"People of Christ Making a Difference"

Reformation Sunday

October 25, 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 by the first hall 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 *"A Mighty Fortress Is our God"* Wilbur Held

(We Stand)

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS
In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.
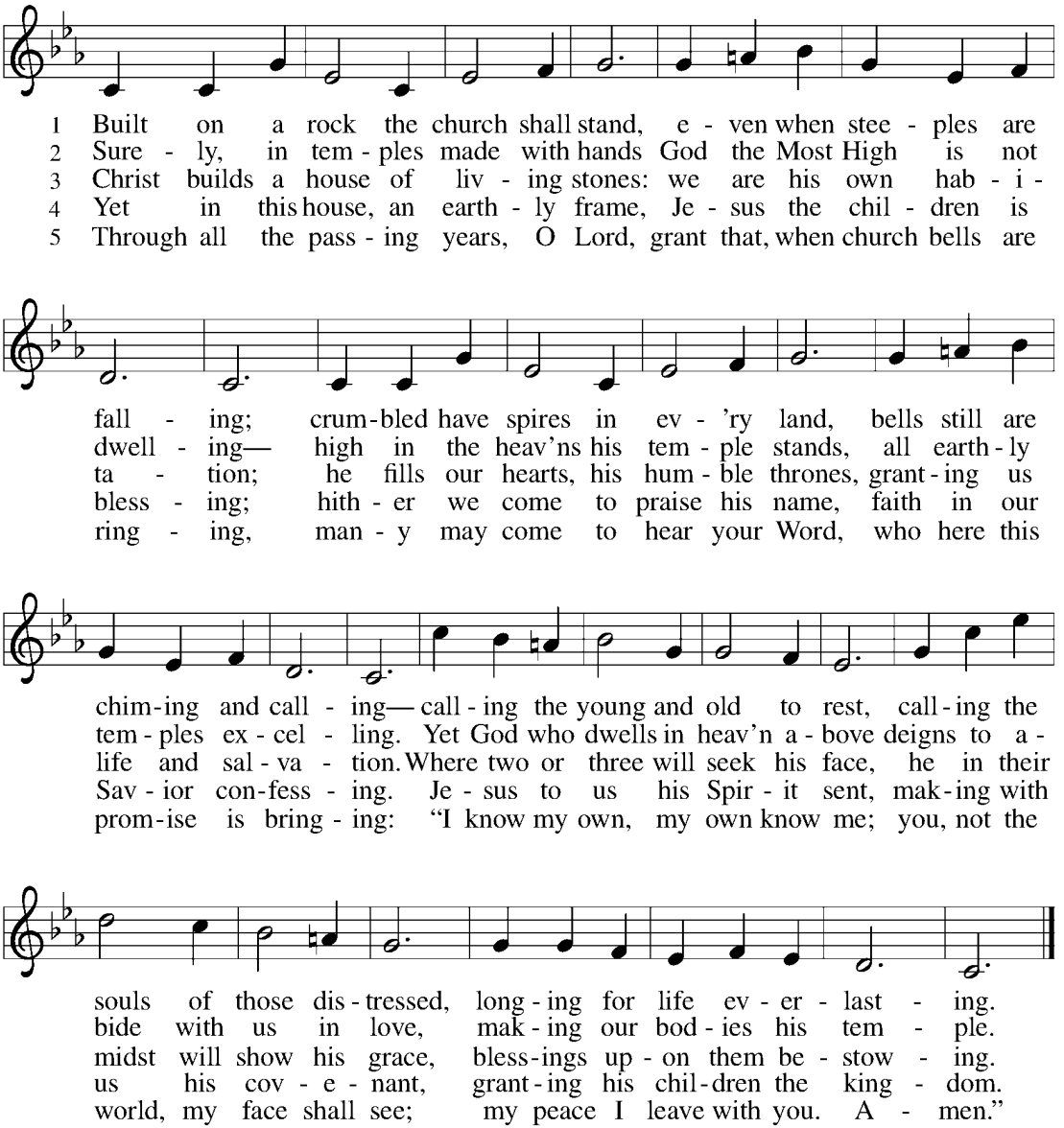
Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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 *"Built on a Rock"* ELW 652
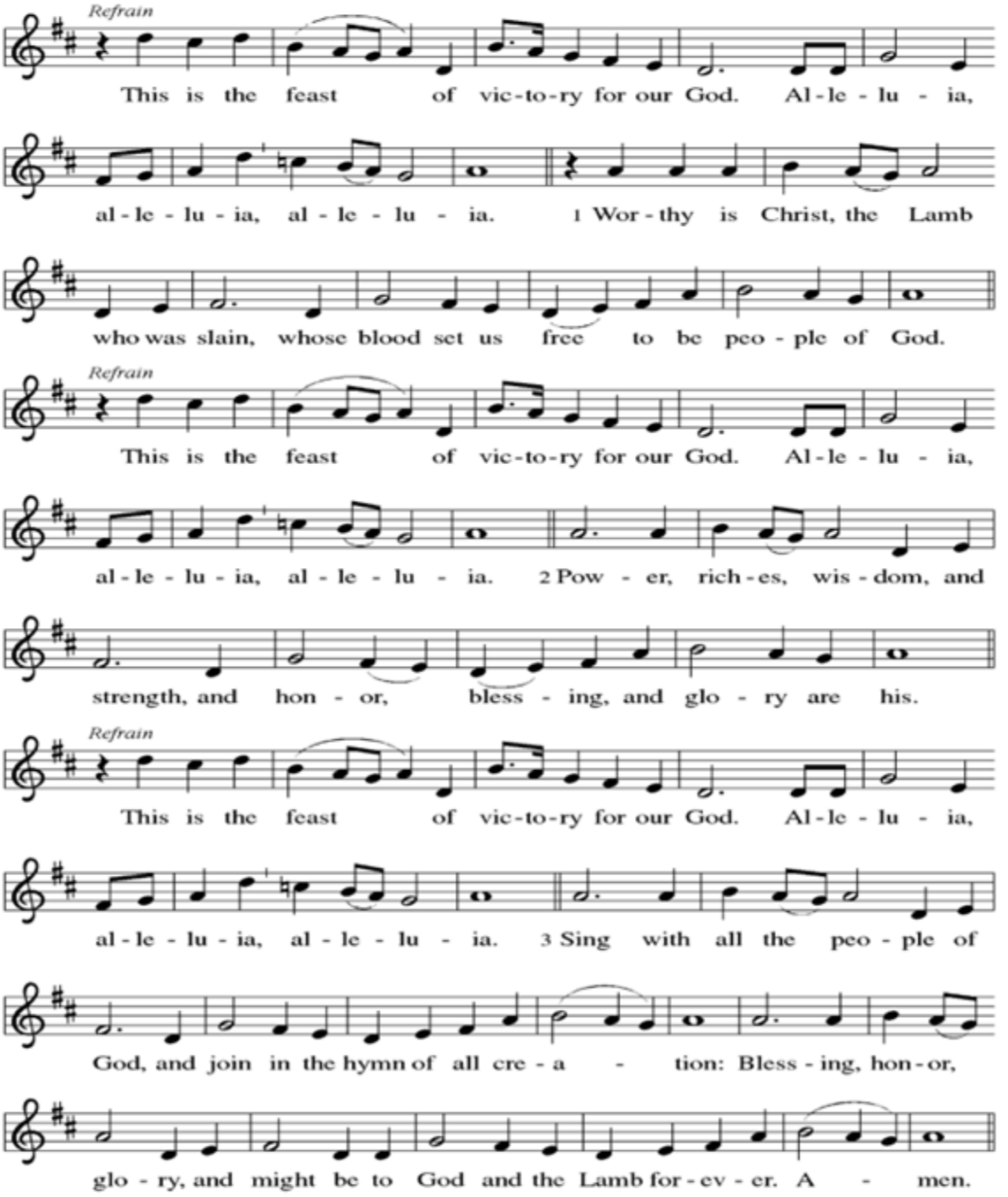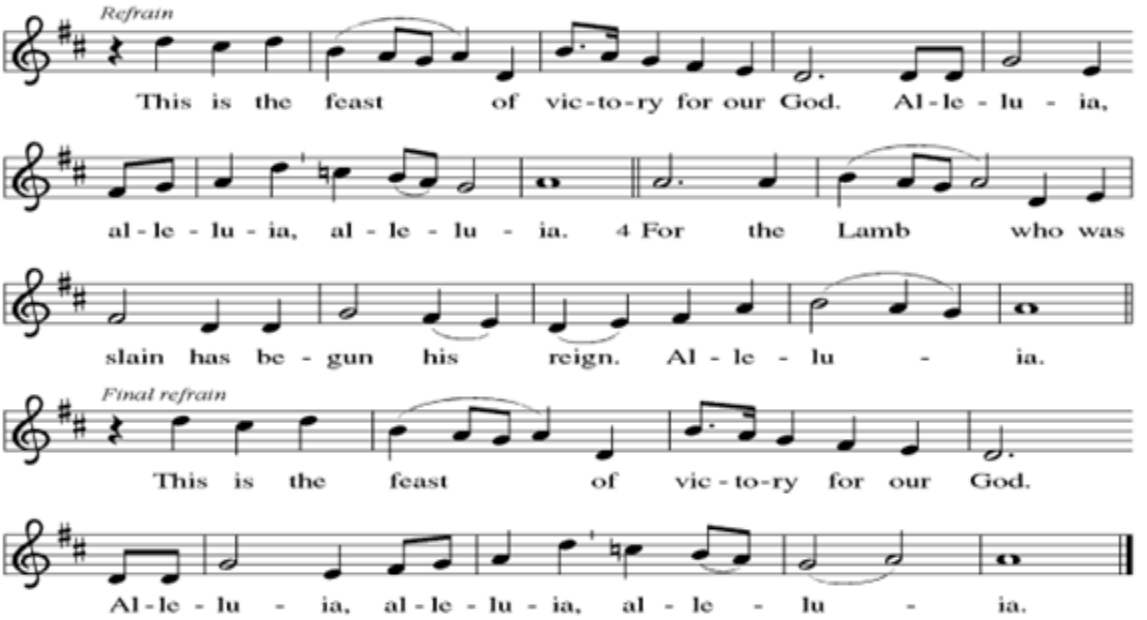


