



Title: Jesus in Benares (20th century). Artist: Frank Wesley (1923-2002).

18th Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026, 11:00 am



St. John's Lutheran Church

Salisbury, North Carolina

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S!

We are glad God has brought you here!

Wednesday Evening Discipleship – 6:15 pm, Sept. 30-Oct. 14. Topic: Dusting off the Catechism. Whether you are looking for a refresher from your Confirmation days or are new to the Lutheran tradition, join us for this 3-week class designed to help deepen your understanding of our faith and its rich traditions.

Catawba Singers - Oct. 4 at 4 pm in the Sanctuary. Shuford School of Performing Arts presents The Catawba Singers, featuring St. John's Chancel Choir – "*An American Tapestry*". Join us for an afternoon of songs, stories and voices woven into the American experience.

Hood Theological Seminary – Mondays, Oct. 5-Nov. 2 at 1 pm in Room 213. Join us for a thoughtful conversation on the book: "*Am I Just My Brain?*" authored by Sharon Dirckx. Facilitated by Trevor Eppheimer, Academic Dean at Hood Theological Seminary. Bring your own lunch and beverage. RSVP by scanning the QR Code here.



Flu Clinic – Oct. 7, 4-6 pm in Ritchie Hall. Flu shots available for ages 3 and up. High-dose available for ages 65+. Please bring your insurance card. Walgreens is partnering with us to provide the clinic.

Birth–2 yr Old Milestone "*Jesus Loves Me*" – Oct. 11, 12:30-2 pm. Join Mrs. Stacey in the Ark for music, family fun, and fellowship! **RSVP to** Stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org.

Blessing of the Animals Celebration – Oct. 11, 2-3:30 pm in the St. John's Chapel Breezeway. We will celebrate the **Blessing of the Animals**. Bring your pets for a special time of thanksgiving and blessing as we rejoice in God's gift of creation and the companions who share their lives. **Cats must be in carriers and dogs on leashes.** If your pet doesn't travel well, bring a photo! They can still be blessed.

Consecration Sunday Brunch – Oct. 18, 8:30-11:00 am in Ritchie Hall. Join us for our annual Celebration Brunch. Invitation cards are available online, in our literature racks, and the QR code here. If you forget to RSVP, we will follow up with a phone call.



Senior Seasons Academy – Starts Oct. 20, Tuesdays 9:30 am – 2:30 pm in Ritchie Hall. "Let Me Tell You a Story..." Gathering time is at 9:30 am. Morning Sessions are from 9:30 – 11:15. Lunch is from 11:15 am – 12 pm and the Afternoon Sessions are from 12:15-2:30 pm. Contact Pastor Dan, at dan@stjohns-salisbury.org with any questions.

Altar Flowers – Given to the Glory of God and in honor of our 1st wedding anniversary, by Nancy Shirley and Ron Bellinghausen.



*The congregation is invited to respond where words are in **Bold**.
Hymns are found by number in the red worship books located in each pew.*

