

***“People of Christ  
Making a  
Difference”***

**15th Sunday  
after Pentecost**

**September 6, 2026**

**8:30 AM &  
11:00 AM**

## **WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S!**

A nursery is provided for children through age 4 for both worship services and for infants and toddlers during Sunday School. The nursery is located at the end of the hall on the right side.

Children's bags can be found in the "Kid's Corner" of the narthex.

Restroom facilities are located down the hall on the left side.

First Aid, Emergency Equipment, and a wheelchair are located down the hall on the right by the stairwell.

If for any reason you must leave the sanctuary, the service is live streamed in the Agape Sunday School classroom. Any usher will be glad to direct you.

Sunday school classes are provided for 2 year olds through adults.

Listening devices and larger print bulletins are located in the narthex.

Ushers are also available to assist you.

If you are a visitor feel free to sign-in using the QR code. Here's how it works: Point your camera at the image, tap the link that appears on your screen, and share whatever information you desire. Thank you! Hope to see you again soon!



## **GREETING, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND PEACE**

### **PRELUDE**

*"Liturgical Improvisation No. 1"*

George Oldroyd

(We Stand)

### **BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

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.

**Amen.**

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.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are in bondage 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.**

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, 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.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN***"As We Gather at Your Table"*

ELW 522

1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,  
2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;  
3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast

help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.  
where tri - um-phiant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.

Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;  
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;  
There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,

teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.  
may we still be - hold your im-age in the world you died to save.  
as we join with saints and an-gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

**GREETING**

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

**And also with you.**

## CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



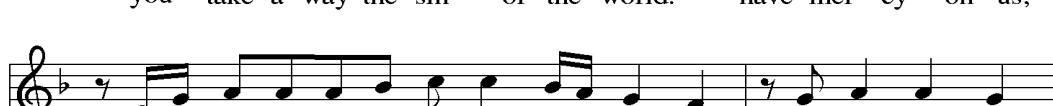
we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



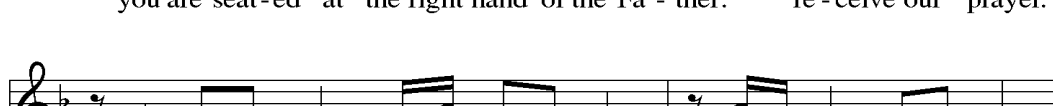
Lord Je-sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



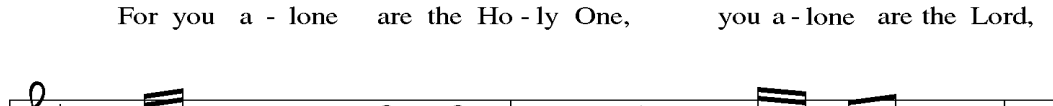
you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



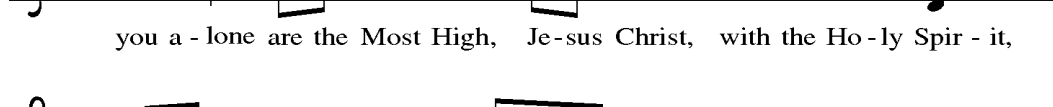
you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



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.

## THE SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

(We Sit)

## FIRST READING

Ezekiel 33:7-11

<sup>7</sup>So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

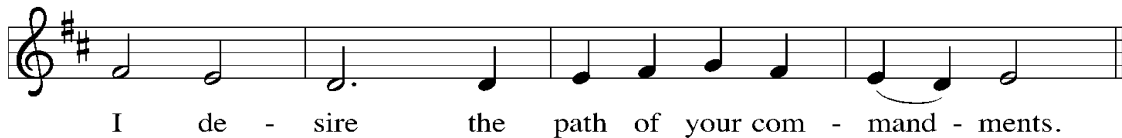
<sup>10</sup>Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" <sup>11</sup>Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

Psalms 119:33-40



<sup>33</sup>Teach me, O LORD, the way | of your statutes,  
and I shall keep it | to the end.

<sup>34</sup>**Give me understanding, and I shall | keep your teaching;  
I shall keep it with | all my heart.**

<sup>35</sup>Lead me in the path of | your commandments,  
for that is | my desire.

<sup>36</sup>**Incline my heart to | your decrees  
and not to | unjust gain. R**

<sup>37</sup>Turn my eyes from be- | holding falsehood;  
give me life | in your way.