GREETING

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





THE SALUTATION
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

(We Sit)

FIRST READING Jeremiah 31:31-34

31The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of
Israel and the house of Judah. 32It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke,
though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33But this is the covenant that I will make with the
house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on
their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34No longer shall they teach one
another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them
to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM ANTHEM *"God is Our Refuge"* Allen Pote

God is our refuge and strength; A present help in time of trouble
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,
though the waters roar and foam, we will not fear.

Come and behold the work of the Lord, the awesome acts of God.
He is in the midst of his people, in all the earth.
He is the word, we are his hands, he will lead us.
He is the air, we are his song, we will celebrate his presence all the day long.

He is the rain, we are the stones, he will cleanse us.
He is the air, we are his song, we will celebrate his presence all the day long.
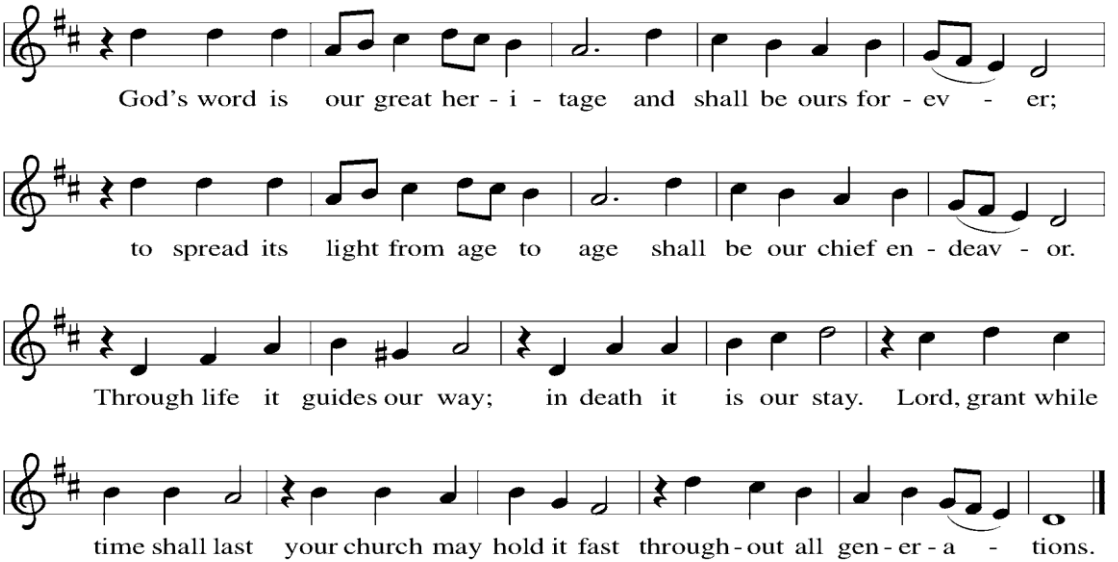
SECOND READING Romans 3:19-28

