FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
November 29, 2026 10:30 a.m.



"Touched by the Gospel, we seek to be instruments of God's Peace, for the sake of the World."

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
1747 W. Milham Avenue ♦ Portage, MI 49024
Pastor Rachel Laughlin
Church phone: 269/343-3453 ♦ fax: 269/343-2025
Website: popportage.org
Prayer-mail: prayer@popportage.org
Find us on Facebook: *Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA*

WELCOME IN THE NAME OF CHRIST!

Entering Worship

- Fully accessible restrooms (men's, women's, single-stall) are located behind you as you face the altar. The women's room and nursery have changing tables.
- People of all ages and stages are encouraged to worship together. A staffed nursery is available 9 AM – Noon.
- Many people enjoy prayerful quiet in the Sanctuary before worship begins to help center themselves. By keeping conversation in the Gathering Space before worship, you are giving the gift of this peace to your neighbors.
- All are welcome to share Christ's communion regardless of age or faith tradition. The bread is gluten, nut, and dairy free. Wine and grape juice are available.

Embodying Praise

- Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; please engage in them only as you are comfortable or able.
- Some brains need a quiet activity to help them learn. Feel free to borrow a worship bag or a fidget toy to help your brain and body stay engaged. Ask an usher for assistance.
- If your body would benefit from extra motion during worship, you are welcome to get up and move about during the service. The Prayground in front of the left pews is equipped with quiet activities and soft toys for little ones. Parents are invited to sit nearby to assist children in engaging in worship in an age-appropriate manner. The service is audible in the Gathering Space, if you need to step out for a time. For children who need a louder place to play, the staffed nursery is available to the left as you exit the sanctuary.
- Hearing assistance devices direct clearer sound directly to your ears. They are available from the ushers. If you use Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids, see the back of the bulletin for instructions on connecting to the assistive listening system in our sanctuary.

Engaging in Community

- Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to be an open, welcoming place for all people. Please join us in the Gathering Space after worship for snacks, coffee, and fellowship.
- This bulletin may be recycled in the basket on the floor near the glass door to the front parking lot. We invite you to take home the *Peace Proclamations* page with announcements and upcoming events.
- If you'd like to learn more about our community you can: greet Pastor Rachel at the door by the baptismal font after worship, visit the welcome table to pick up informational brochures or staff business cards, or visit our website: www.popportage.org.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

WELCOME

MUSIC FOR THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP

Stand

PRAYER OF BLESSING

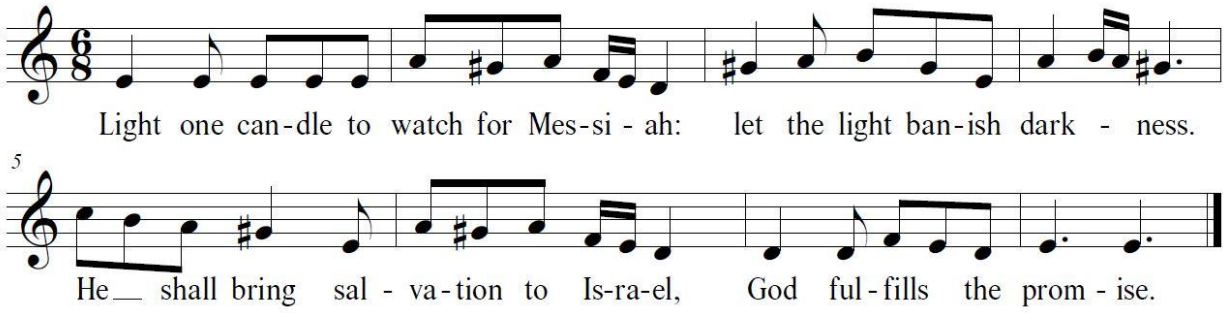
Pastor: Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near. You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world. You show up in our lives at unexpected times. Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival. We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour, you hurry to gather all people to your peace.