<sup>38</sup>**Fulfill your promise | to your servant,  
which is for | those who fear you.**

<sup>39</sup>Turn away the reproach | that I dread,  
because your judg- | ments are good.

<sup>40</sup>**Behold, I long for | your commandments;  
by your righteousness en- | liven me. R**

## SECOND READING

Romans 13:8-14

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

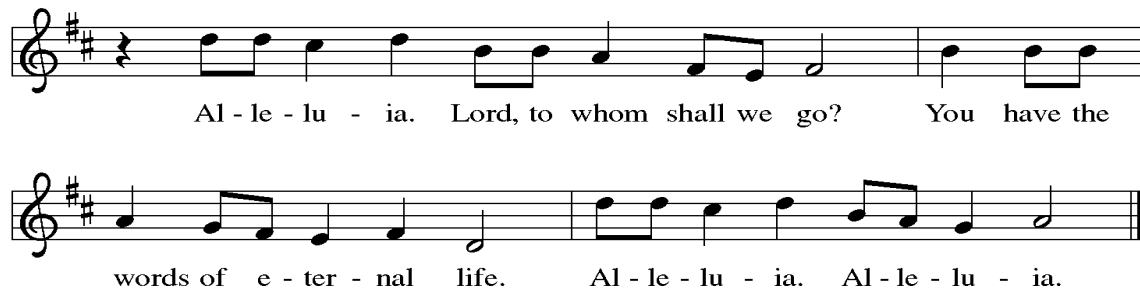
<sup>11</sup>Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup>the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; <sup>13</sup>let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

(We Stand)

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



## THE HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 18:15-20

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>15</sup>"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

(We Sit)

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Ralph

SERMON

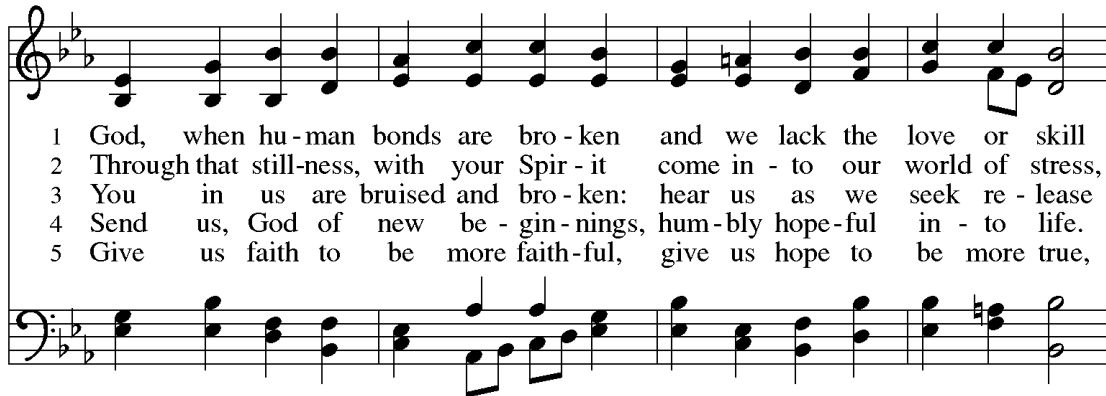
Pastor Ralph

(We Stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

*"God, When Human Bonds Are Broken"*

ELW 603



1 God, when hu-man bonds are bro-ken and we lack the love or skill  
2 Through that still-ness, with your Spir-it come in-to our world of stress,  
3 You in us are bruised and bro-ken: hear us as we seek re-lease  
4 Send us, God of new be-gin-nings, hum-bly hope-ful in-to life.  
5 Give us faith to be more faith-ful, give us hope to be more true,



to re-store the hope of heal-ing, give us grace and make us still.  
for the sake of Christ for-giv-ing all the fail-ures we con-fess.  
from the pain of ear-lier liv-ing; set us free and grant us peace.  
Use us as a means of bless-ing: make us stron-ger, give us faith.  
give us love to go on learn-ing: God, en-cour-age and re-new!

