgiveness

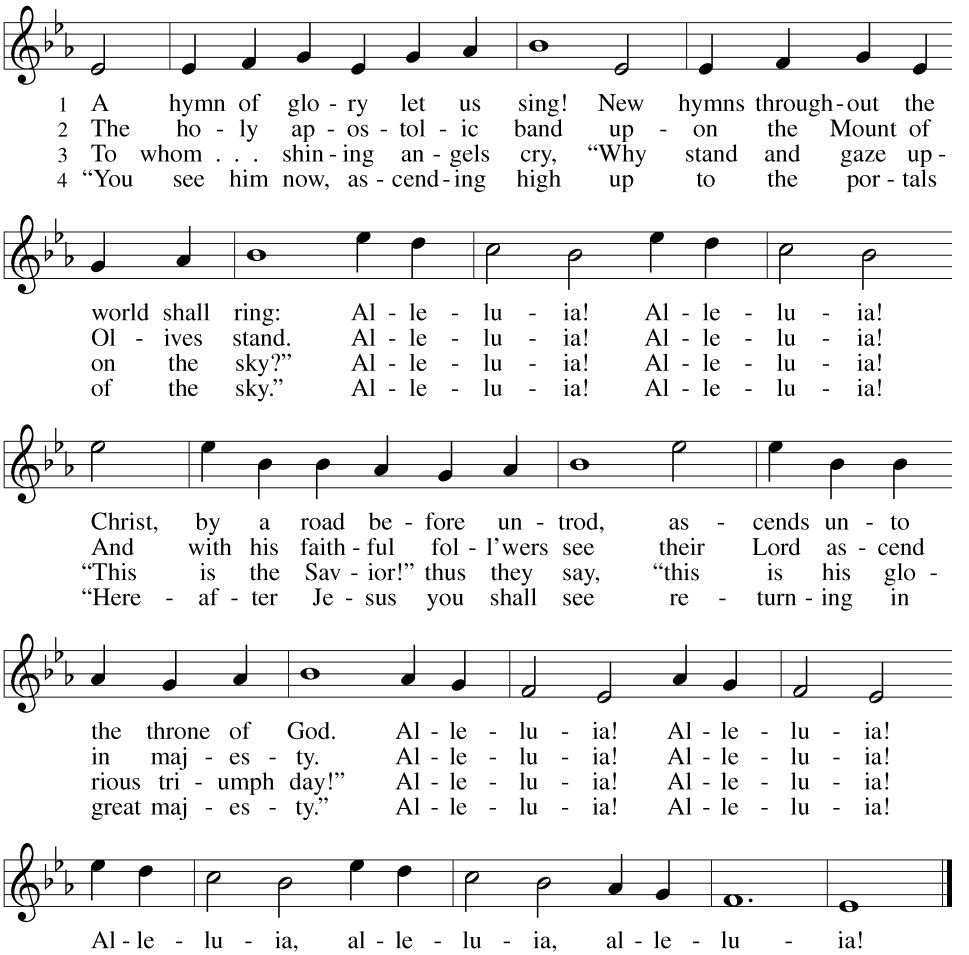
P: In the name of the Father, and of the ☩Son, and of the Holy Spirit. A: Amen.

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.

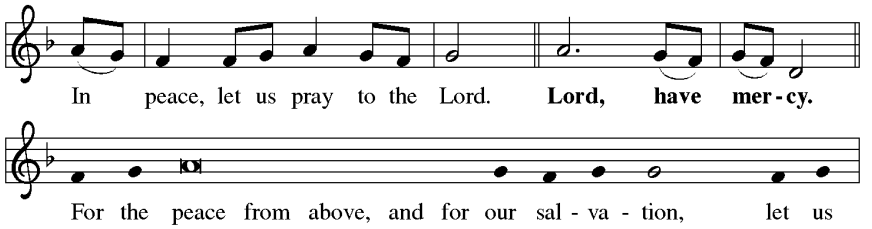
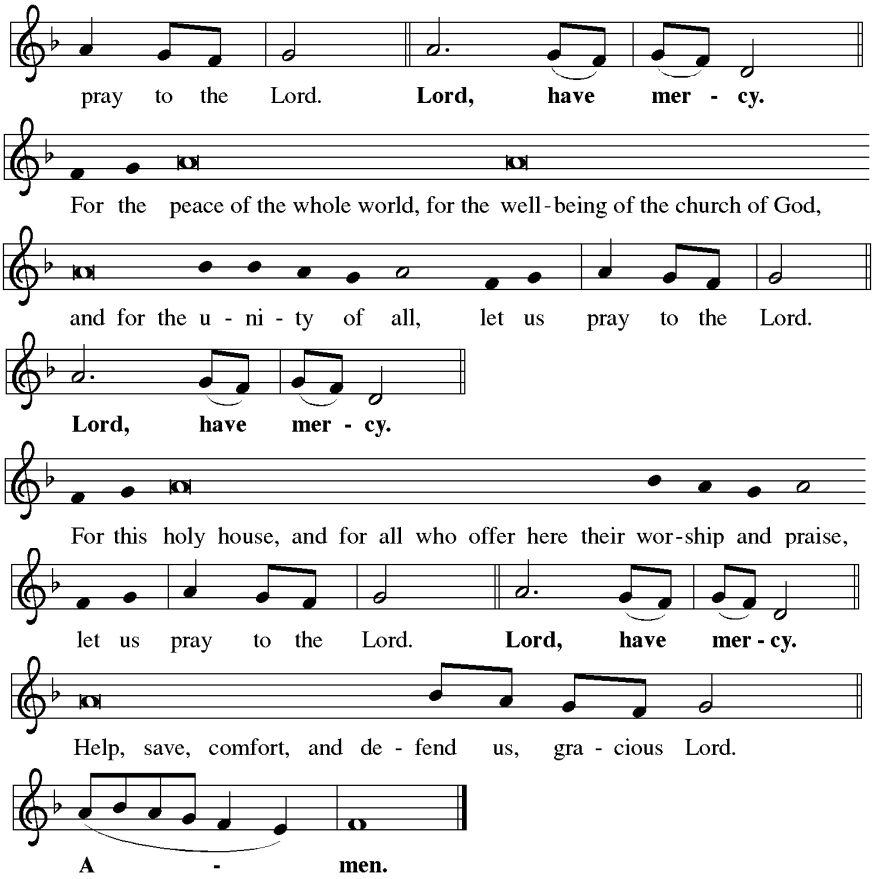
P: Let us confess our sin, in the presence of God and of one another.