All: Amen.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

One candle is lit while the whole congregation sings:

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah ELW 240



GREETING

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

All: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray,

All: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Sit

THE CHILDREN'S SERMON

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

FIRST READING Isaiah 64:1-9

R: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down; the mountains quaked at your presence.
From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you,
for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

R: Word of God. Word of Life.
All: Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

R: Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.
All: Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
R: O Lord God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?
High voices: You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
Low voices: You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
All: Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
R: Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.
And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
All: Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

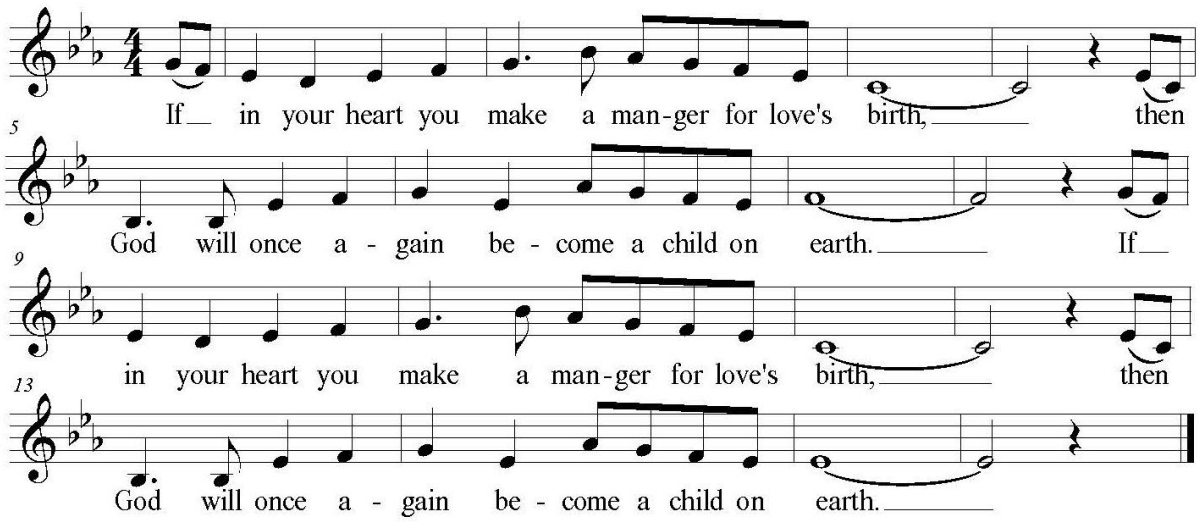
SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

R: Word of God. Word of Life.
All: Thanks be to God.

Stand
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL READING **Mark 13:24-37**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 13th chapter.
All: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] "In those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
"Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels and gather the elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