PRELUDE

We rise and face the cross.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

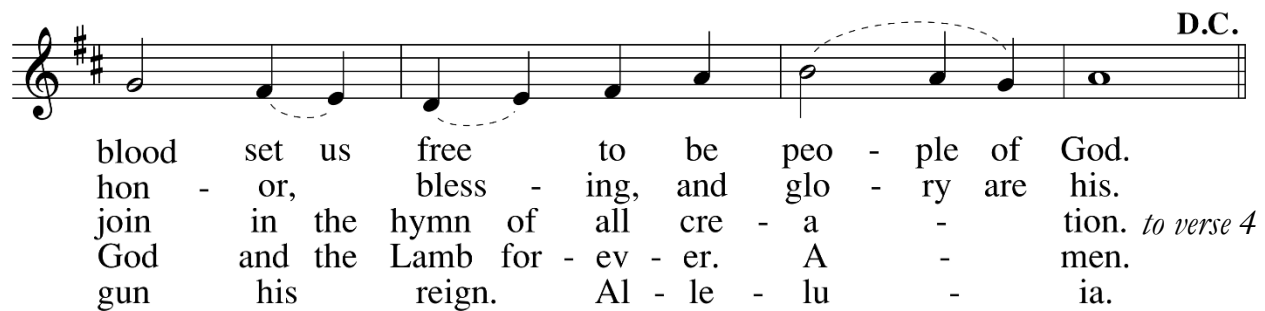
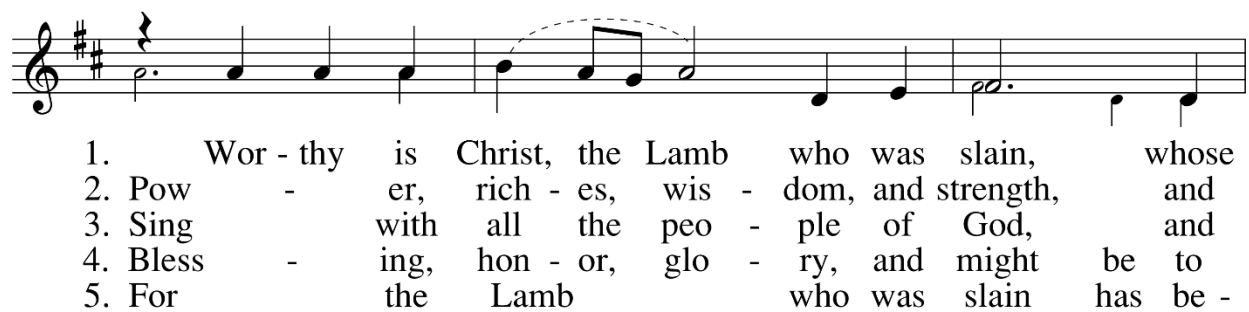
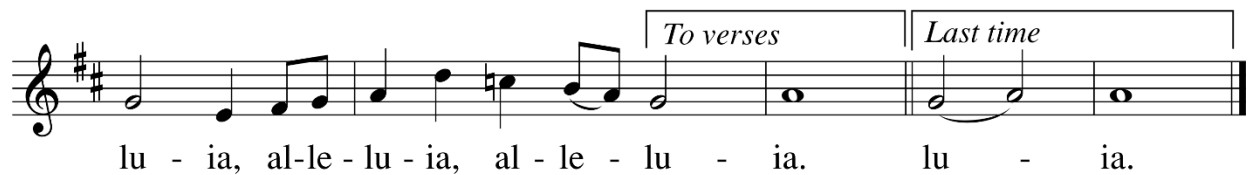
Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through ✙ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

THIS IS THE FEAST



PRAYER OF THE DAY

We pray: God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*Children ages 3 through 3rd grade are now invited to Kingdom Kids.
Children will return to the worship service after the sermon.*

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.



READING

Philippians 2:1-13

A reading from Philippians, the 2nd chapter.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

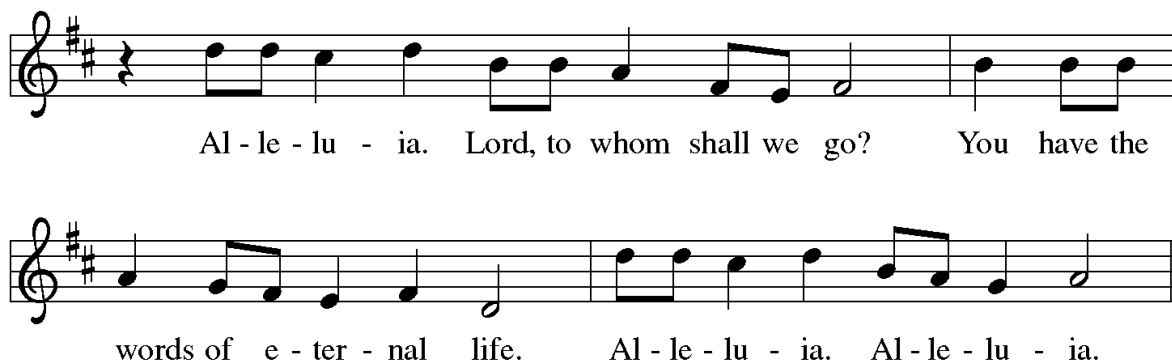
¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

We rise.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:23-32



The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 21st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Lori Carter



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
 2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho - ly, great cloud of wit - ness -
 3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash - ing of light - ning,
 4 Walk - ing be-hind to hem my jour - ney, go - ing a - head to
 5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up - hold me:
 es en - fold; proph - ets, a - pos - tles, an - gels wit - ness:
 strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan - et:
 light my way, and from be - neath, a - bove, and all ways:
 hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur - round me; O Christ, sur - round me.

APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole church, we confess our faith: **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 $\ddagger$ of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS AND PEACE

Each petition concludes with the following:

Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Share the 'peace' of Christ with one another.
 The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Be seated.

