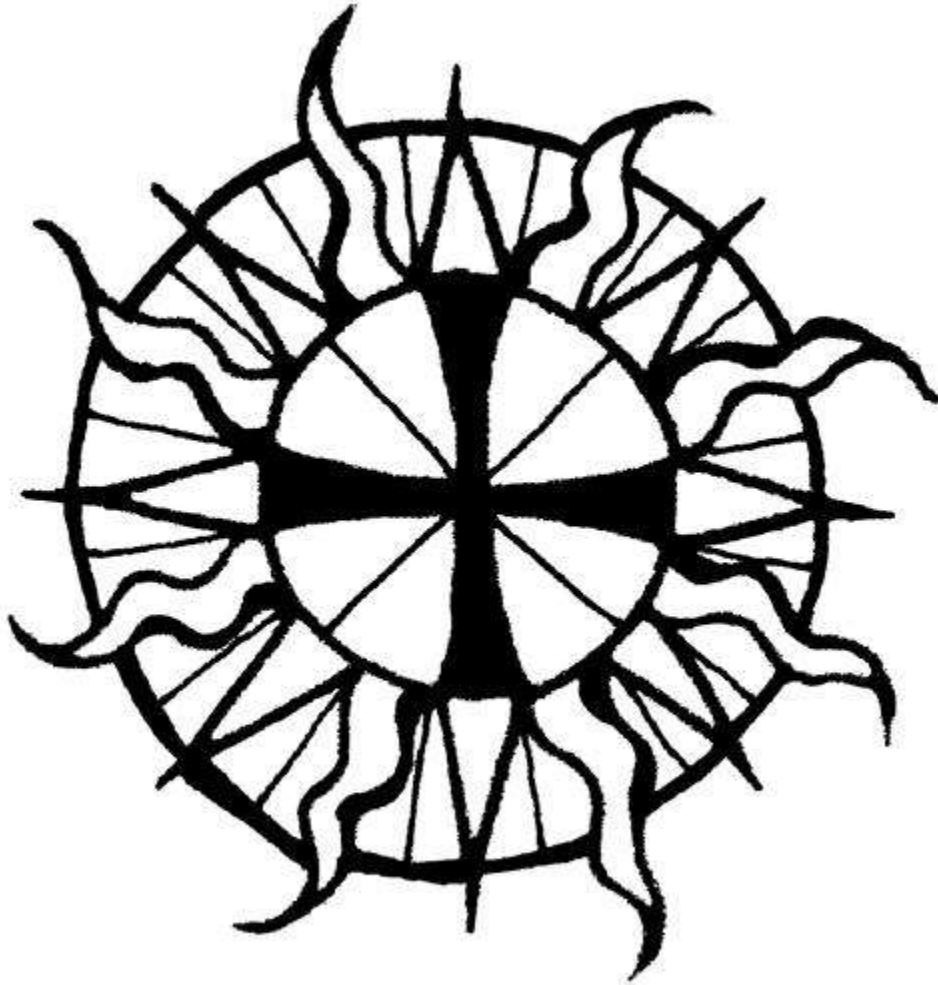


4th Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 22, 2020
8:30 & 11:00 am



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
1910 34th Ave SE
Albany, Oregon
(541) 926-4875

Email: office@goodshepherdalbany.org
Website: www.goodshepherdalbany.org



Just as God instructed Samuel to anoint David as Israel's king, God has anointed each of you for special work. May this worship service strengthen you for service!

Serving at Worship

	<u>EARLY</u>	<u>LATE</u>
Assisting Minister	Linda Passmore	Joe Rounsavell
Reader	Chris Keys	Barb Moody
Ushers	F.Carson/B.Bilyeu	Jake Lamp
Communion Assistants	Al & Julie Wentland	Choir
Altar Guild	M.Hibbs & A.Mumm for the month of March	
Hosts	Thune/Dysle/Passmore/Jackson/Wentland	
Counters	Eriksen/McConnel-LeRoy	



Flowers on the altar today are from Barb Moody in celebration of Norma Carns' Birthday.