## THE APOSTLE'S 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 THE FAITHFUL

(We Sit)

### OFFERING

God calls us to be generous stewards for the sake of our ministry near and far. You can support our ministry by putting your offering in the offering plate, mailing it to the church, giving online ([sslc.org](http://sslc.org)) or use the QR Code) or through the Givelify app. If you would like more details on direct deposit giving please contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, at (803) 359-6562.



Anthem

*"Beautiful Savior"*

Nancy Grundahl

Lord of the sunlight, Lord of the starlight, Lord of the seasons, teach me to know  
how best to love thee, how best to serve thee, mid summer's flowers or winter's snows.

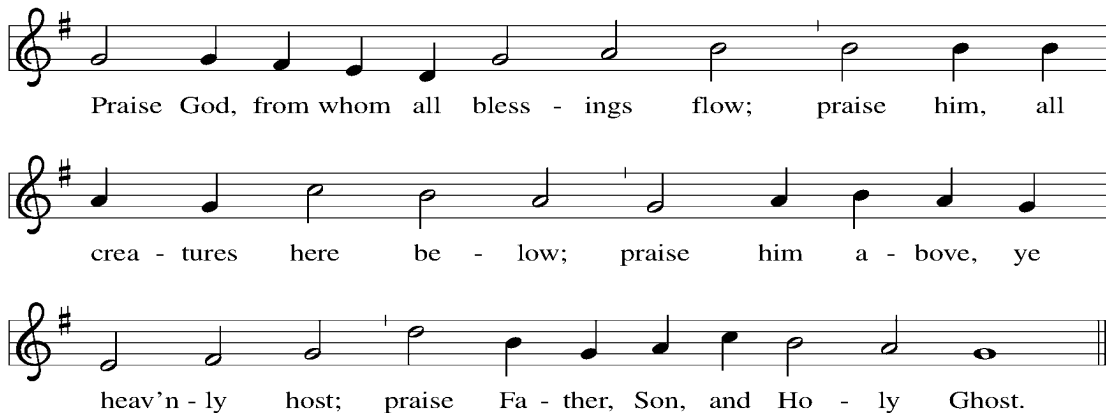
Fair are the meadows, fairer the woodlands, robed in flowers of blooming spring.  
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer. He makes our sorrowing spirits sing.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of all the nations, thou both human and divine.  
Glory and honor, praise, adoration, now and forever more be thine.

(We Stand)

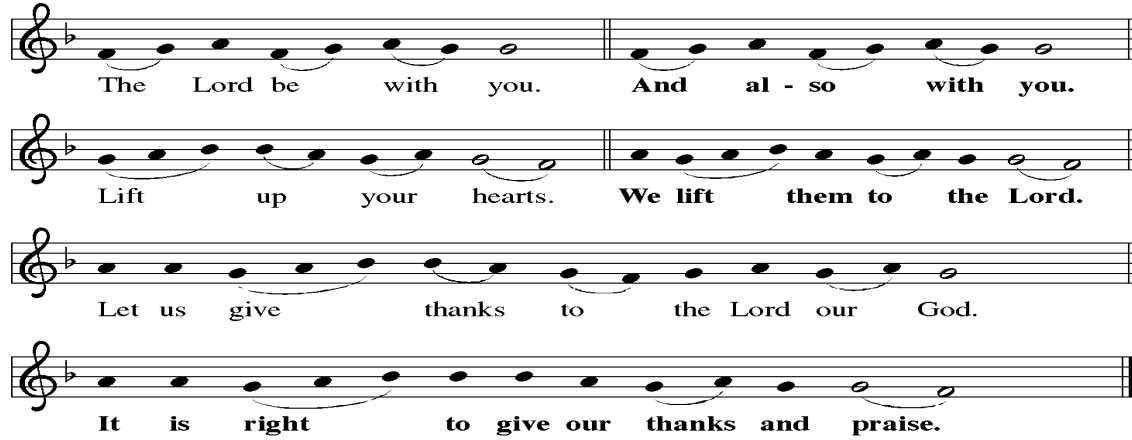
### OFFERTORY

ELW 854



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all  
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye  
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