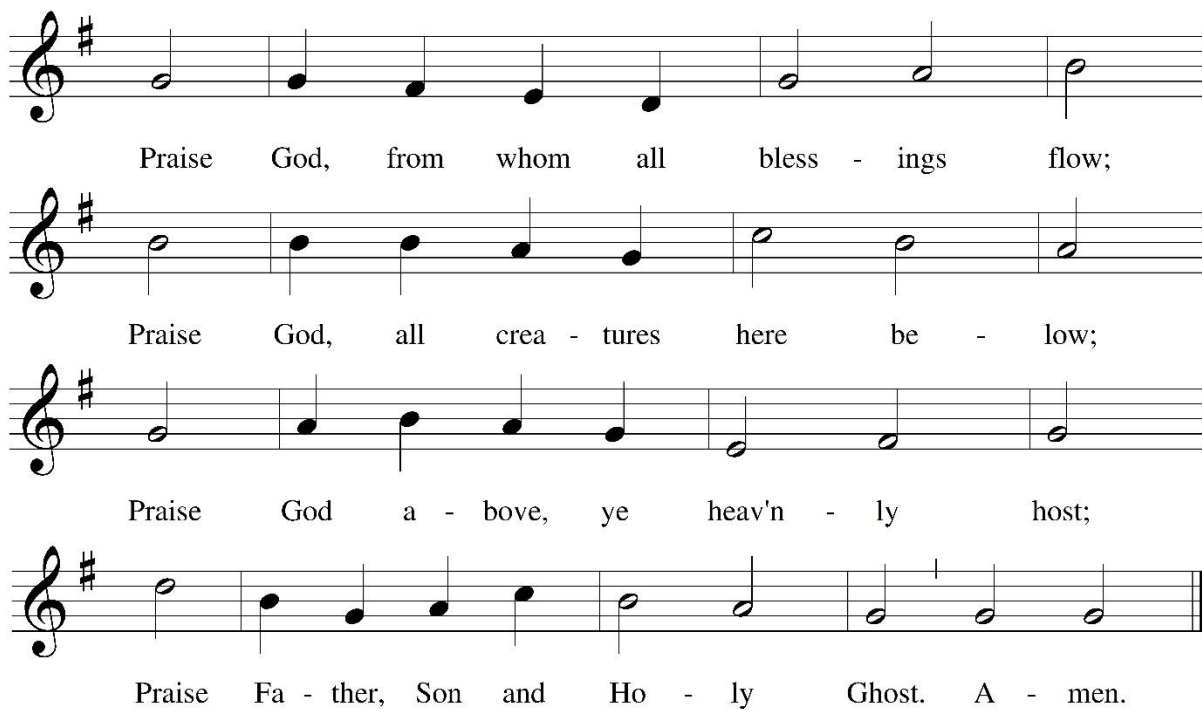
OFFERING AND ANTHEM

'Prayer for Guidance'
by Allen Pote

*Teach me your ways, make them known to me.
Teach me to live according to your truth.
Because you are my Savior.
All day long I trust in you.
O remember your kindness and constant love,
which you have shown from long ago.
Forgive the sins and errors of my youth.
Remember me, O Lord. All day long I trust in you.
Teach me, O Lord. Teach me your ways.
Teach me, O Lord.*

We rise.

RESPONSE AND PRAYER



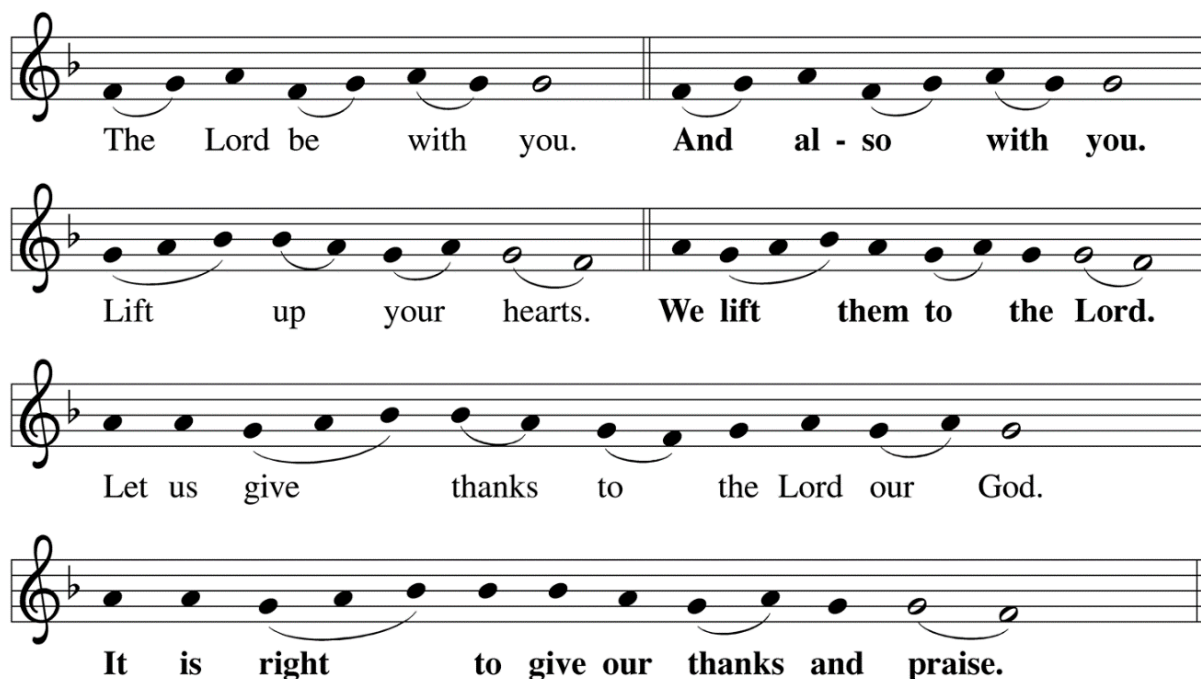
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here be - low;