Happy Birthday Norma!!

Laura O'Brien	Pastor
Al Wentland	Council President
Teresa Thomas	Treasurer
Phyllis Wimer	Church Bookkeeper
Meghan Hess	Church Office Manager
Alicia Jabin	Director of School
Crystal Weinmann	Operations Manager
Penny Bazanele	Pianist
Serena Lodes	Choir Director

4th Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 22, 2020
Feast & Celebration

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Presider: In the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen

Presider: If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. Let us confess our sin to God who is faithful and just and who has promised to forgive our sin and cleanse us from unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Presider: Most Merciful God,

Congregation: Have mercy on us.

All: We confess to you that 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 trusted you with our whole heart; we have not loved one another in deed and in truth. In your compassion forgive our sin and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ our light and our truth. Amen.

Presider: With joy, I proclaim to you that Almighty God, rich in mercy, abundant in love, forgives you all your sin and grants you newness of life in Jesus Christ.

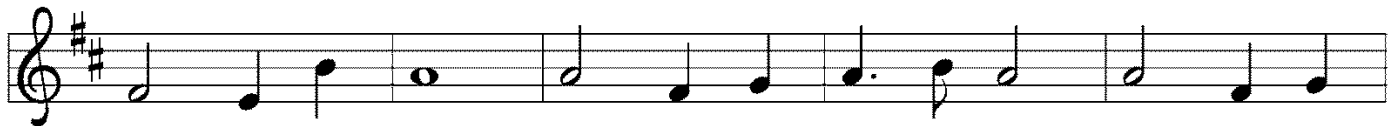
Congregation: Thanks be to God!

GATHERING SONG

My Faith Looks Up to Thee



1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
be thou my guide; bid dark-ness turn to day, wipe sor-row's
shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -



guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
love to thee pure, warm, and change-less be, a liv - ing fire!
tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
trust re-move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

PASTORAL GREETING

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

C: **And also with you.**

KYRIE

Assistant:

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Refrain:

Assistant: *Congregation:*

Let us pray to the Lord, have mer - cy,
Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have
mer - cy.

Assistant:

For the Reign of God, and for peace through - out the
For your peo - ple here, who have come to give you
world, for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the
praise, for the strength to live your Word, let us pray to the

Assistant:

Help, save and de - fend us, O God.