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that
every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For "no
human being will be justified in his sight" by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law
comes the knowledge of sin. 21 But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been
disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, 22 the righteousness of God through faith
in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, 23 since all have sinned and fall
short of the glory of God; 24 they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption
that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood,
effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance
he had passed over the sins previously committed; 26 it was to prove at the present time that he
himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus. 27 Then what becomes of
boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we
hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

(We Stand)

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL *"God's Word Is Our Great Heritage"* ELW 509



THE HOLY GOSPEL John 8:31-36

The holy gospel according to St. John, the 8th chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

31 Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are
truly my disciples; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." 33 They
answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What
do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?" 34 Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you,
everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. 35 The slave does not have a permanent place in the
household; the son has a place there forever. 36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free
indeed."

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

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL *"God's Word Is Our Great Heritage"* ELW 509

(We Sit)
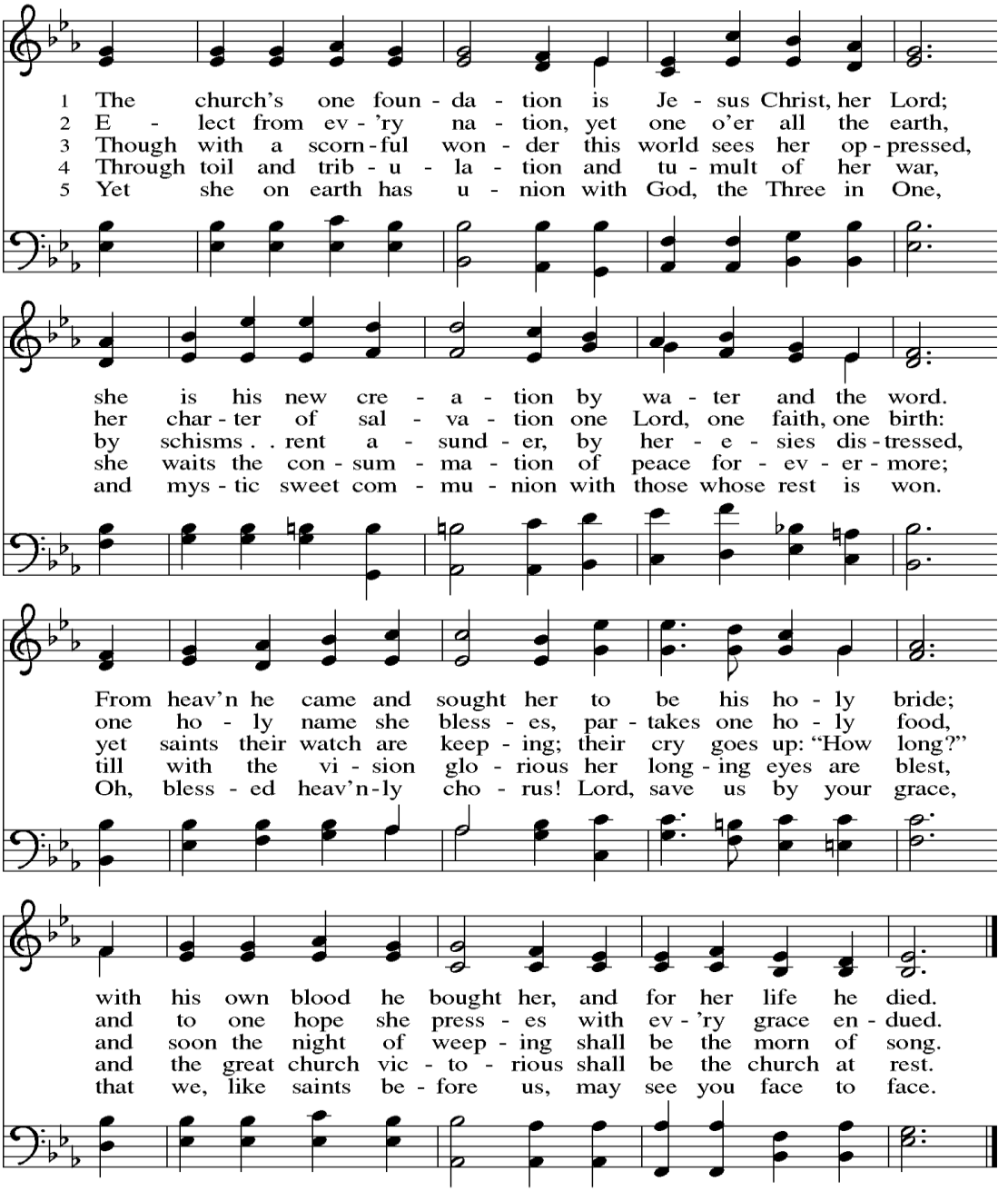
CHILDREN'S SERMON Pastor Jason

SERMON Pastor Jason

(We Stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY *"The Church's One Foundation"* ELW 654