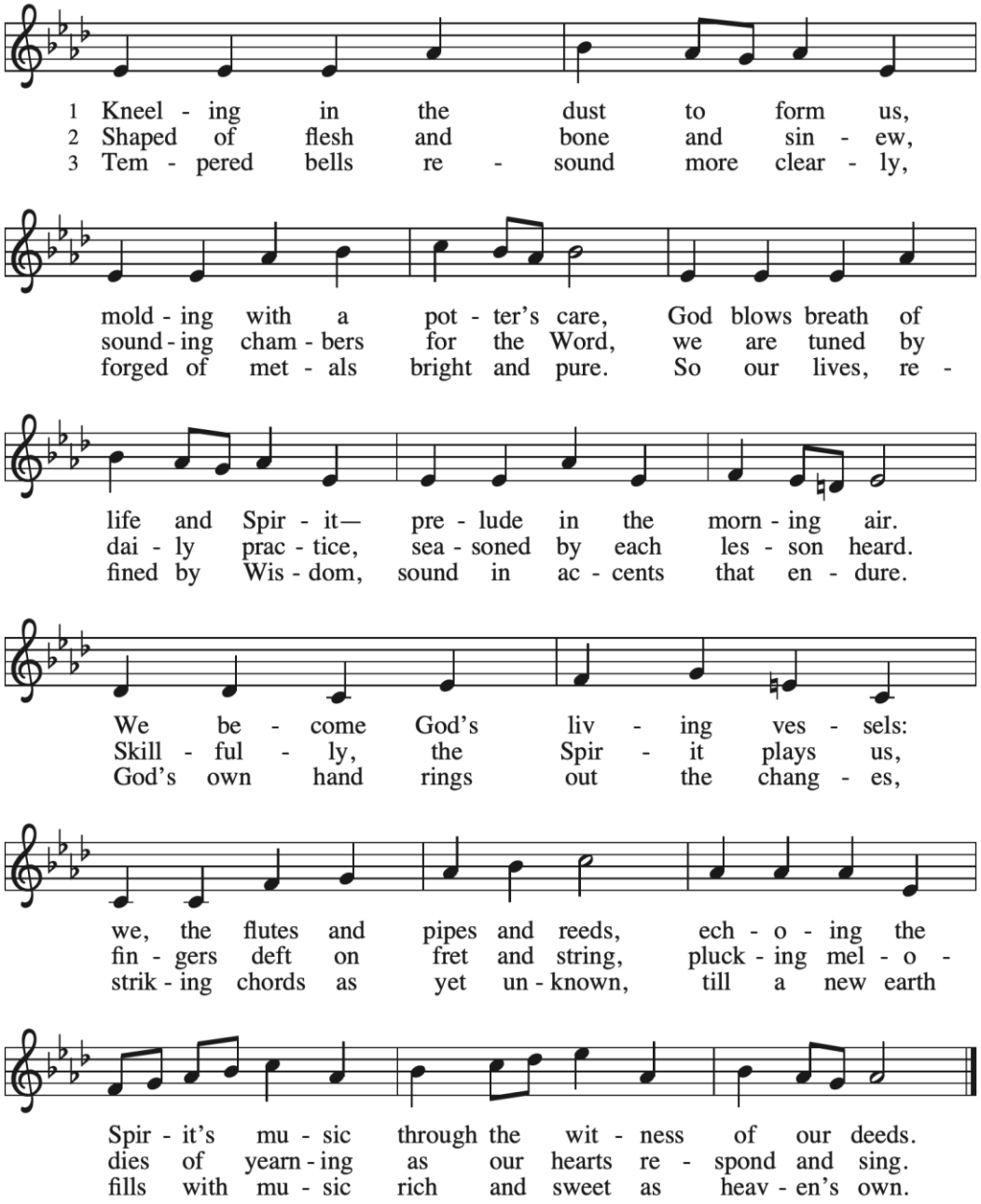
"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight or at cockcrow or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.
All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit
SERMON Pastor Rachel Laughlin

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY Kneeling in the Dust to Form Us ACS 1099



APOSTLES' CREED

Asst: With the whole church, we confess our faith:

All: 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.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION
P: Joined together as one body in Christ, we are bold to confess what can tear us apart. In this silence, simply breathe, or hold in mind what you want to bring honestly before God. We will hold about 15 seconds of silence.

Silence

P: Compassionate God,
C: We confess that we have not always offered to others the grace we ourselves have received. We have looked away from suffering we could have addressed. We have left barriers in place - in our community and in our hearts. Forgive us for the times we chose silence over witness and for the times we have confused limitation with failure, or dependence with weakness - in ourselves and in each other. Accompany us on the path of reconciliation with you, with one another, and with all of creation, that we may be one together. Amen.

P: God knows every body and every mind. God meets you here, exactly as you are. And this God - who made you, who claims you, who has never let you go - declares to you the full and entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
After "God, in your mercy," worshipers respond ***"receive our prayer."***

WE SHARE IN HIS MEAL:

SHARING OF THE PEACE
Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
All: And also with you.