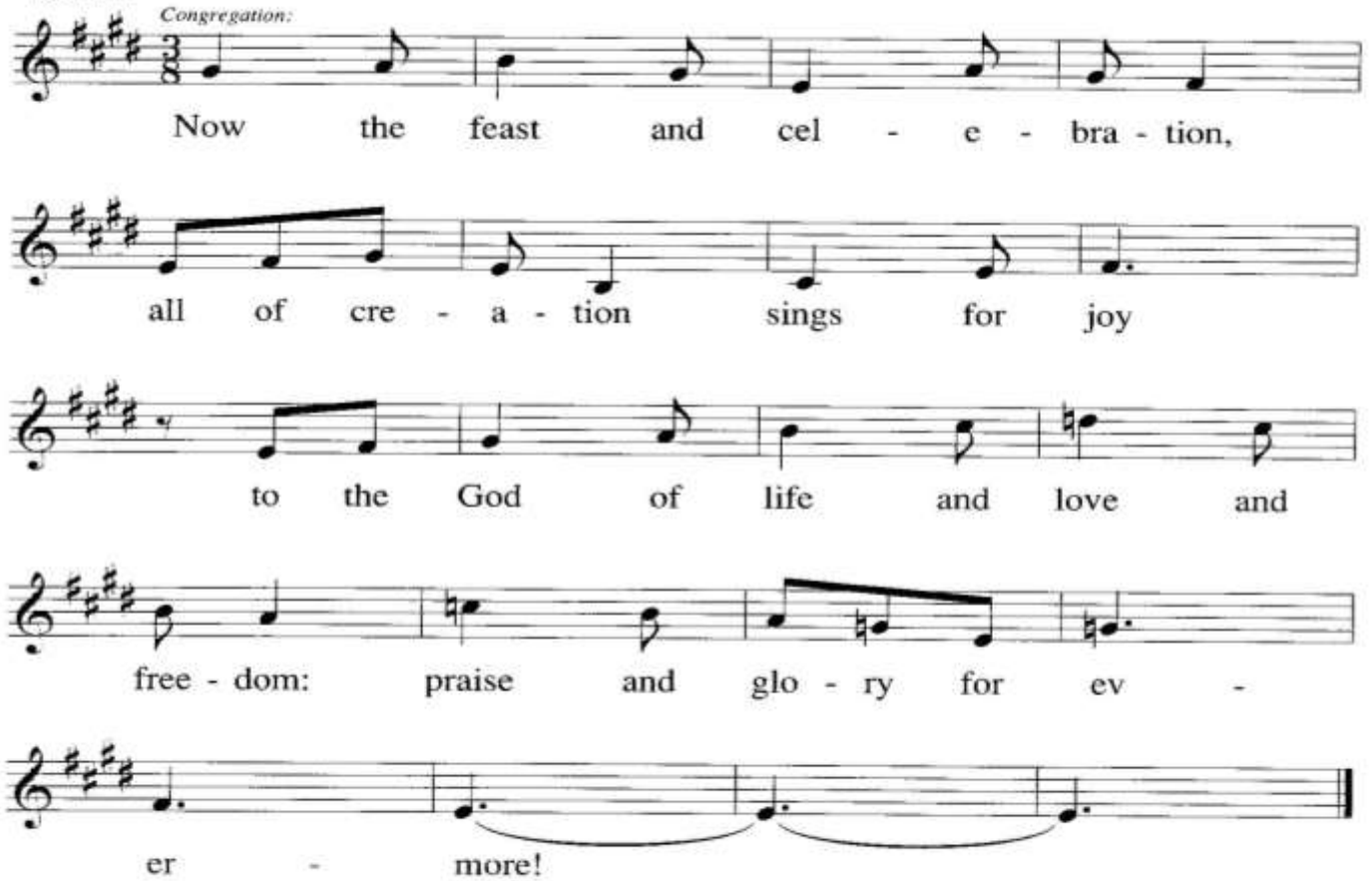
Congregation:

A - - - men.

