

**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Sunday, July 24, 2022**  
**10:00 am**



**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
**1910 34<sup>th</sup> Ave SE**  
**Albany, Oregon**  
**(541) 926-4875**

**Email: [office@goodshepherdalbany.org](mailto:office@goodshepherdalbany.org)**

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



**Dear family, welcome to this time of worship. Share a word of peace with someone now.**

**Serving at Worship Today**

<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Dick Running
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Phyllis Wimer & Holly Flom
<b>Usher</b>	Bob Hibbs & Crew
<b>Hosts</b>	McConnel/Carson
<b>Counters</b>	McConnel/Carson



*Flowers on the altar today were provided by Martin Black in celebration of his birthday. Happy Birthday Martin!!*

Laura O'Brien	<b>Pastor</b>
Rob Hibbs	<b>Council President</b>
Teresa Thomas	<b>Treasurer</b>
Rhonda Walters	<b>Church Bookkeeper</b>
Meghan Hess	<b>Church Office Manager</b>
Katy Garletts	<b>Director of School</b>
Steph Croswell	<b>Assistant Director</b>
Crystal Weinmann	<b>School Bookkeeper</b>
Penny Bazanele	<b>Pianist</b>
Serena Gerhart	<b>Choir Director</b>

**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Sunday, July 24, 2022**  
**ELW – Setting 5**

**PRELUDE**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*Presider:* Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, whose steadfast love endures forever.

**Congregation: Amen**

*Presider:* Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

*Presider:* Merciful God,

**Congregation: Have mercy on us.**

**All: We confess that we have not followed your path but have chosen our own way. Instead of putting others before ourselves, we long to take the best seats at the table. When met by those in need, we have too often passed by on the other side. Set us again on the path of life. Save us from ourselves and free us to love our neighbors. Amen**

*Presider:* Hear the good news!  
God does not deal with us according to our sins but delights in granting pardon and mercy. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are free to love as God loves.

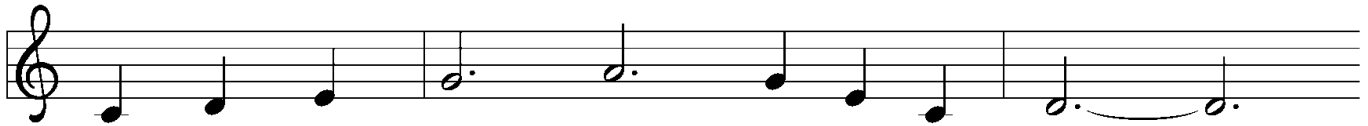
**Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

# GATHERING SONG

## Morning Has Broken



1 Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing;  
2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sun - lit from heav - en,  
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing,



black-bird has spo - ken like the first bird.  
like the first dew - fall on the first grass.  
born of the one light E - den saw play!



Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the morn - ing!  
Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet gar - den,  
Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - 'ry morn - ing,



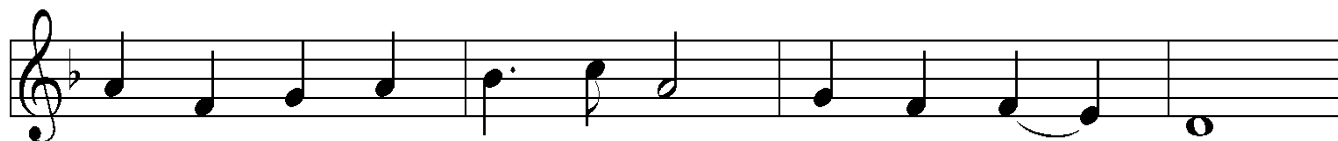
Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!  
sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.  
God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

## 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



**A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:      **G** Lord, have mer - cy.  
*Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:*