(stanza 1 – all stanza 2 – women stanza 3 – men stanzas 4,5 – all)



THE 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 THE FAITHFUL

(We Sit)

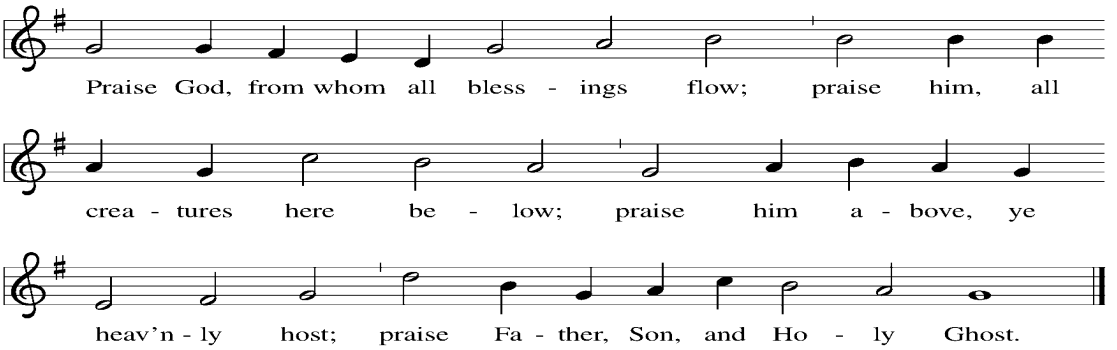
OFFERING

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 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.

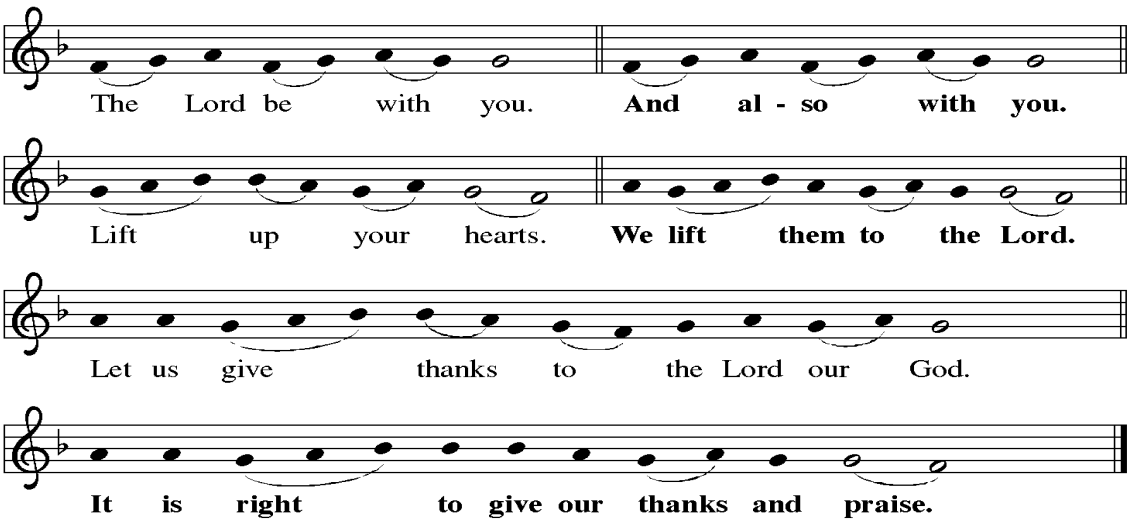
Voluntary *"Built on a Rock"* Martha Sobaje

(We Stand)