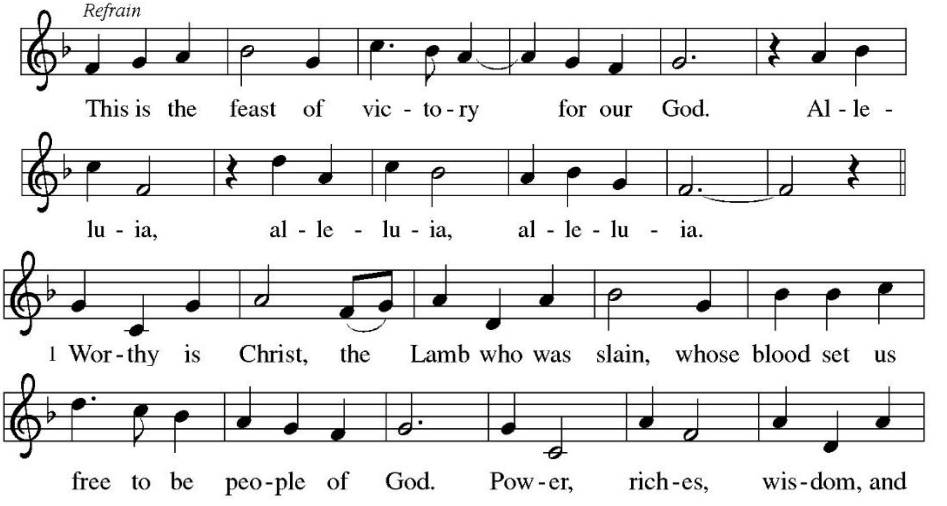
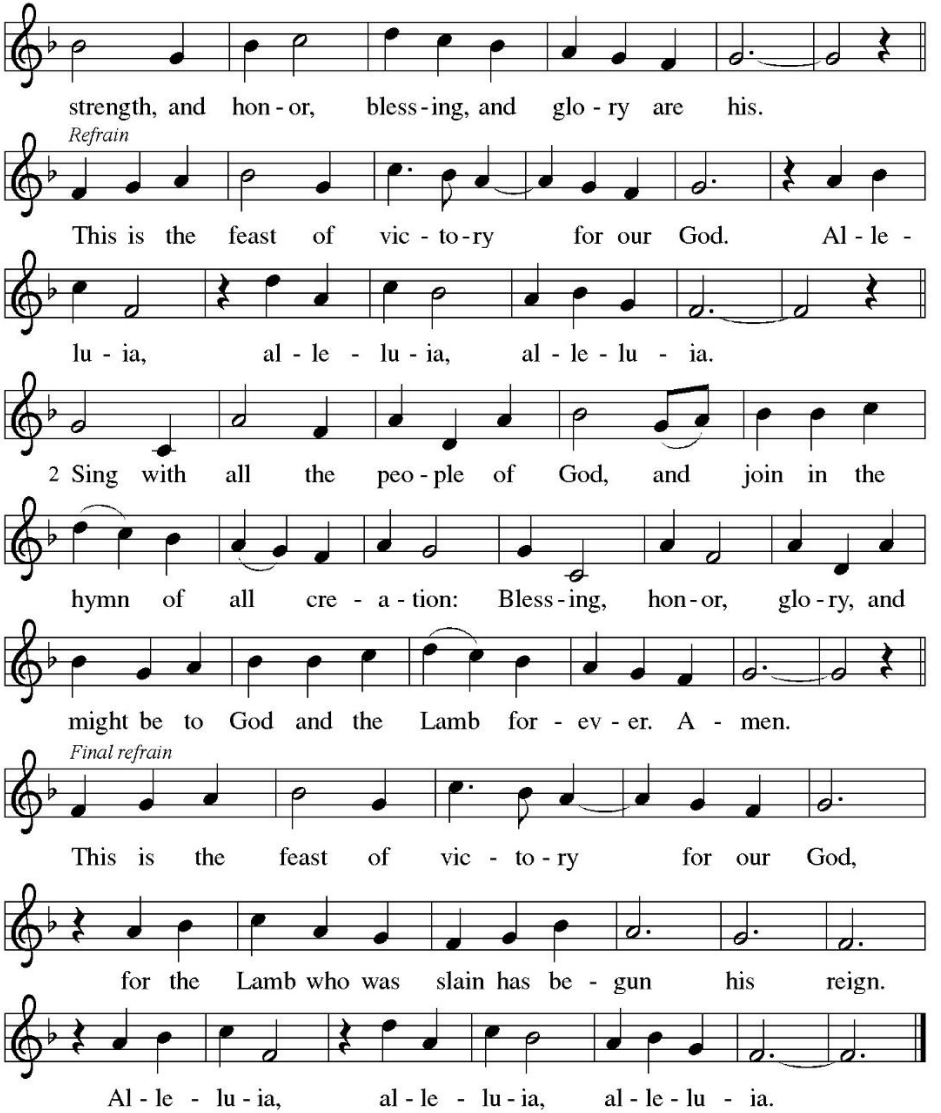
P Most merciful God, **A: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. 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 *"A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!"* *(LBW 157)*