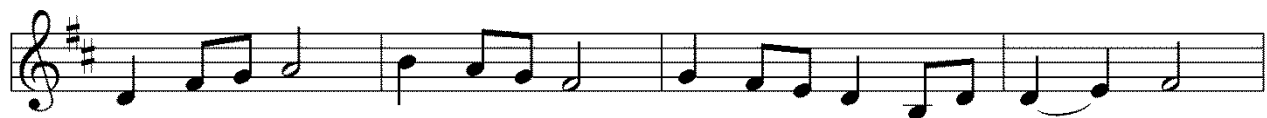


**A** Chri - ste e - le - i - son:      **G** Christ, have mer - cy.  
*Christ, . . . . have mer - cy:*



**A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:      **G** Lord, have mer - cy.  
*Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:*

# HYMN OF PRAISE



☉ Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est;



glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, and peace to God's peo- ple on earth.



☐ Lord God, heav-en - ly king, al-might- y God and Fa- ther, we



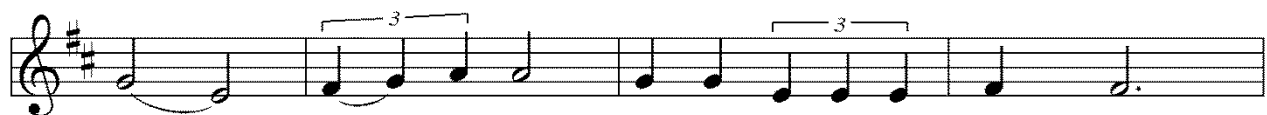
wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



☉ Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est;



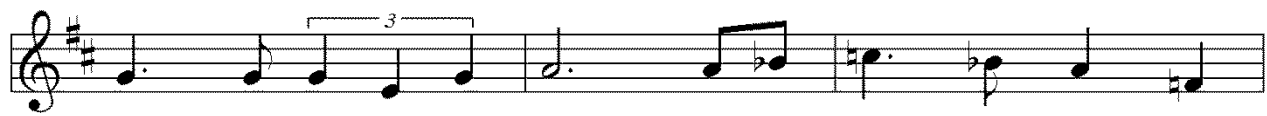
glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, and peace to God's peo- ple on earth.



☐ 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.



**☩** Glo-ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo- ple on earth.



**I** For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,  
**II**



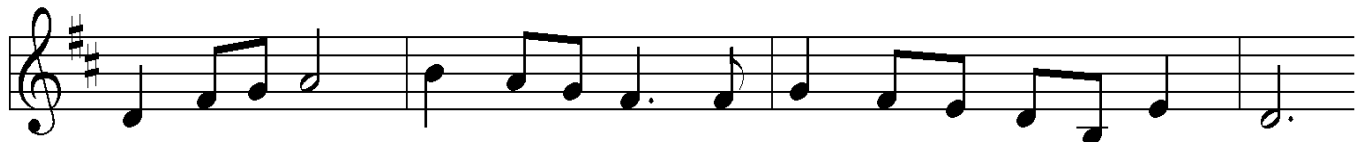
you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther, A - men.



**☩** Glo-ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo- ple on earth,



and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C:** **And also with you.**

**P:** Let us pray.

O God, your ears are open always to the prayers of your servants. Open our hearts and minds to you, that we may live in harmony with your will and receive the gifts of your Spirit; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** **Amen.**

## **FIRST READING: GENESIS 18:20-32**

**L:** The First Lesson is from Genesis the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning at the 20<sup>th</sup> verse:

<sup>20</sup>Then the LORD said, “How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! <sup>21</sup>I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know.”

<sup>22</sup>So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. <sup>23</sup>Then Abraham came near and said, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? <sup>24</sup>Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? <sup>25</sup>Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” <sup>26</sup>And the LORD said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.” <sup>27</sup>Abraham answered, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. <sup>28</sup>Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And he said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.” <sup>29</sup>Again he spoke to him, “Suppose forty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of forty I will not do it.” <sup>30</sup>Then he said, “Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” He answered, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” <sup>31</sup>He said, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.” <sup>32</sup>Then he said, “Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.”