NOW THE FEAST

Refrain

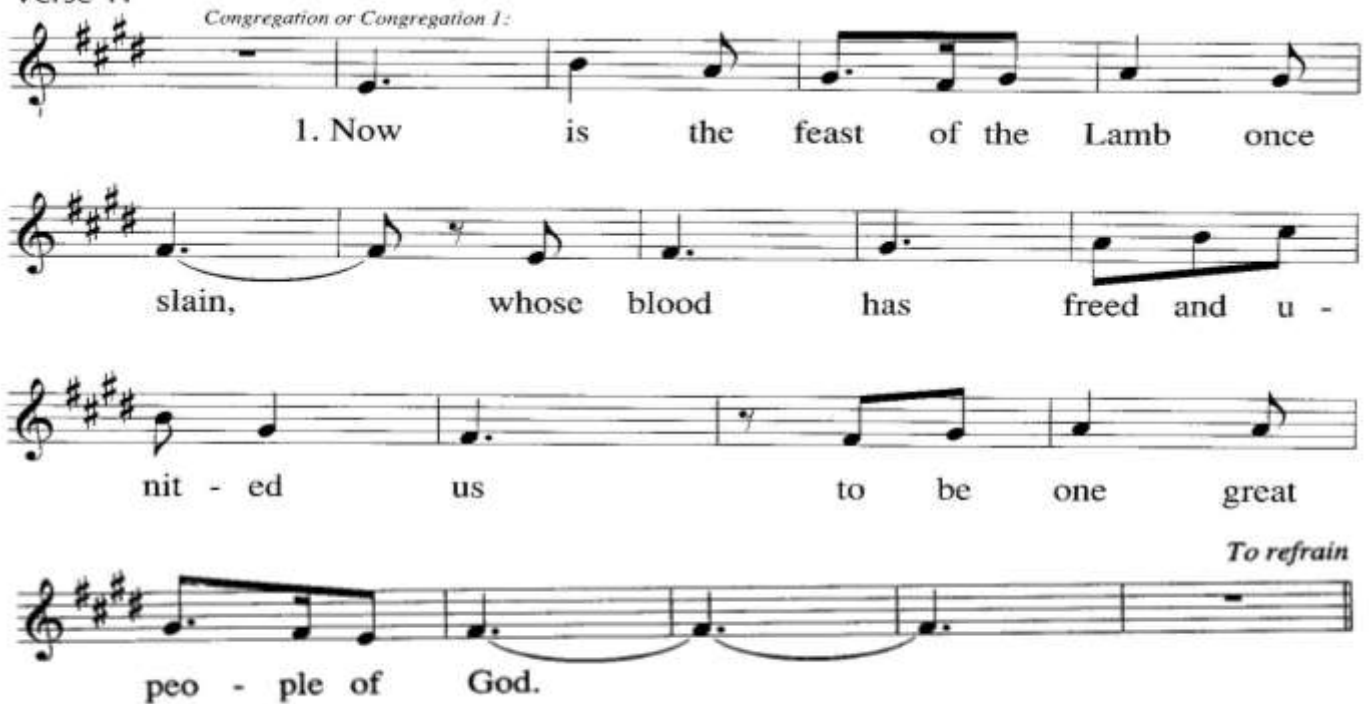
Congregation:



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy
to the God of life and love and
free - dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -
er - more!

Verse 1:

Congregation or Congregation 1:



1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once
slain, whose blood has freed and u -
nit - ed us to be one great
peo - ple of God.

To refrain

Verse 2

Congregation or Congregation 2:

Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and
might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ
for ev - er. *To refrain*

Verse 3

Congregation:

3. For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us peo - ple of God; to make
all things new. *To refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray..... God of all mercy, by your power to heal and to forgive, graciously cleanse us from all sin and make us strong; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

CHILDRENS SERMON

CHOIR TO SING AT EARLY SERVICE

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

L: The First Lesson is from 1 Samuel the 16th chapter, beginning at the 1st verse:

¹The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.”

²Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’”

³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” ⁵He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is now before the LORD.” ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

²**He makes me lie down in green pastures**

and leads me beside still waters.

³He revives my soul

and guides me along right pathways for his name's sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;**

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;

you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶**Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,**

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

L: The Second Lesson is from Ephesians the 5th chapter, beginning at the 8th verse:

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,

and Christ will shine on you.”

L: The Word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

RETURN TO GOD (During Lent)

Congregation:

Re - tum to God with all your heart. the

Source of grace and mer - cy; Come, seek the ten - der

faith - ful - ness of God. *Repeat optional*

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and contains the lyrics 'Re - tum to God with all your heart. the'. The second staff continues with 'Source of grace and mer - cy; Come, seek the ten - der'. The third staff concludes with 'faith - ful - ness of God.' and ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign, with the instruction 'Repeat optional' written above it.