*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

*This is the Feast



*Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised, he abides with us on earth to the end of time, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Word

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

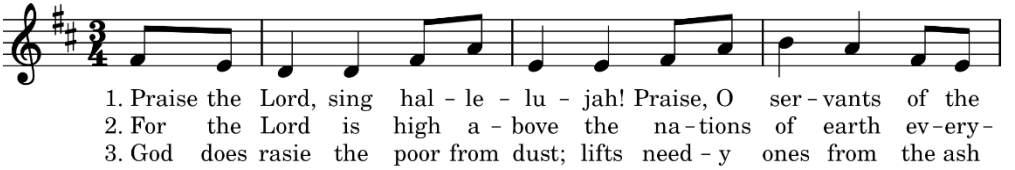
Both Luke and Acts are addressed to Theophilus ("God-lover"). The two men in dazzling white robes are also the figures the women met at the empty tomb who told them of the resurrection; they may be Moses and Elijah (the Law and the Prophets), who are dressed in this way at the Transfiguration.

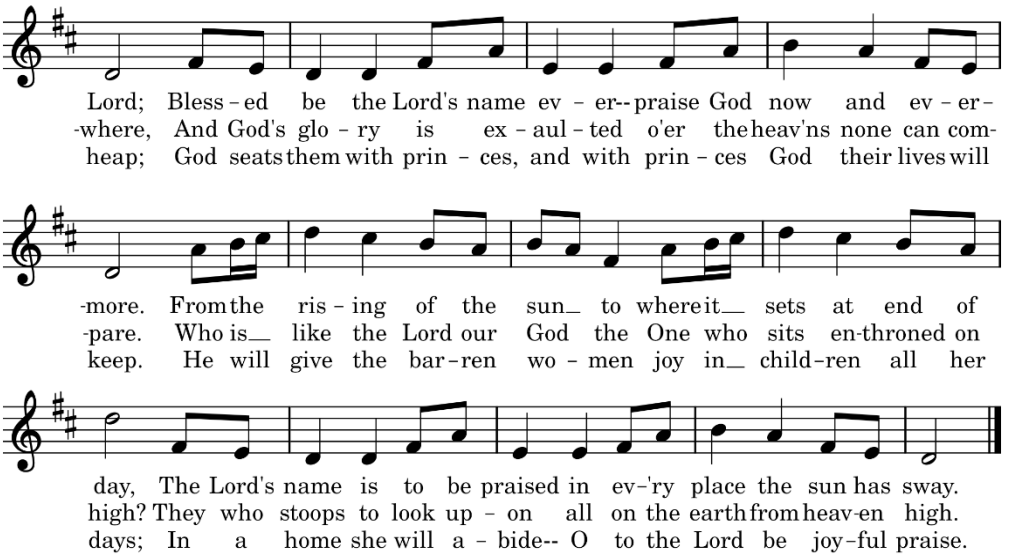
[Luke writes:] 1 In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and
teach 2 until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through
the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3 After his suffering he presented
himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days
and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4 While staying with them, he ordered them not
to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what
you have heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the
Holy Spirit not many days from now."

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you
will restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or
periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when
the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all
Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 When he had said this, as they were
watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going
and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by
them. 11 They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This
Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you
saw him go into heaven." L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God**.

Psalm 113 *(sung to the tune Nettleton)*

For the Israelites and many other cultures, "higher" means holier, closer to God, and this psalm uses that imagery over and over. For us, it echoes the Ascension of Jesus.