**L:** The Word of the Lord

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**



## **PSALM: Psalm 138**

<sup>1</sup>I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;  
before the gods I will sing your praise.

<sup>2</sup>**I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name,  
because of your love and faithfulness;**

<sup>3</sup>for you have glorified your name  
and your word above all things.

<sup>4</sup>**When I called, you answered me;  
you increased my strength within me.**

<sup>5</sup>All the kings of the earth will praise you, O Lord,  
when they have heard the words of your mouth.

<sup>6</sup>**They will sing of the ways of the Lord,  
that great is the glory of the Lord.**

<sup>7</sup>Though the Lord be high, he cares for the lowly;  
he perceives the haughty from afar.

<sup>8</sup>**Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;  
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right  
and shall save me.**

<sup>9</sup>The Lord will make good his purpose for me;

O Lord, your love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your hands.

## **SECOND READING: COLOSSIANS 2:6-15 [16-19]**

L: The Second Lesson is from Colossians the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, beginning at the 6<sup>th</sup> verse:

<sup>6</sup>As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

<sup>8</sup>See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. <sup>9</sup>For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, <sup>10</sup>and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. <sup>11</sup>In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; <sup>12</sup>when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup>And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup>erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it. [

<sup>16</sup>Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths. <sup>17</sup>These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. <sup>18</sup>Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, <sup>19</sup>and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.]

L: The Word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



## **GOSPEL: LUKE 11:1-13**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse:

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

<sup>1</sup>[Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”<sup>2</sup> He said to them, “When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

<sup>3</sup>Give us each day our daily bread.

<sup>4</sup>And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.”

<sup>5</sup>And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; <sup>6</sup>for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ <sup>7</sup>And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ <sup>8</sup>I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

<sup>9</sup>“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup>Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup>Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

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

## **SERMON**

## HYMN OF THE DAY

### What a Friend We Have in Jesus



- 1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
- 2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
- 3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!  
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—  
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - row share?  
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!  
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

## 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:** Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

Rooted and built up in Christ, we pray for the church. Embolden church leaders to take risks for the sake of the gospel, and equip the baptized to proclaim your extravagant love for the whole world. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**A:** Rejoicing in the works of your hands, we pray for the natural world. Make rivers and lakes, oceans and all waterways, sparkle with your radiance. Protect water sources and strengthen those who defend them. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**A:** Interceding on behalf of the vulnerable, we pray for the peoples of the world. Inspire all rulers and governing authorities with your justice. Guide the work of legislators and public officials, that they advocate for the well-being of those they serve. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Persistent in prayer, we pray for our neighbors in need. To all who have hunger, give daily bread. To all who have bread, give hunger for justice. Open us to the cries of those who suffer..... Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Gracious God, watch over and care for all persons who serve in the military..... Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Abounding in thanksgiving, we pray for this congregation. Bless the prayer and fellowship ministries in this place. Call us together in times of praise and blessing, trouble and sorrow, in your holy name. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Buried with Christ in baptism and raised with him to new life, we give thanks for your saints who rest in your eternal presence. Join our voices with theirs as we sing of your great glory. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

**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



☐ Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were  
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we  
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,  
Lord, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

**A:** Let us pray.... God of abundance: you have set before us a plentiful harvest. As we feast on your goodness, strengthen us to labor in your field, and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all, in the name of Jesus.

**C:** Amen

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C:** And also with you.