OFFERTORY ELW 854

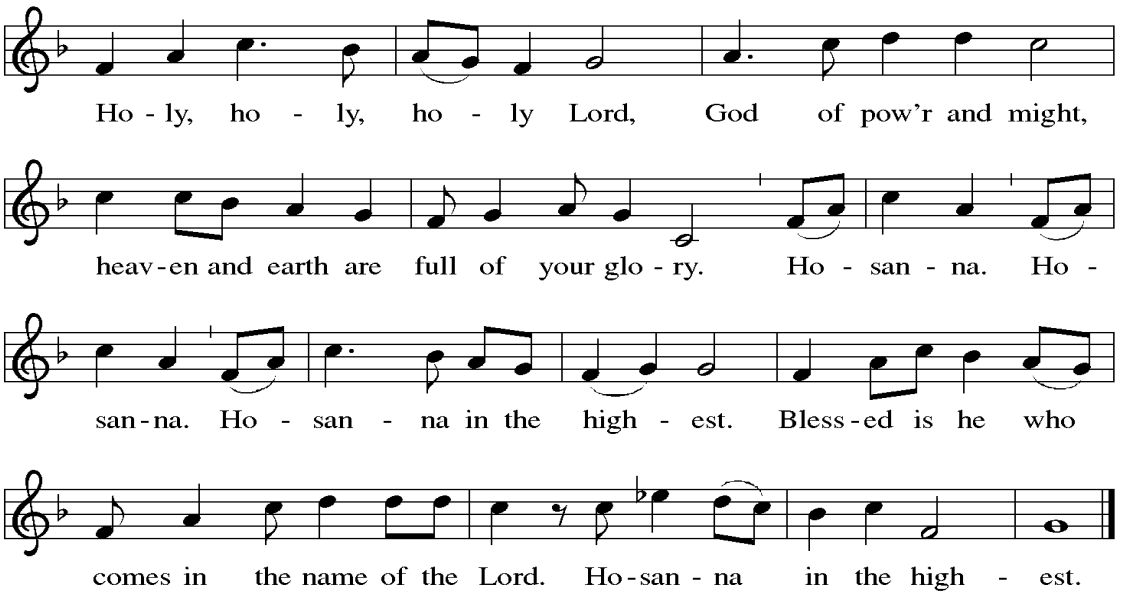


THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



THE PREFACE

THE SANCTUS



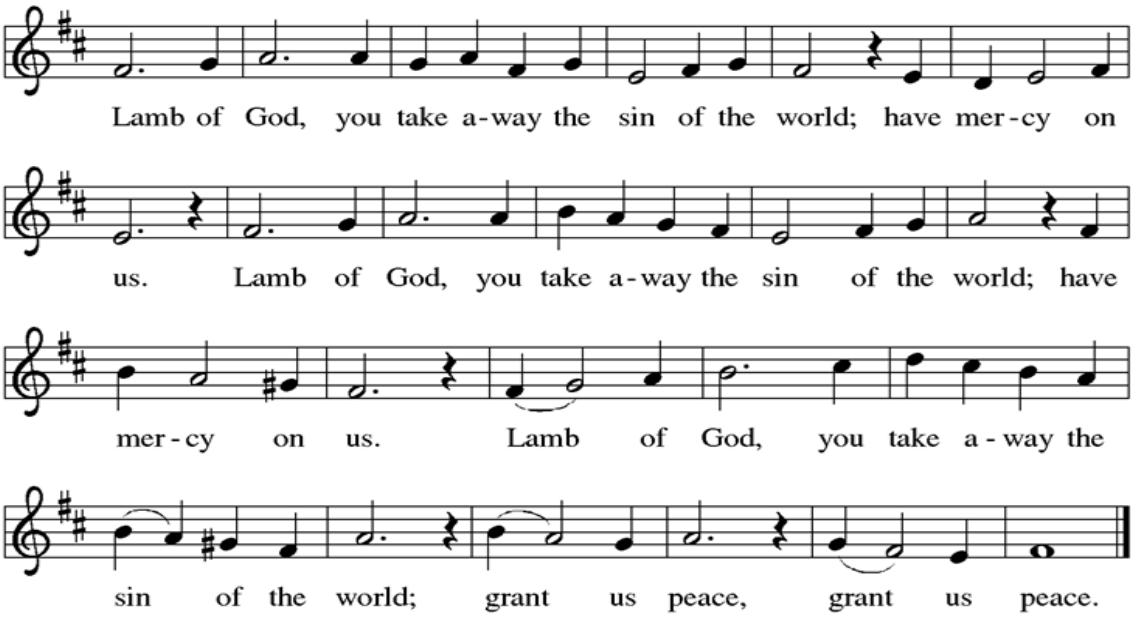
THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