GOSPEL: John 9:1-41

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 9th chapter, beginning at the 1st verse:

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground

and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes,⁷ saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?"⁹ Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."¹⁰ But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?"¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight."¹² They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.¹⁴ Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see."¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided.¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight¹⁹ and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner."²⁵ He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

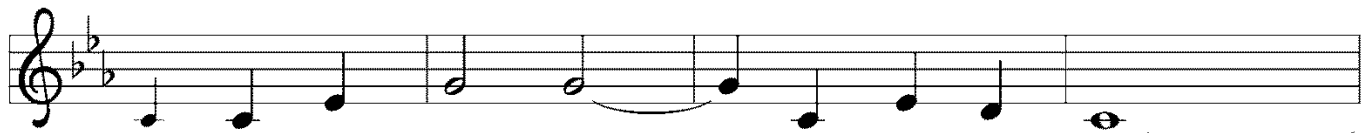
P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

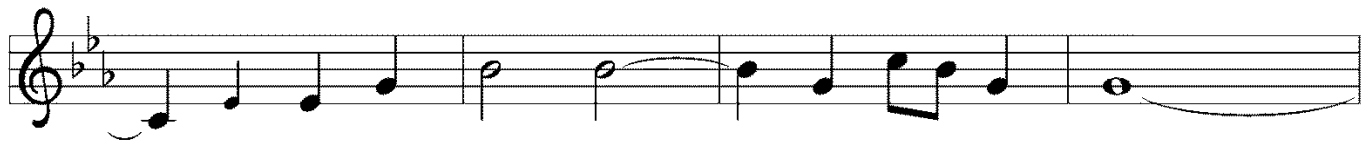
SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

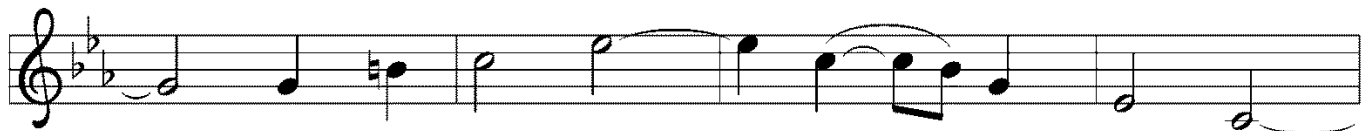
I Want Jesus to Walk with Me



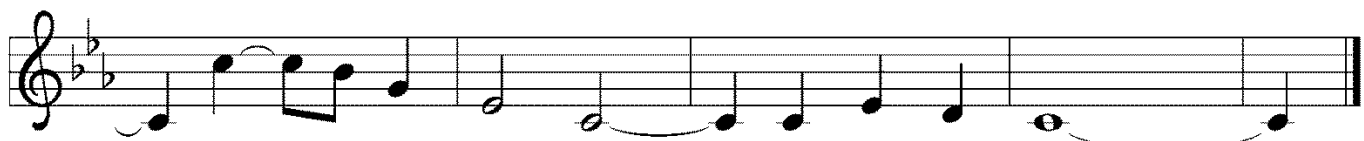
1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



I want Je - sus to walk with me;
in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
when my heart is al - most break - ing,
when my head is bowed in sor - row,



Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

APOSTLE'S CREED

A: God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

C: **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 CHURCH

A: Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

God of insight, open the hearts of the church and the world to all who testify to your deeds of power (*like Jonathan Edwards, whom we commemorate today*). Raise up voices in your church that are often silenced or overlooked due to age, gender expression, race, or economic status. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of insight, empower us to care for the land and all living things that dwell in it and beneath it. Provide rich soil for crops to grow. Bring rain to lands suffering drought. Protect hills and shorelines from damage caused by erosion. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of insight, bring peace to all people and nations. Anoint leaders who seek goodness, righteousness, and truth on behalf of all. Frustrate the efforts of those who would seek to cause violence or terror. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: God of insight, you care for our needs even before we ask. Come quickly to all who seek prayer this day..... Accomplish healing through the work of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, nutritionists, and all who tend to human bodies. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Gracious God, watch over and care for all persons who serve in the military..... Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of insight, help this assembly lift up the unique gifts of each person who enters, no matter their physical capacity, cognitive ability, or sensory need. Help us to be creative and brave in making our facilities and our ministries accessible to all. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of insight, you call out to those who are asleep and awaken them to new life with you. We give thanks for your saints. Join us together with them as your children in this world and the next. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us greet one another with a sign of God's peace.