We offer one another a sign of Christ's peace in whatever way works for your body and your comfort today. A handshake, a wave, a nod, a hand placed on your own heart. Eye contact or a peace sign across the room. A word spoken to someone nearby. Or simply receiving the peace of this moment from right where you are.

OFFERING
For members of the Prince of Peace community, an offering is our expression of gratitude to God, and a way we share God's love with the world. If you are visiting with us today, your presence is already a great gift!

- If you give electronically, thank you.
- If you would like to give electronically, please scan the QR code.
- If you are led to give through cash or check, simply place your offering in the plate as it passes.
- During this time, please also date and sign the attendance registration pads.

OFFERING RESPONSE Come Now, O Prince of Peace ELW 247
Stand for last verse

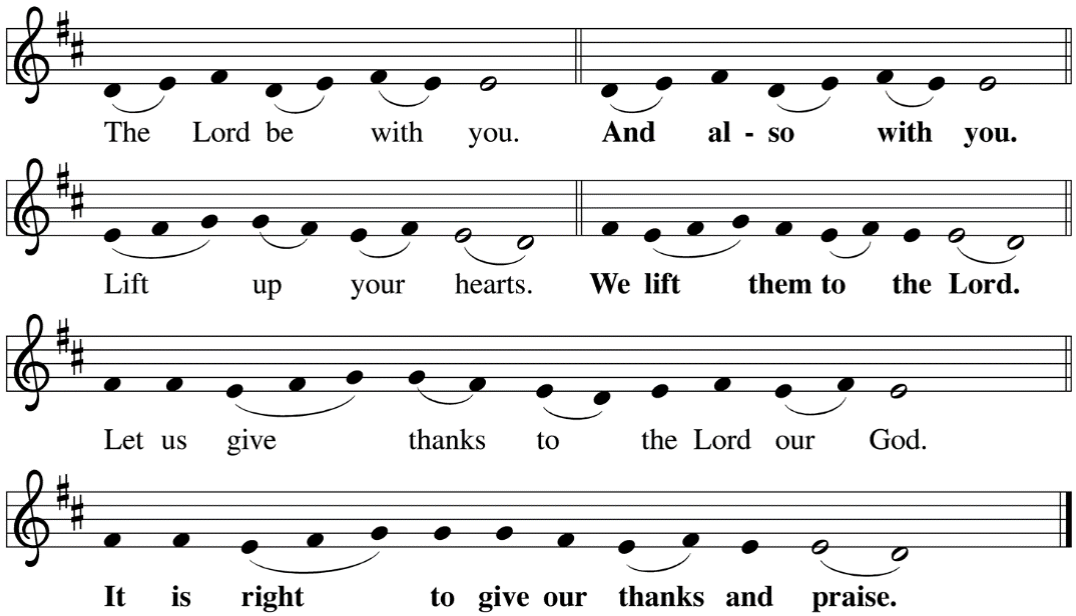
LITURGICAL HAND WASHING
I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds. Psalm 26:6-7