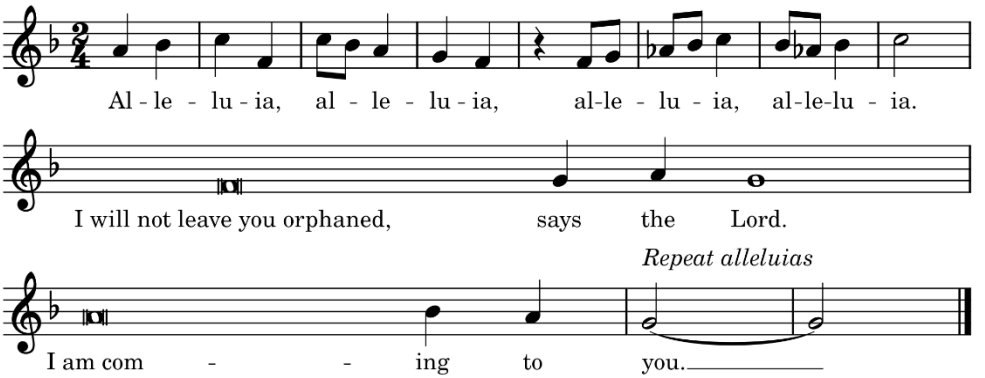


Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

These verses form a great hymn to the magnificence and transcendence of the resurrected and ascended Christ. Since he "fills all in all," while he is seated at the Father's right hand, he is never absent from any place in creation.

15 I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for
this reason 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my
prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit
of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, 18 so that, with the eyes of your
heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what
are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, 19 and what is the
immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his
great power. 20 God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead
and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and
authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this
age but also in the age to come. 22 And he has put all things under his feet and has made
him the head over all things for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who
fills all in all. L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation



*Gospel Reading: Luke 24:44-53

Luke ends his Gospel with this story of the Ascension, slightly different from the version with which he will begin Acts. But he is clearly laying the groundwork for the ministry of Jesus to continue in that second volume and beyond.

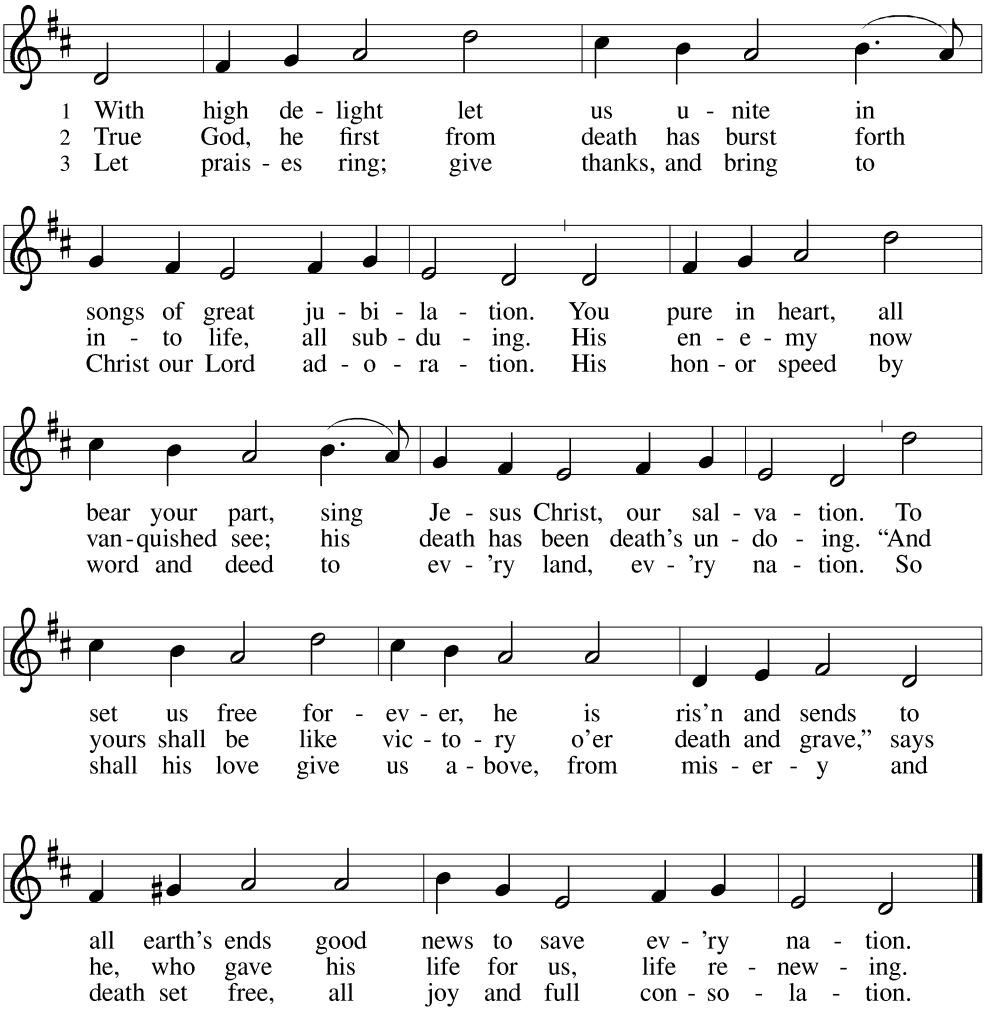
P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the twenty fourth chapter.
A: Glory to you, O Lord.