The congregation is invited to greet one another with a gesture of peace (hand shake or hug) using these or similar words – *God's peace be with you.*

OFFERING

Gathering of Offerings

Offertory

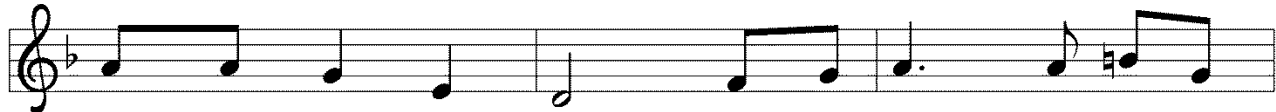
Presentation of our Gifts

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery



① Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your
2 We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed
3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling



death we are re - born; though you die in all of
on through act and word; ev - 'ry per - son lost and
though our steps may be; one with you in joy and



his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you
bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord, wears the
sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the



rise with ev - 'ry morn.
bod - y of our Lord.
riv - er, you the sea.

One of the following may be sung as a final stanza at the appropriate time.

General

Light of life beyond conceiving,
mighty Spirit of our Lord;
give new strength to our believing,
give us faith to live your word

Lent 1

From the dawning of creation
you have loved us as your own;
stay with us through all temptation,
make us turn to you alone.

Lent 2

In our call to be a blessing,
may we be a blessing true;
may we live and die confessing
Christ as Lord of all we do.

Lent 3

Living Water of salvation,
be the fountain of each soul;
springing up in new creation,
flow in us and make us whole.

Lent 4

Give us eyes to see you clearly;
make us children of your light.
Give us hearts to live more nearly
as your gospel shining bright.

Lent 5

God of all our fear and sorrow,
God who lives beyond our death,
hold us close through each tomorrow,
love as near as every breath.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.... God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord.

C: Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music with lyrics underneath. The parts are labeled as 'Presider:' and 'Congregation:'.
Staff 1: *Presider:* The Lord be with you. *Congregation:* And al - so with
Staff 2: you. *Presider:* Lift up your hearts. *Congregation:* We
Staff 3: lift them to the Lord. *Presider:* Let us give
Staff 4: thanks to the Lord our God. *Congregation:* It is
Staff 5: right to give God thanks and praise.

P: It is our duty and delight that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you. O God, through Jesus Christ, who calls us to follow his way of humble service and love, and so with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Congregation:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
 might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
 glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the
 One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the
 high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: You are indeed holy, gracious and merciful God; everything is filled with your glory. We give you thanks for your promise and presence which has sustained the faithful in this and every generation. Above all, we give you thanks for Jesus, born of Mary, who in word and deed announced your gentle rule of justice, reconciliation and peace.

On the night of his betrayal 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.

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.

P: Remembering his command to love one another, his life and death, his resurrection and his ascension, we pray for his coming again, even as we cry:

Assistant

A - men. Come, Lord Je - sus. A -

Congregation:

men. Come, Lord Je - sus. A - men. Come, Lord

Je - sus. A - men. Come, Lord Je - sus.

P: Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that all of your promises may come to us and your whole creation.

Assistant

A - men. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it. A -

Congregation:

men. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it. A - men. Come, Ho - ly

Spir - it. A - men. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it.

P: This we pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and our friend.

THROUGH CHRIST, WITH CHRIST, IN CHRIST

Congregation:

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the
u - ni - ty of the Spir - it, all glo - ry and hon - or is
yours, O God, now and for ev - er.
A - men.

The image shows a musical score for a congregational hymn. It consists of four staves of music in a treble clef, with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 6/8 time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with the word 'Through' and ends with 'in the'. The second staff continues with 'u - ni - ty of the Spir - it, all glo - ry and hon - or is'. The third staff continues with 'yours, O God, now and for ev - er.'. The fourth staff concludes with 'A - men.'.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Make us bold, O merciful God, to address you as our Abba as we pray:

C: **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**

DISTRIBUTION

We welcome you to the Lord's Table to share the Sacrament of Holy Communion with us. Holy Communion is served with both red wine and white grape juice. It is your choice to receive either one.