OFFERTORY PRAYER

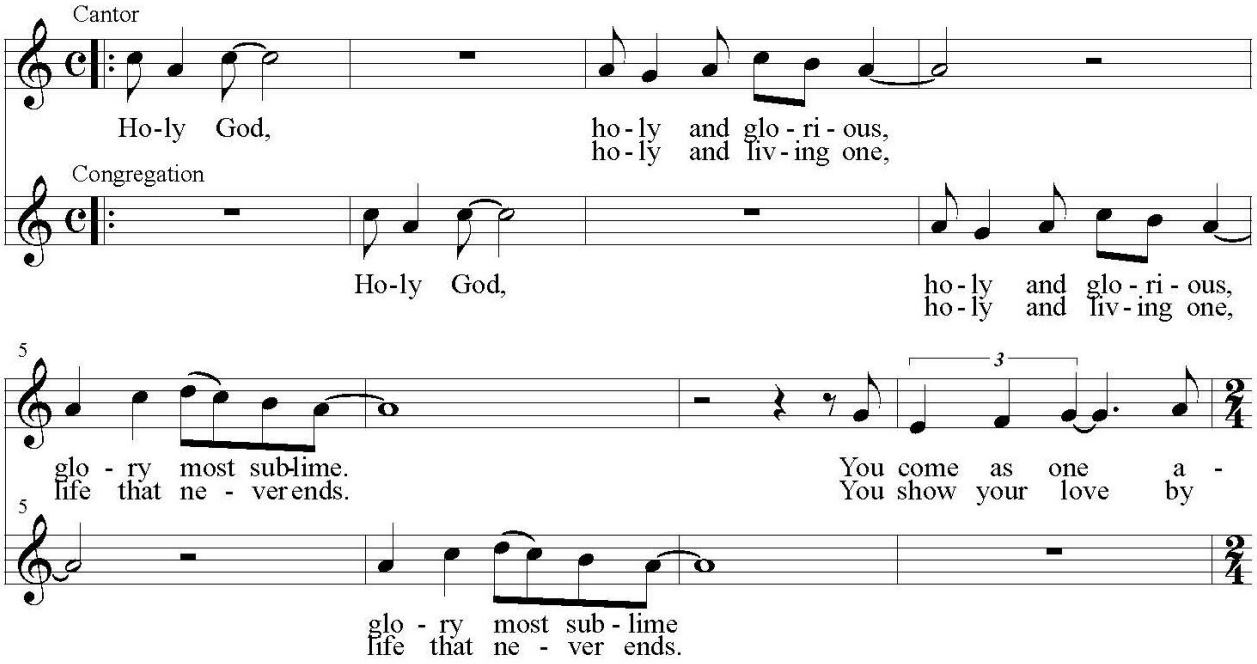
A: Let us pray. Generous God, source of every gift - you gather us together into one body with many gifts to share in the world you love. We offer today what we have, knowing it is never quite enough, but trusting that in your hands it becomes more than we can fathom. Use these gifts to feed, shelter, and support, and to open doors that have been closed too long - open the door wide enough for all of us to gather around your table for the feast that has no end. Make us ready for the meal that makes us one. In Jesus' name we pray.

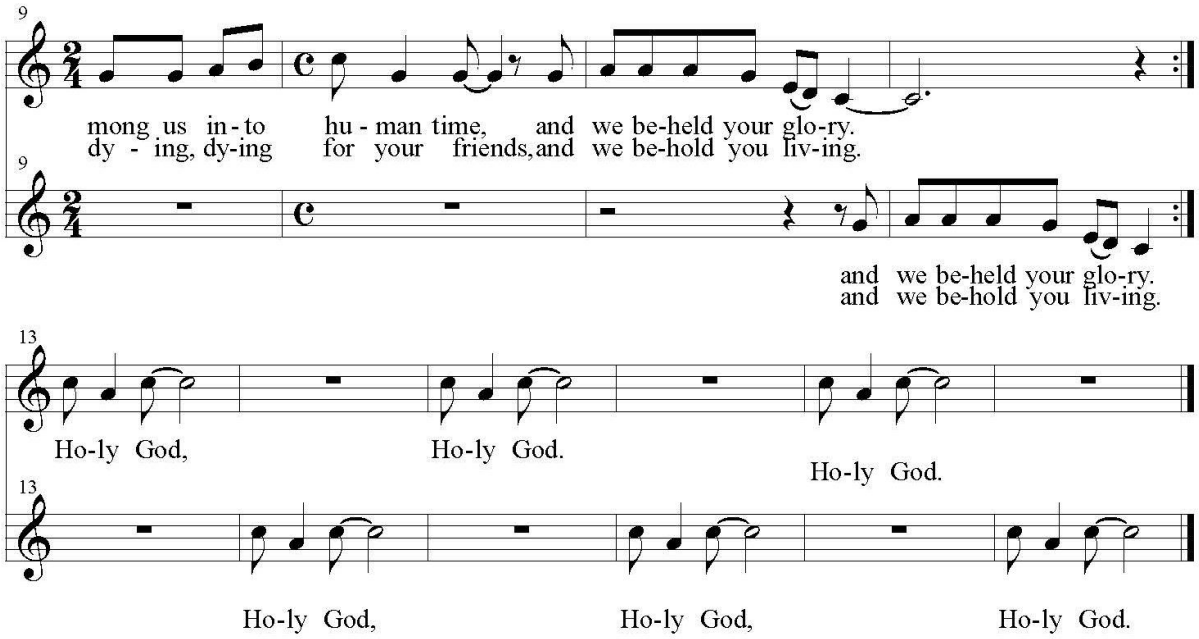
C: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING - Grace Before the Meal