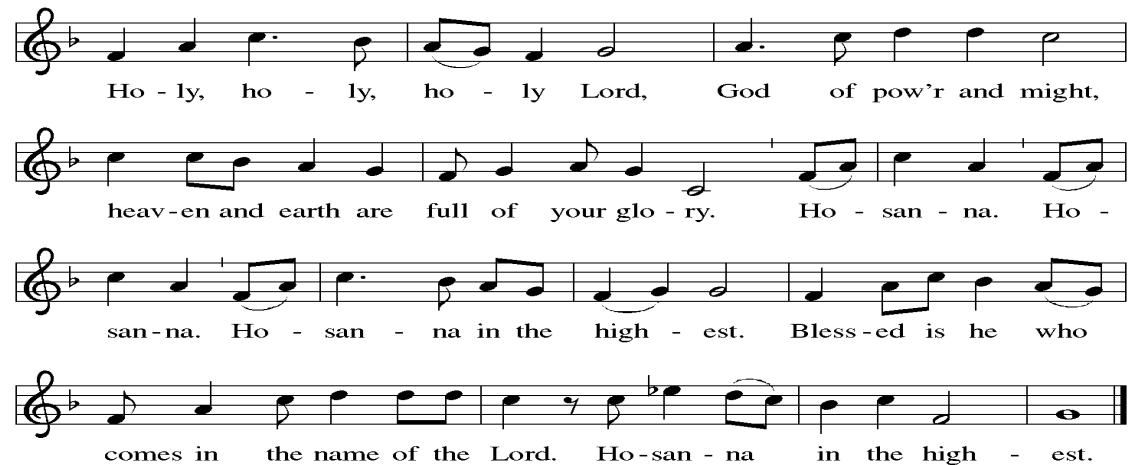
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## THE PREFACE

### THE SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -

san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

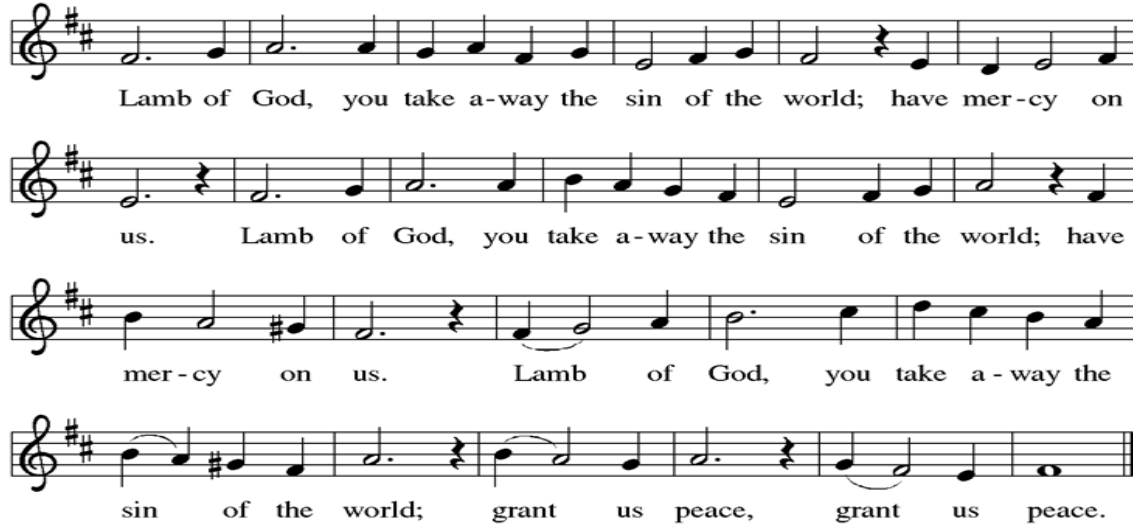
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the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

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

(We Sit)

## THE AGNUS DEI



## RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

**C**hrist welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! We receive communion this morning at the altar rail. Communion will be brought to the front rows for those who wish to remain seated. Children who commune should be assisted by adults near them. Those unable to partake of wine or wheaten bread are assured of our Lord's presence in, with, and under each element alone. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

Communion Music

*"Deep River"*

H.T. Burleigh

Deep river, my home is over Jordan. Lord, I want to cross over into campground.  
Oh, don't you want to go to that gospel feast, that promised land where all is peace?  
Oh, deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.