44 [Jesus said to the eleven and those with them,] “These are my words that I spoke to
you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the
prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”45 Then he opened their minds to
understand the scriptures, 46 and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is
to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day 47 and that repentance and
forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from
Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And see, I am sending upon you what
my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power
from on high.”

50 Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed
them. 51 While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into
heaven. 52 And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and they
were continually in the temple blessing God.

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

Sermon

*HYMN OF THE DAY: *"With High Delight Let Us Unite"* (ELW 368)

Text: Georg Vetter, 1536–1599; tr. Martin H. Franzmann, 1907–1976, alt.
Music: MIT FREUDEN ZART, medieval European tune
Text © 1969 Concordia Publishing House.

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*NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*Prayers of Intercession

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

L: Welcoming God, you invite all people to come and encounter your love. Give your church open hearts and minds to embrace all who seek your presence. Increase the capacity for cooperation between denominations and congregations. Hear us, O God.
A: Your mercy is great.

L: Creating God, your might is seen in storms and in silence. Where drought threatens, bring rain. Where waters flood, ease them back. Where fire, earthquake, hurricane, or tornado destroy, shelter your people and restore your land. Hear us, O God.
A: Your mercy is great.

L: Discerning God, fill the hearts of leaders with your passion for justice and mercy. Call the nations of this world to tables of peace and collaboration. Encourage governments to seek avenues of collective benefit and joy. Hear us, O God.
A: Your mercy is great.

L: Abiding God, all people are held in your care. Accompany survivors of abuse, trauma, and exploitation. Strengthen our resolve to listen and advocate on behalf of all who are unnoticed. Hear our prayers for those close to our heart (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
A: Your mercy is great.

L: Rejoicing God, be with this congregation as summer begins in the northern hemisphere. Keep travelers safe. Keep the vulnerable cool. Invigorate summer ministry efforts in our community, and support the well-being of children and young people especially Camp Mount Luther and Camp Sequanota. Hear us, O God.
A: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.
L: Loving God, the beginning and the end, you are with us throughout our lives. In gratitude for the saints who have died especially George Conrad and the martyr Justin, whom the greater church remembers today, we look toward your coming again among us. Hear us, O God.
A: Your mercy is great.

L: We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.
A: Amen.

*Peace

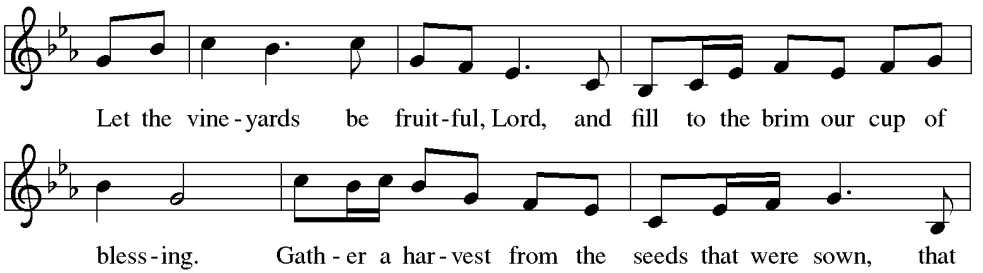
P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also with you.**

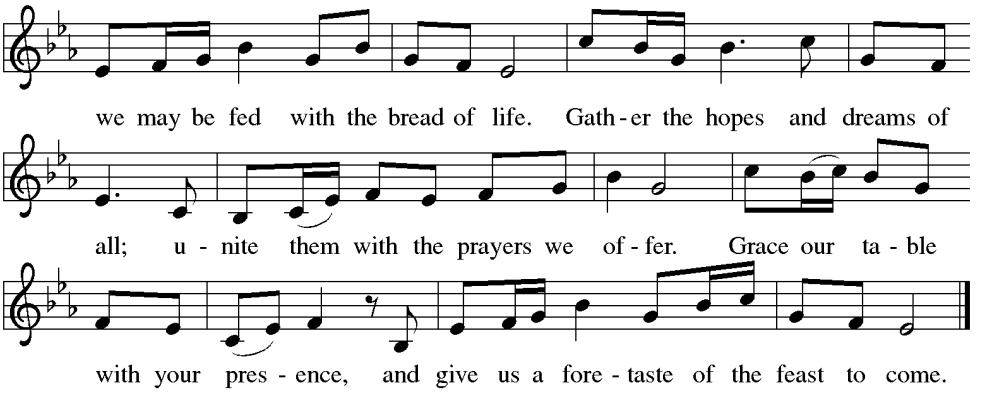
Meal

Offering

Musical Offering

*Offertory: *"Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful"* *(ELW 184)*





Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927
Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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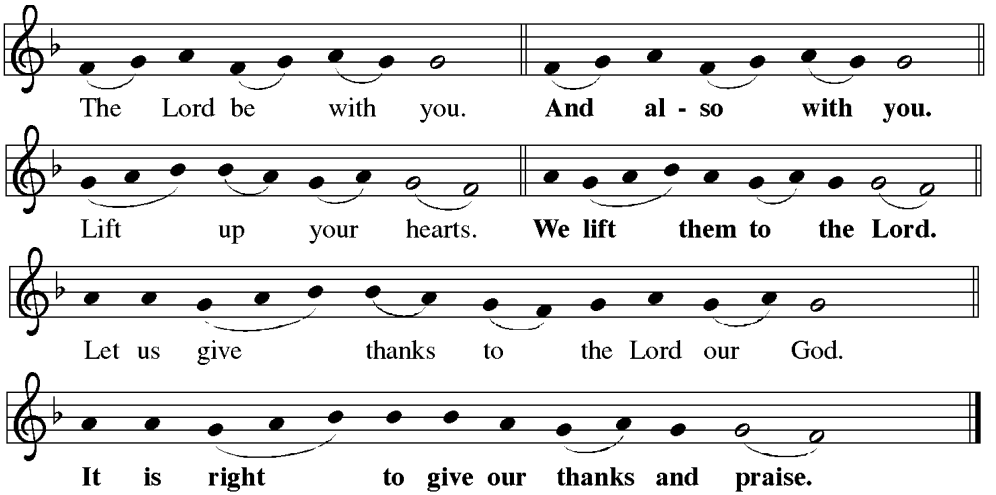
*Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray: Risen One, you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we bring. Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with this meal, that we may live as your risen body in the world. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

* DIALOGUE

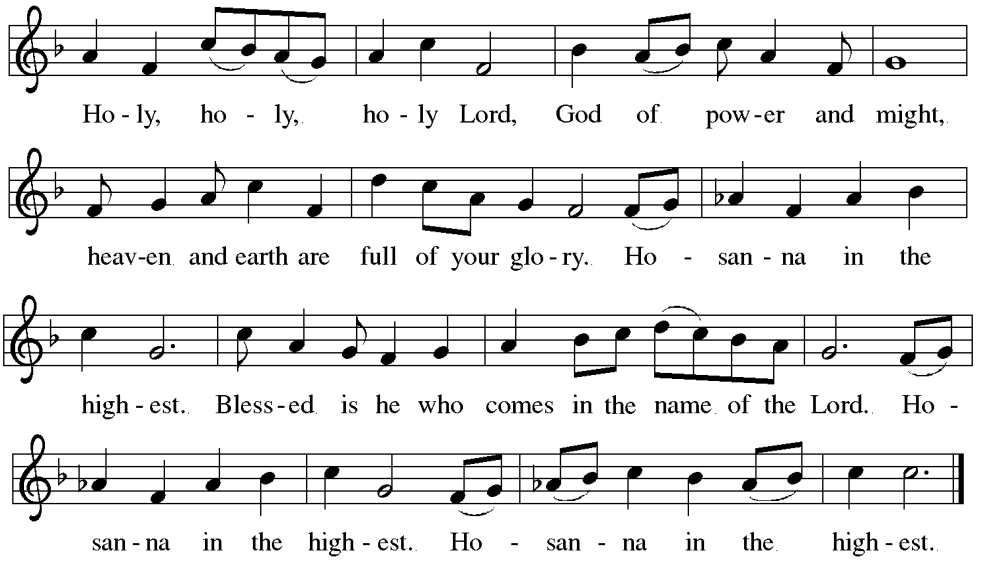


*PREFACE

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, for the glorious resurrection of our

Savior Jesus Christ; who, enthroned forever at your right hand, intercedes for us as our great high priest. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*SANCTUS



*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide,
together with rivers and seas, wells and springs
we bless and magnify you.
You led your people Israel through the desert,
and provided them water from the rock.
We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,
who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.
In the night in which he was handed over,
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.
Together we proclaim the mystery of our faith:
A: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.
Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.
A: Amen, come Lord Jesus.
Pour out your Spirit on this holy food
and on all the baptized gathered for this feast:
wash away our sin,
that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.
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! Alleluia!