P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy…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:





EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: And so, remembering his life, death, resurrection, and promise to come again, we gather at this table…Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty and faithful God, now and as we journey toward the day when all will be in your presence, forever and ever.
C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered at this Table as God's own, we boldly pray together as Jesus taught us:

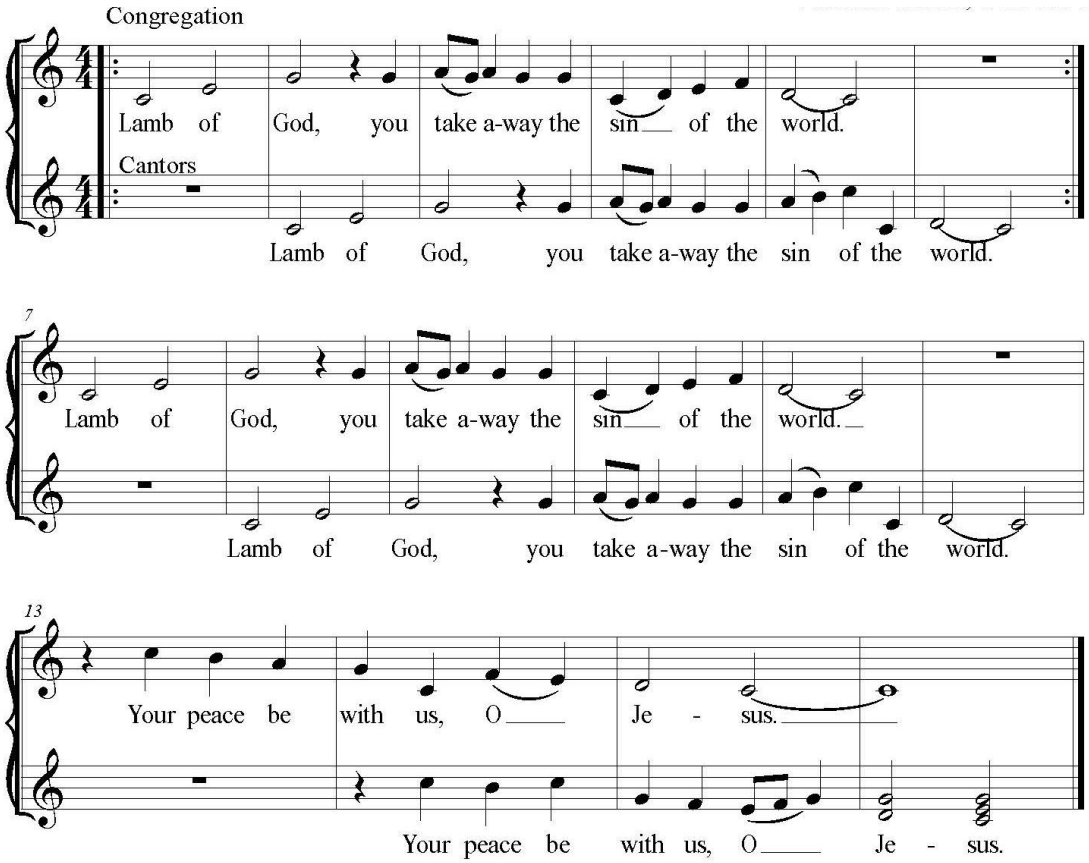
All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen.