*The Congregation is encouraged to participate in the following Communion Hymn.  
The hymn can be found in the back portion of the WOV (Blue) Hymnal in your pew rack.*

Communion Hymn

*"Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether"*

WOV 703

(We Stand)

## BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS

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

**Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

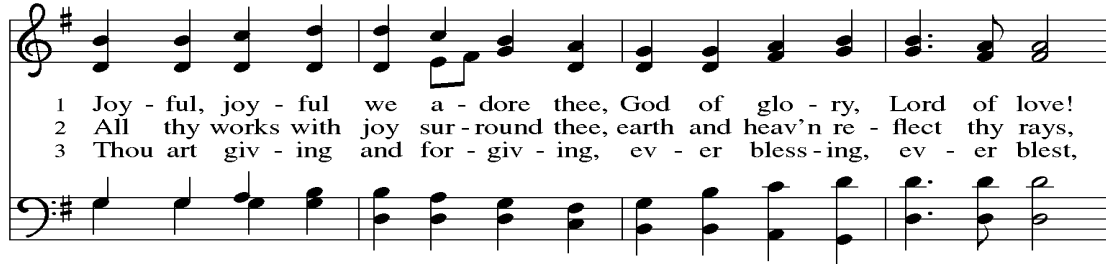
Almighty and merciful God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you this day and forevermore.

**Amen.**

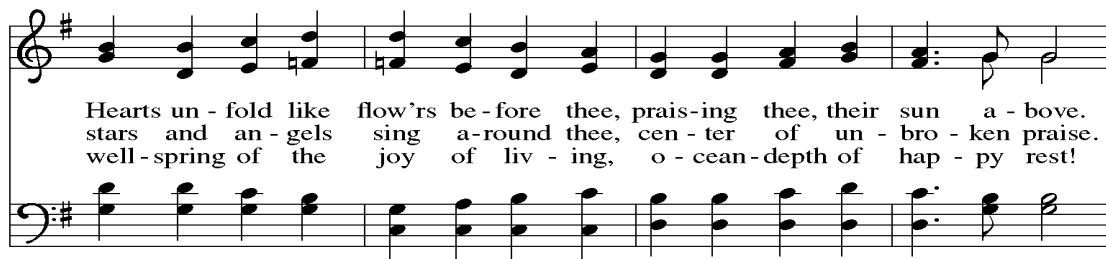
**SENDING HYMN**

*"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"*

ELW 836



1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!  
 2 All thy works with joy sur - round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,  
 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.  
 stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - 'ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,  
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 chant - ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in thee.  
 teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
 Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE**

*"Festive Trumpet Tune"*

David German

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the glory of God and in memory of Ralph Rodgers on his 80th birthday by his family.

**SERVING TODAY:**

**Ushers:** (8:30) Eric Wessinger, Ivan Black, Bill Carroll, Aaron Rawl, Vernon Hester, Deon Fink, Blaine Richardson, and Chad Geary;

(11:00) Alon Cox, Roy Welch, Brian Paeth, Doug Harper, Heyward Addy, and Matt Martin

**Cantor:** Shawn Lackey

**Soloist:** Austin Means

**Organist:** Frances Webb

**Greeters:** (8:30) Paul Austin; (11:00) Rick and Suzanne Swaffield

**Readers:** (8:30) Ginger Macaulay; (11:00) Shannon Burnett

**Communion Assistants:** (8:30) Jim and Marty Nantz; (11:00) Myra Strock and Ed Smith

**Order of St. Stephen's:** (8:30) [A] Liam Crawford [C] Connor Fink [BB] Weston Hill;  
(11:00) [A] Ann-Reece Lever [C] Jocelyn Summerall [BB] Sophie Taylor

**The Church Staff**

**Website: [www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)**

The Rev. Jason T. Antley

The Rev. Ralph G. Hill

Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life

Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator

Ms. Susan Wilson, Director of Music/Organist

Mrs. Julie Tworzyanski, Preschool Director

Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus

**Summer Sunday School Information:**

**Locations for Adult Classes**

|                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agape Adult Class</b>                                                                        |
| Room #102 (Closest to Narthex)                                                                  |
| <b>Saints &amp; Sinners with PJ and PR</b>                                                      |
| Room #203 (Large Upstairs Room)                                                                 |
| If you are interested in beginning<br>a new Sunday School class<br>please contact Mrs. Shannon. |

If you are not receiving the weekly announcements and monthly newsletter via email and would like to receive them, please email Shannon ([Shannon@ssl.org](mailto:Shannon@ssl.org)) so she can add you to the distribution list.

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