**P:** Lift up your hearts.

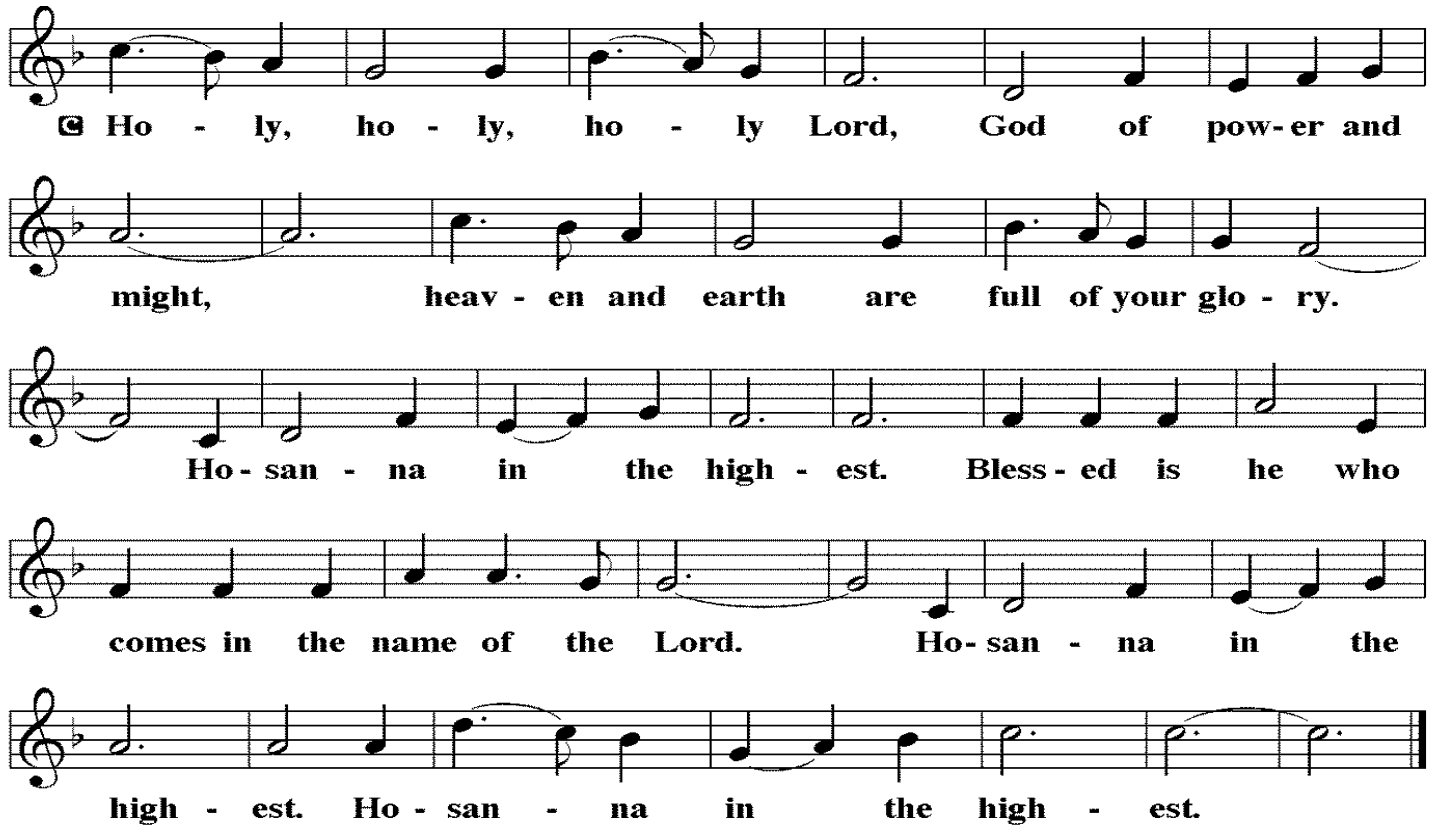
**C:** We lift them to the Lord.