INVITATION TO THE MEAL

P: If you desire to receive what God offers, come to this Table. Come with your faith and your doubt. Come with your questions and your hopes. Come with your grief and your love. Come taste the Lord's goodness. There is room for you here because this is Christ's table. You are welcome.

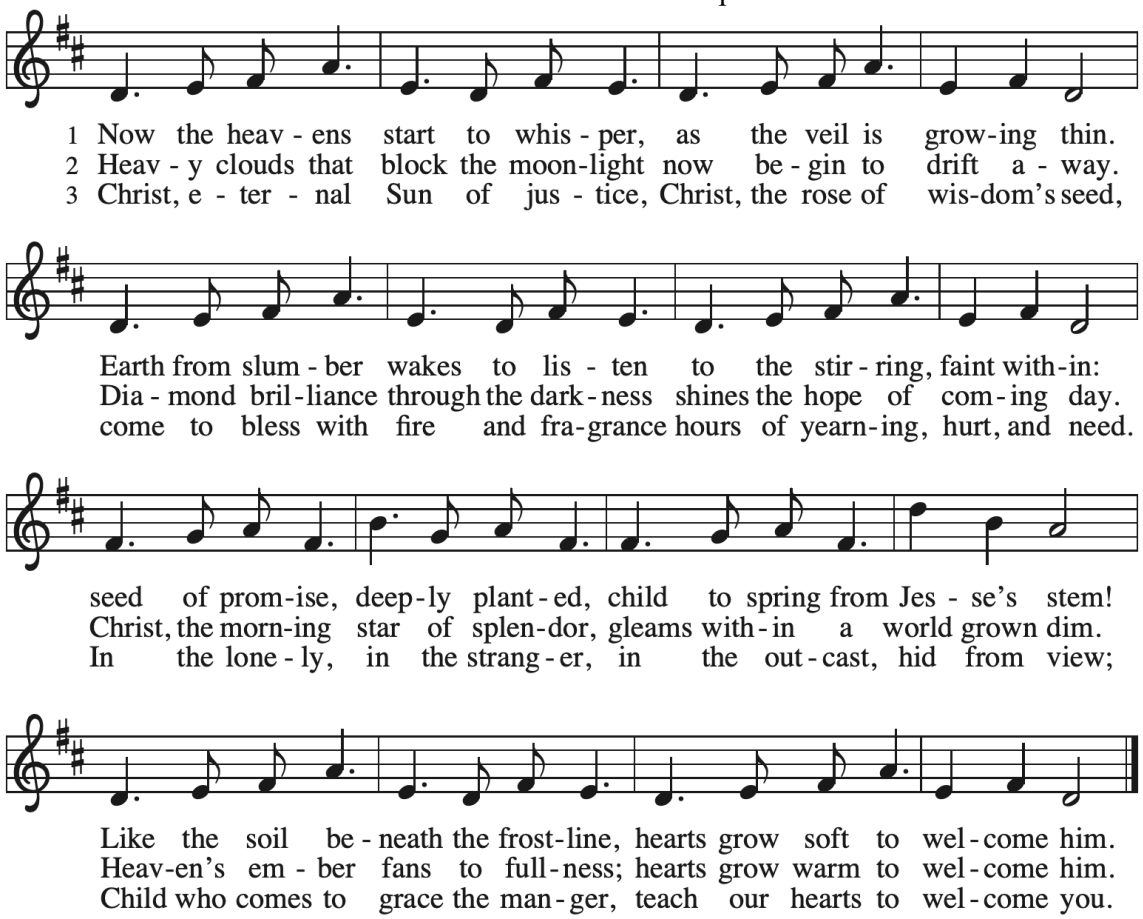
Sit
HOLY COMMUNION - The Lord's Supper

- All are welcome at Christ's table regardless of age or membership status. Ushers will direct you to come forward. Those who prefer not to commune are welcome to stay seated or come forward for a blessing. If you would like a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest or make a similar sign to indicate your choice.
- The bread we serve is gluten, nut, and dairy free in hopes that our entire community will be able to share the same bread. The recipe does contain eggs and honey. Gluten-free wafers or pre-packaged sets of elements containing a wheat wafer and grape juice are available on the stands at the head of the aisle.
- After receiving the bread, you may move to the next server to select your own cup. The wine is red, the lighter color is grape juice. Place your empty cup in the baskets on the stands as you return to your seat.
- If it would be helpful to have communion brought to you, please let an usher know.
- A **prayer station** is available at the baptismal font during the communion distribution. If your heart feels heavy, if your soul feels dry, if you are bursting with joy or desire an extra measure of peace, a prayer leader will be there to pray with you.



Communion Hymn:

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper ACS 901



Communion Hymn: Christ, Be Our Light ELW 715

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray. Generous God, we thank you that you have fed the hungry in this meal. It has nourished us and connected us to you and to all who have shared this table. Now send us out - into the ordinary, the embodied, the human - to proclaim justice, to care for others, and to accompany all people in love. The world is not yet what you intend, but it is also the world you refuse to give up on. And so we go - held in your love and led by your Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

SENDING OF COMMUNION

Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent.