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

Christ welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! We receive communion this morning at the center aisle. 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 "*Beautiful Savior"* Anthony Giamanco

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

Communion Hymn *"My Hope is Built on Nothing Less"* LBW 293

(We Stand)
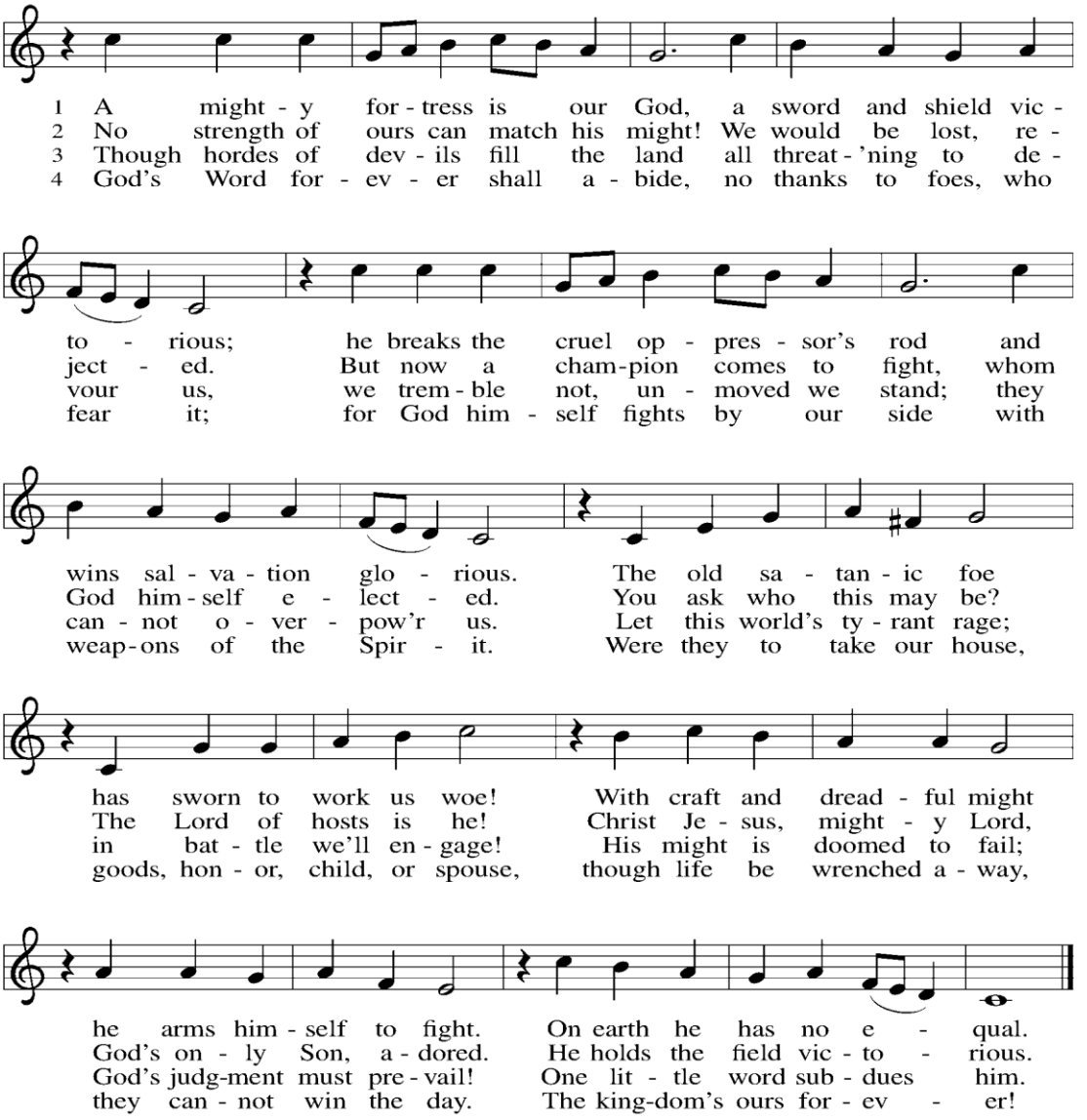
BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS

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 *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"* ELW 504



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

POSTLUDE *"A Mighty Fortress"* Johann Pachelbel

Sunday, October 25, 2026
Reformation Sunday

Know God, Know Ourselves

This is a Sunday packed with beautiful images, deep-seeded ideas, and a rich history. For life-long Lutherans, these things can provoke a sense of pride in our denomination, but Reformation Sunday is not "Lutheran Pride Day." Instead it is a day focused on knowing God truthfully and in the process understanding who we are as people of faith and children of God in light of God's unbelievable grace.