**P:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C:** It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; 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 the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and  
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## THANKSGIVING

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,  
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,  
who preached good news to the poor,  
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,  
we await his coming in glory.  
Pour out your Holy Spirit,  
that by this Holy Communion we may know  
the unity we share with all your people  
in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:**

**C: 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.**

### **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 apple 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.



**♩** 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



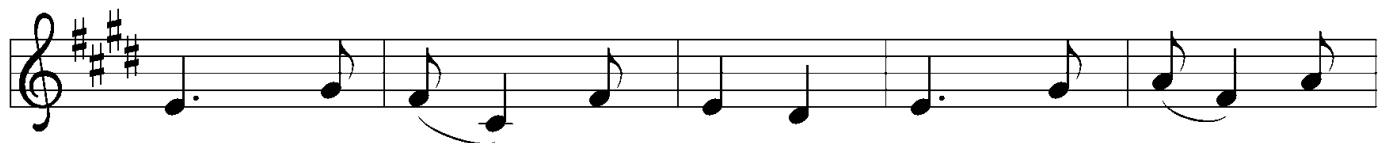
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

## COMMUNION HYMN

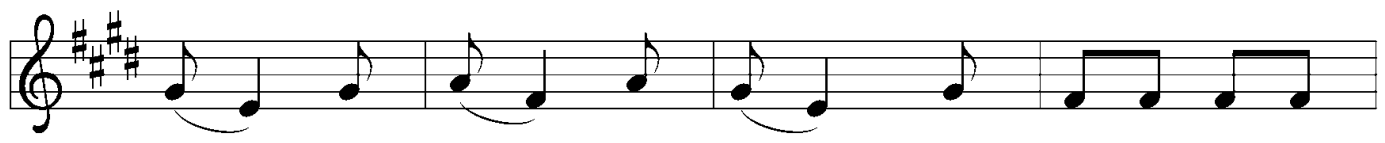
### Your Will Be Done *Mayenziwe*



Ma - ye - nzi - we 'nta - ndo ya - kho. Ma -  
Your will be done on earth, O Lord. Your



ye - nzi - we 'nta - ndo ya - kho. Ma - ye - nzi -  
will be done on earth, O Lord. Your will be



we 'nta - ndo ya - kho. Ma - ye - nzi - we 'nta -  
done on earth, O Lord. Your will be done on




ndo ya - kho. Ma - ye - nzi - we 'nta - ndo ya - kho.  
earth, O Lord. Your will be done on earth, O Lord.

## COMMUNION BLESSING

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

**C:** Amen

## THANKSGIVING CANTICLE



© Thank - ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev - 'ry -  
one what God has done. Let all who seek the  
Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.  
Send us with your prom - is - es, O God, and  
lead us forth in joy with shouts of thanks -  
giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia.

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

A: Let us pray.... Life giving God, through this meal you have bandaged our wounds and fed us with your mercy. Now send us forth to live for others, both friend and stranger, that all may come to know your love. This we pray in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen

## BLESSING

P: The God of peace,  
Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you, comfort you,  
and show you the path of life  
this day and always.

C: Amen

# SENDING HYMN

## Soon and Very Soon



1 Soon and ver - y soon  
2 No more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
3 No more dy - in' there,  
4 Soon and ver - y soon



soon and ver - y soon  
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
no more dy - in' there,  
soon and ver - y soon

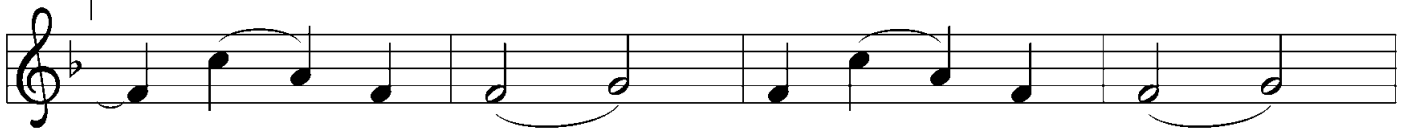


soon and ver - y soon  
no more cry - in' there, we are goin' to see the King.  
no more dy - in' there,  
soon and ver - y soon



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're goin' to see the King!

*Coda after stanza 4*



Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu -



jah, hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah.

## DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

### PRAYER LIST CLEAN UP

Please take a look at the Prayer list on the church bulletin board. We have removed several people from the list in the last couple months that have passed away. We don't verify names so if they pass away sometimes, we don't get notified for a year or better. If there is an asterisk symbol (\*) by a name that means the name will be removed from the list in the next couple weeks unless told to keep the name on. Help us clean up this list and please let me know if you would like anyone added or removed!

### *Pinochle*

*Join the pinochle group on Sunday, July 24th at 11:45am following Coffee Hour. Bring a side dish to share!*



We have a pretty stocked food pantry at this time and get donations each month. Thank you so much everyone that contributes to this wonderful outreach program!!

At this time, we would like to be able to give out more gas vouchers. We are receiving more and more calls each day with people desperate for gas. Normally we give out a \$20-\$25 gas voucher but only receive \$100 a month so it doesn't last long. If this is something you're interested in giving too, please get in contact with Mary Hibbs or Teresa Thomas. We have had people dropping by gift cards that we've been giving out as well for gas. If you are interested, please reach out to us or drop by the church office!

## Walking Group

I would like to start a walking group here at the church. We would walk every weekday M-F, meet at the church doors and start our walk at 10:15am for about 1 hour.

This will be a come when you can group and we won't judge you if you can't make it, but you'll be missed!



## Mass in the Grass

**Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:00am at Timber Linn Park. Bring your lawn chairs and pack a picnic lunch if you would like. No food will be provided this year. Hope to see you there ☺**



## **Weekly Schedule**

**July 24<sup>th</sup> – July 31<sup>st</sup>**

- Today:** 9:00 a.m. Summer Bible Study - **Narthex**  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service  
11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour – **MPR**  
11:45 p.m. Pinochle - **MPR**
- Monday:** 10:15 a.m. Walking Group – **Main Church Entrance**  
6:00 p.m. AA
- Tuesday:** 10:15 a.m. Walking Group – **Main Church Entrance**  
6:00 p.m. AA
- Wednesday:** 10:15 a.m. Walking Group – **Main Church Entrance**
- Thursday:** 10:15 a.m. Walking Group – **Main Church Entrance**  
6:00 p.m. AA
- Friday:** 10:15 a.m. Walking Group – **Main Church Entrance**  
6:00 p.m. AA
- Saturday:**
- Sunday:** 9:00 a.m. Summer Bible Study - **Narthex**  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service  
11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour – **MPR**

### **Upcoming Events and Reminders**

- **Mass in the Grass @ Timber Linn** August 21<sup>st</sup>
- **Labor Day** September 5<sup>th</sup>
- **Rally Sunday** September 11<sup>th</sup>

## God's Goodness Doesn't Sting

Sometimes when people are in need, they pray. And then they wait. They wonder. They wait some more, and pray some more. *Is God listening? Will God answer my prayer?* Some people may worry that they have done something to deafen God's ears to their needs. Maybe they fear they are unworthy to be heard and helped, or that their lives don't matter. Maybe they just give up on themselves and on God.

Jesus is well aware of the challenges of being a person of faith and trusting in God when life is tough. He invites people into a deep trust in God. Why? Because God gives us everything we want, even if it is bad for us? No! God doesn't give scorpions to sting us, even if we ask for them. Jesus invites people into a deep trust in God because of God's profound goodness. Jesus urges us to ask God for the sustenance we need: bread, fish, eggs, mercy, justice, love. God will give us such good things because God is so good.

The heart of Jesus' message is rooted in God's goodness. It is not centered on our worthiness, but on God's generous heart. God is good. God is merciful. God is compassionate. God responds to our need out of that benevolence. The Good One gives good things for those in need. This is who God is for us.

This doesn't resolve our tough and appropriate questions about when and how prayers get answered. It does tell us that we are invited to trust that we are cared for no matter what. We are provided for beyond our comprehension, not because of *our* goodness, but because of *God's*. We can come forward to Christ's table—hungry for acceptance, longing for the bread of mercy—and know we will receive that bread in our hands.