Pastor: Gracious God, whose mercy endures from generation to generation: As Mary set out to visit Elizabeth before she gave birth to her son, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with our sisters and brothers who are sick/homebound/imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this communion, that through the body and blood of your Son we may all know the hope of your promised coming in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

WE ARE SENT OUT TO SERVE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worshipers are invited to briefly share announcements not listed in the weekly Peace Proclamations – blessings (such as anniversaries, birthdays, births or new jobs), prayer concerns, or moments when you've encountered God recently. So that all present in person and live-streaming can see and hear you, please come up the ramp to the chancel then go to the pulpit to give your announcement.

Stand

BENEDICTION

P: Go from this place - into the ordinary days and the extraordinary ones, into a world where our liberation is bound up in one another, needing your fierce advocacy and your gentle rest… The blessing of almighty and faithful God - Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of every body and every life - be with you now and always.

C: Amen.

SENDING SONG Awake! Awake! and Greet the New Morn ELW 242

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace - you are Christ's body in the world.

C: Thanks be to God.

MUSIC FOR THE CLOSE OF WORSHIP

This Week's Servers

November 29, 2026
Worship Asst: Claudia Lee
Readers: Melissa Ottesen
Ushers: Kay Kincaid
Technology: Mike Whately, Paul Guthrie, Paul Swodzinski
Prayer Station: Lynne Wathen
Sacristy Asst.: Kathy Eklov
Communion Asst.: Sandy Mertz, Annika Eklov, MacKenzie Hart
Altar Guild: Dianne Hellman
Fellowship Treats & Host: Idy Stemaly
Church Lockup: Judson Stemaly

Next Week's Servers

December 6, 2026
Worship Asst: Sandy Foster
Readers: Lee Banitt
Ushers: Greg Guthrie
Technology: Mike Whately, Paul Guthrie, Paul Swodzinski
Prayer Station:
Sacristy Asst.: Marilyn Storch
Communion Asst.: Beth Whately, Karen Adams
Altar Guild: Gail McNellis
Fellowship Treats: Jill Waggner
Church Lockup: Jeremy Zimmerman

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Staff
Church phone: 269-343-3453

Pastor: Rachel Laughlin ext 11
Music Director: Janet Hill ext 16
Engagement Coordinator: Em Witteveen ext 12
Admin. Asst.: Ashley Wineland ext 10
Tech Manager: Mike Whately ext 13
Accountant: Marilyn Storch ext 14
Nursery: Melissa Copeland & Megan Zimmerman ext 17
Custodian: Charles Boyd ext 20
Care Team Email: prayer@popportage.org

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