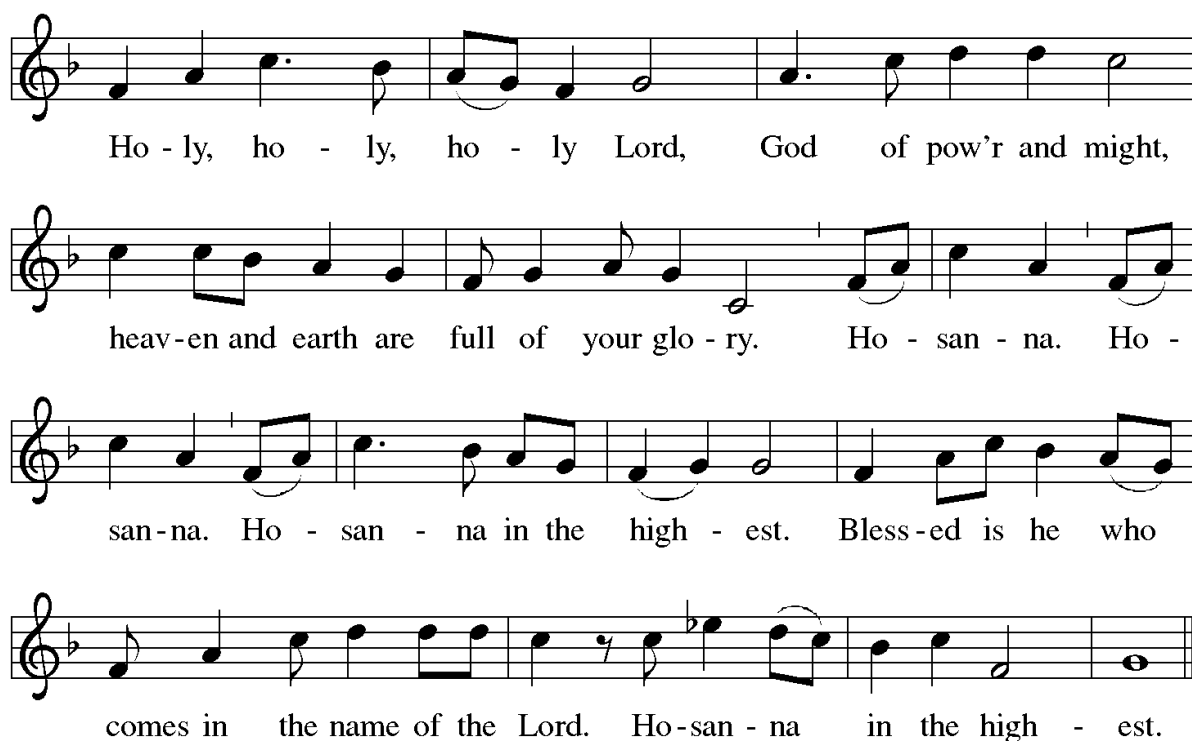
Praise God a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host;

Praise Fa - ther, Son and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

We pray: God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. **Amen.**



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:



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,
you alone are holy,
you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise:
beyond the stars;
beneath the sea;
within each cell;
with every breath.
We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness:
through the water;
by night and day;
across the wilderness;
out of exile;
into the future.
We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son:
at the heart of human life;
near to those who suffer;
beside the sinner;
among the poor;
with us now.
We thank you, O God.