Empty cups may be placed in the bowl to the left or right as you return to your seat.

COMMUNION - Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us, mercy on us, mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you are the bread of life for us all:

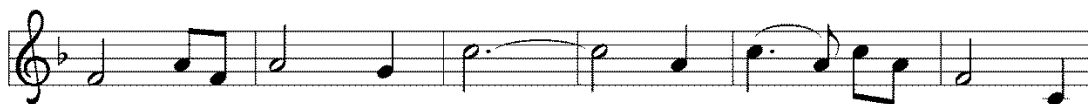
have mercy on us, mercy on us, mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, you break the chains of hatred and fear:
 have mercy on us, mercy on us, mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, you are the way of justice and peace:
 have mercy on us, mercy on us, mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, you are the way of mercy and love:
 have mercy on us, mercy on us, mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
 grant us peace, grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound



1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

COMMUNION BLESSING

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

C: Amen

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

Congregation:




1. Praise to you, O God of mer - cy:
2. From of old you loved and sought us:



Thanks be to you for ev - er! Rais - ing high the
Thanks be to you for ev - er! Truth and jus - tice



weak and low - ly: Thanks be to you for - ev - er!
you have taught us: Thanks be to you for - ev - er!



Strong is your faith - ful - ness, strong is your love, re -




mem - b'ring your cov - e - nant of life with us.



3. Praise to you O God of mer - cy: Thanks be to you for



ev - er! Rais - ing high the weak and low - ly:



Thanks be to you for ev - er. Thanks be to you for - ev - er!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray... Almighty God, source of every blessing, your generous goodness comes to us anew every day. By the work of your Spirit lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

BLESSING – TO BE SUNG BY CHOIR AT EARLY SERVICE

SENDING HYMN

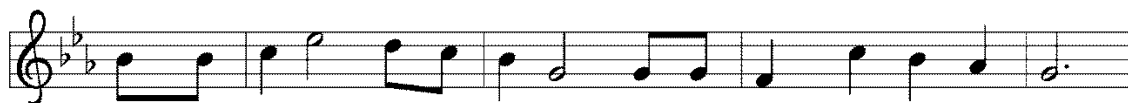
Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us



1 Sav-ior like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.
2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;
3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;
4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your fold pre-pare.
keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.
you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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No Permission Required

Report for Sunday
March 15th

Total Attendance: 0

Total Deposit: \$4,274.00

Eyes Opened

Toward the end of today's lengthy gospel reading, religious leaders summon, for a second time, the man who was blind from birth and whose sight Jesus restored one sabbath day. Confounded by Jesus' disregard for the sabbath, they judge him a sinner and ask how a sinner could have worked such healing. They cry to the newly sighted man, "'Give glory to God! We *know* that this man is a sinner.' He answered, '*I do not know* whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see'" (John 9:24-25; emphasis added).

It is such a radically simple answer. But this clear testimony does not align with the preconceived judgment of the religious leaders, who won't rejoice that the man's eyes have been opened. Instead, the blame game initiated by Jesus' disciples rages on in altered form. While the disciples wondered if it was the man's or his family's *fault* that he was blind to begin with, the religious leaders focused on a way to discredit the one who had restored his sight. Neither the disciples nor the religious leaders seem empathetic about the man's blindness, nor joyful about the new possibilities for his life and participation in community now that he can see.

As we listen to the narrative unfold, perhaps we recognize some of the voices blaming, accusing, or (as with the man's parents) seeking to withdraw from the controversy. The story stands in John's gospel as another important sign, identifying Jesus as "light of the world" (John 9:5). But it also serves to remind us of ways we are blinded by our judgments and critiques of others and of ourselves. To what and whom are our eyes closed? What mixture of mud and washing might open us to see differently and, in so doing, restore us in and to community?