*Lord's Prayer

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

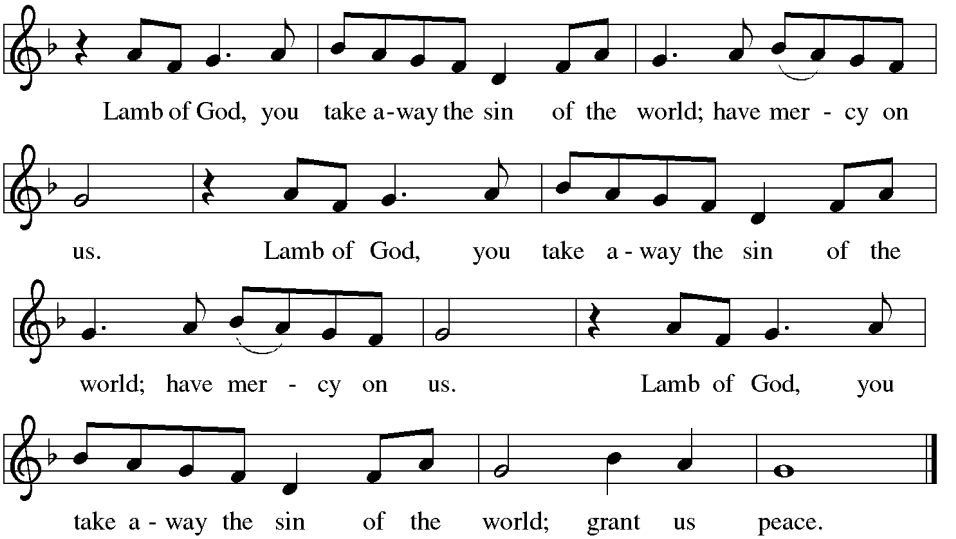
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

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.
Lead us not into time of trial,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
forever and ever. Amen.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