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.

Remembering his love for us
on the way,
at the table,
and to the end,
we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit:
in our gathering;
within this meal;
among your people;
throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks
to you, holy God,
through Christ Jesus,
by your Spirit,
in your church,
without end.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as
Jesus taught us: **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

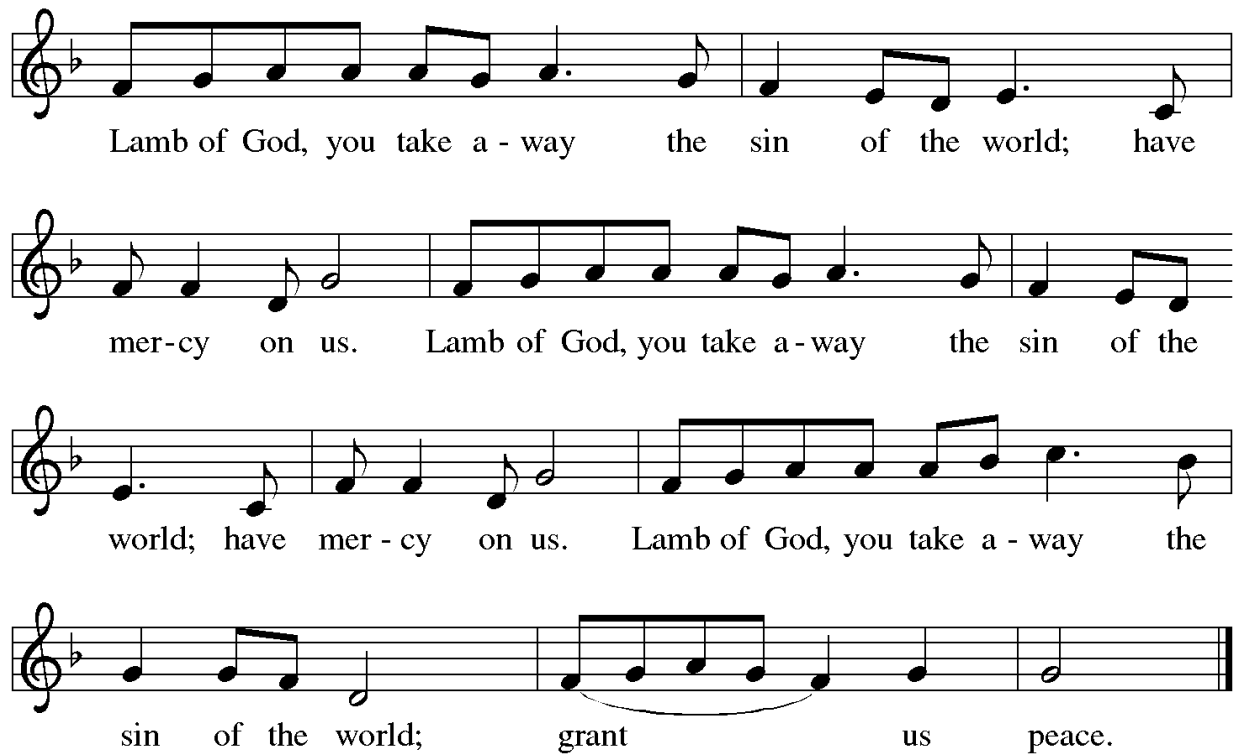
Come, Christ invites you to this table.
Thanks be to God.

Be seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Communion in the nave. Please follow the usher's guidance. In the nave, communion is by intinction, dipping bread (gluten free by request) into wine (or grape juice). Those not receiving Communion are invited forward to receive a blessing (crossing your arms across your chest as a sign to the pastor). If you need Communion brought to you, please signal the servers when they come down from the chancel.

COMMUNION HYMN



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION SONG

COMMUNION HYMN 'Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service'

ELW 712

We rise.

COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you
and keep you in His grace. **Amen.**

We pray: Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your
liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The God of love
draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope
grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of grace
✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

‘The Lord Now Sends Us Forth’

ELW 538

DISMISSAL AND POSTLUDE

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
Thanks be to God.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Reader.....Dennis Rogers
Preacher.....Pastor Lori Carter
Presider.....Pastor Spence Robertson

ORDER OF ST. JOHN’S

Acolyte.....Noah Trick
Crucifer.....Abi Kozlowski
Banner Bearer.....Ellie Kozlowski

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