Luther spent a great deal of time trying to know who God was and to find ways of expressing what he came to know and believe so that others would know God too. He used coarse language, drank beer, and wrote hymns using tunes people knew and recognized. When he wrote his catechism he used language his small son could understand. He even translated the Bible into the language people spoke. Truth about God and our faith, as complex as it is, should be something we can grasp and wrestle with.

Reformation Sunday is certainly a festival day where we celebrate and remember our history, but it should also be a day to reexamine our faith. Part of that is recognizing the truth about our inadequacies, our failings, and our sinfulness. The law is like a mirror in a room with intense fluorescent lights; it shows us who we are with every flaw and wrinkle. But God doesn't look at us in that mirror. The truth about God brings us new knowledge about ourselves. God shines a new light on us, where iniquities are forgiven and sins forgotten.

The message of Reformation Sunday is God's love for us. It is a love that frees us and redefines us as people of God

The Readings on This Day

Reformation Day

During the sixteenth century, some German Lutheran churches celebrated an annual thanksgiving day for the Reformation, and in 1667 the festival was set for October 31 or the Sunday prior, since on this date in 1517 Martin Luther posted the Ninety-five Theses on the Wittenberg church door. The date on which to commemorate the life and achievements of Martin Luther is February 18, his death day in 1546. The point of the festival is the continuing need for perpetual reformation of all churches, rather than Lutheran self-congratulation.

John 8:31-36

It is not the church, or any one church, that is truth; rather, Jesus Christ is truth. No church can claim ownership of the word; rather, Jesus Christ is the Word. The son is free, that is, free to remain in the house. We gather around that word to receive the truth and experience life in the Father's house.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The oracle from Jeremiah is appointed because of its promise that God will continue a covenant of grace. Christians have seen that new covenant, and the forgiveness of sin and knowledge of God it brings, as embodied in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and renewed at the supper—"the new covenant in my blood."

Romans 3:19-28

This excerpt from Romans is appointed because it summarizes the biblical gospel so transformative for Martin Luther. It is faith in Christ that saves, not "law," that is, religious practices stipulated in the Torah, nor, indeed, "boasting" in our church. The church is called perpetually to renew its faith in God's grace.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in honor of the installation of the fifth Bishop of the South Carolina Synod, the Reverend Wade Thomas Roof III, on October 24, 2026.

SERVING TODAY:

Ushers: (8:30) Reuben Eargle, Sandy Shealy, Jim Nantz, Daryl Hooker, and Rick Loging;
(11:00) Otis Rawl, G Kolb, Mike Burgess, Myra Strock, Roy Windham, and George Mathias

Greeters: (8:30) Marty and Jim Nantz; (11:00) Gay Clark

Readers: (8:30) Jamie Early; (11:00) Shannon Burnett

Communion Assistants: (8:30) Tonya Reynolds; (11:00) Peggy Sherman

Order of St. Stephen's: (8:30) [A] Parker Rate [C] Gracen Geary [BB] Connor Geary [TB] Katy Hooker [TB] Jaime Wessinger;
(11:00) [A] Ben Brunson [C] Thomas Brunson [BB] Shannon Burnett [TB] Jack Jebaily [TB] Madelyn Burgess

The Church Staff **Website: www.sslc.org**

The Rev. Jason T. Antley
Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life
Ms. Susan Wilson, Director of Music/Organist
The Rev. Ralph G. Hill
Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator
Mrs. Julie Tworzyanski, Preschool Director
Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus

Sunday School Information:

Locations for Children's Classes		**Locations for Adult Classes**
Nursery – Room #105		**Agape Adult Class** Room #102 (Closest to Narthex)
2—4 year olds & 5K – Room #103		**Saints & Sinners with PJ and PR** Room #203 (Large Upstairs Room)
1st—5th Grade – Room # 216		
6th—8th Grade – Room #212		For those not attending a Sunday School class but waiting on a child to get out of one, feel free to sit in the Social Hall!
9th—12th Grade – Room #217		If you are interested in beginning a new Sunday School class 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@sslc.org) so she can add you to the distribution list.

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