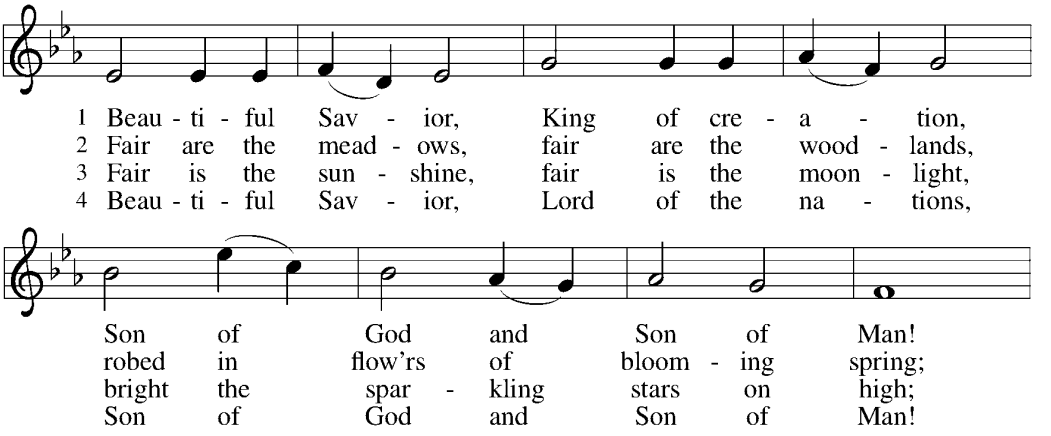
*Lamb of God

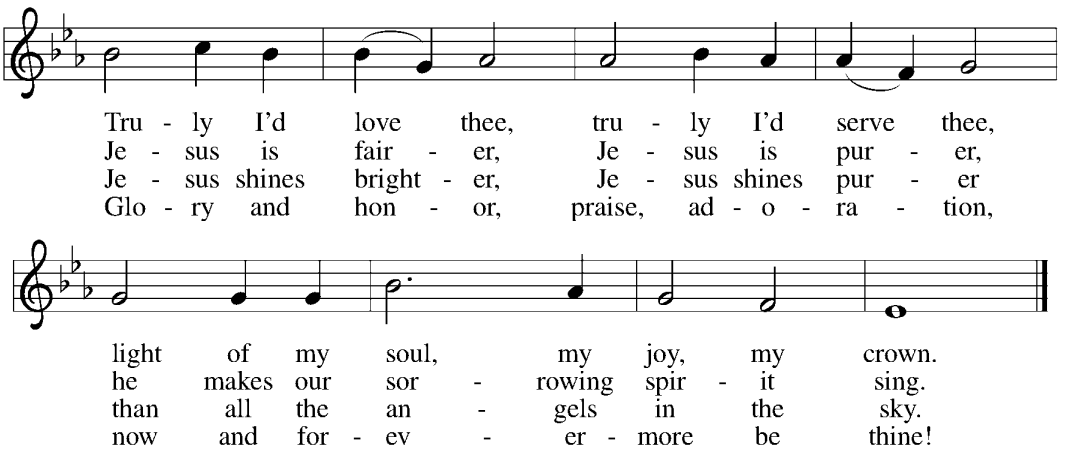


Communion

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

Communion Hymn: *"Beautiful Savior"* *(ELW 838)*



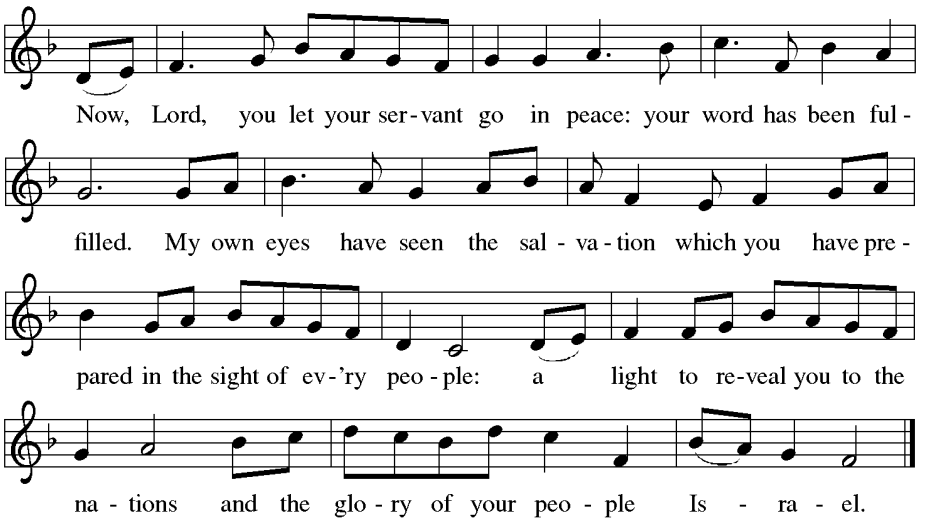


Text: *Gesangbuch*, Münster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823–1904
Music: SCHÖNSTER HERR JESU, Silesian folk tune, 19th cent.

*Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you, body, mind, and soul, now, and unto eternal life**. A: Amen.**

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



*Post-Communion Prayer

L: Let us pray. Living One, in this feast you have made yourself known to us. Send us now to tell of your wonders, sing of your glory, and proclaim your risen life to a wounded and weary world. **A: Amen.**

Sending

*Sending of communion

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

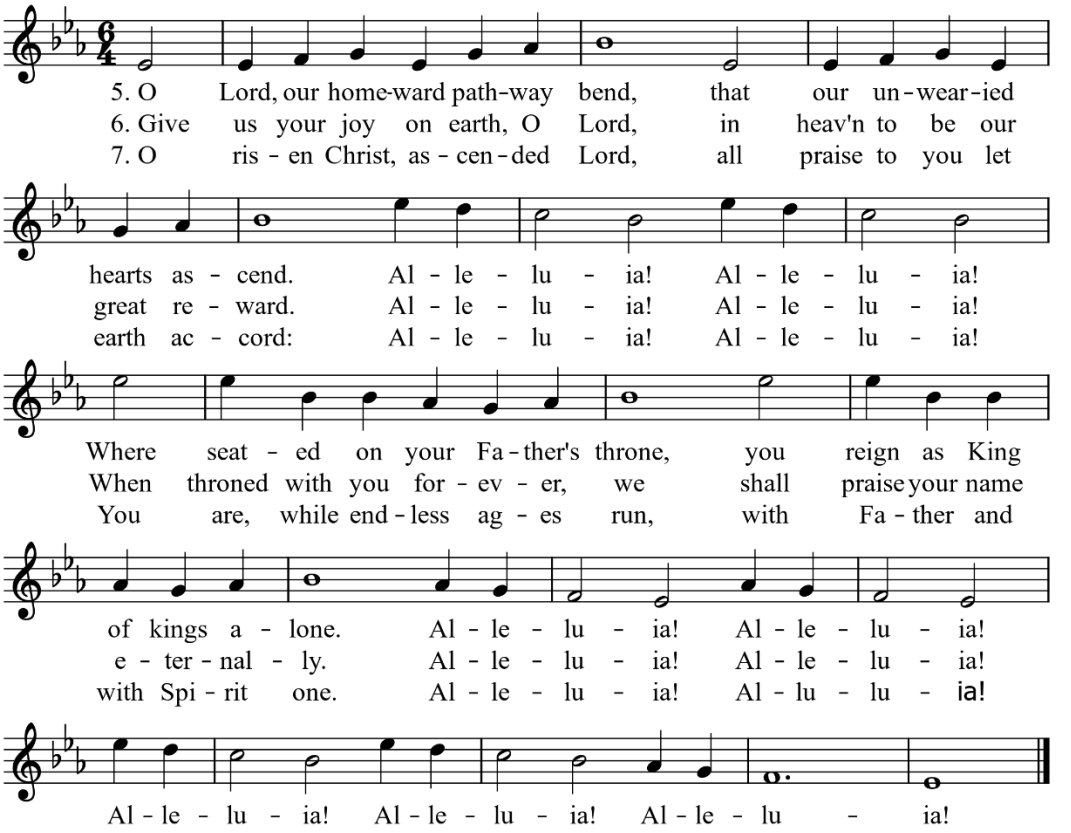
Announcements

You may be seated.

*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: *"A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing vs 5-7"* *(LBW 157)*



*Dismissal

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

A: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

L: Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia! Alleluia!

A: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude

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

Serving Today

Worship Leader.....Bishop Barb Collins
Assisting Minister.....Eleanor Bird
Pianist.....Michelle McMullen
Sacristan.....Delorse Homan
Reader.....Karen Magnuson

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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