

# ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 18, 2026



## PSALM 51:1-17

Read Responsively.

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
    in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

<sup>2</sup> **Wash me through and through from my wickedness,  
    and cleanse me from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup> For I know my offenses,  
    and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup> **Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;  
    so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,  
    a sinner from my mother's womb.

<sup>6</sup> **Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,  
    and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

<sup>7</sup> Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
    wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

<sup>8</sup> **Let me hear joy and gladness;  
    that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

<sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins,  
    and blot out all my wickedness.

<sup>10</sup> **Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
    and renew a right spirit within me.**

<sup>11</sup> Cast me not away from your presence,  
    and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> **Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
    and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

<sup>13</sup> Let me teach your ways to offenders,  
    and sinners shall be restored to you.

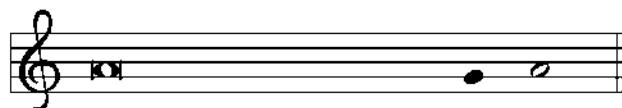
<sup>14</sup> **Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation,  
    and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.**

<sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips,  
    and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

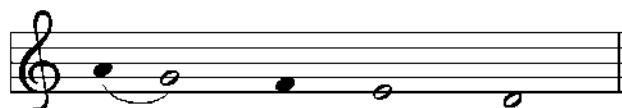
<sup>16</sup> **For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.  
    You are not pleased with burnt offering.**

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
    a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

## KYRIE



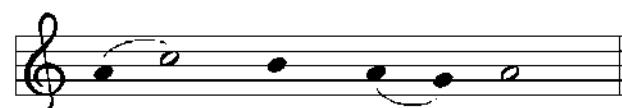
In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



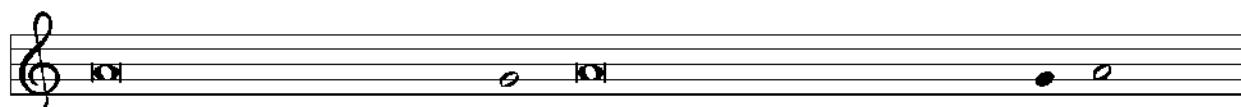
Lord, have mer - cy.



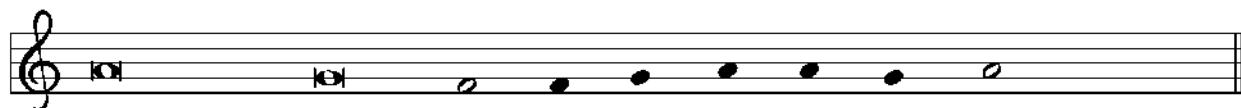
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



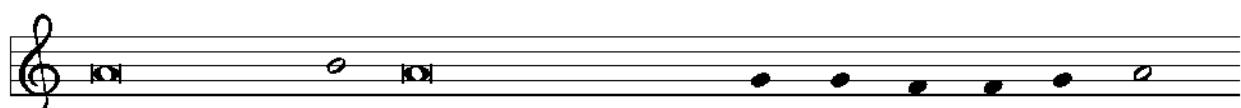
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

## FIRST READING: Joel 2:1–2, 12–17

Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sound the alarm on my holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,  
for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near —  
<sup>2</sup>a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness!  
Like blackness spread upon the mountains  
a great and powerful army comes;  
their like has never been from of old,  
nor will be again after them  
in ages to come. <sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>rend your hearts and not your clothing.  
Return to the LORD, your God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
and relents from punishing.  
<sup>14</sup>Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,  
and leave a blessing behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink offering  
for the LORD, your God?  
<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
<sup>16</sup>gather the people.  
Sanctify the congregation;  
assemble the aged;  
gather the children,  
even infants at the breast.  
Let the bridegroom leave his room,  
and the bride her canopy.  
<sup>17</sup>Between the vestibule and the altar

let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep.  
Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD,  
and do not make your heritage a mockery,  
a byword among the nations.  
Why should it be said among the peoples,  
'Where is their God?'"

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in any-one’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have com-mended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beat-ings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kind-ness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good re-pute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are able.*

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

P The gospel according to Matthew the sixth chapter

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

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup>But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>16</sup>“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

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

*Please be seated.*

## **SERMON**

1 Sav-ior, when in dust to you low we bow in hom-age due;  
2 By your help-less in-fant years, by your life of want and tears,  
3 By your hour of dire de-spair, by your ag-o-ny of prayer,  
4 By your deep ex-pir-ing groan, by the sad se-pul-chral stone,

when, re-pen-tant, to the skies scarce we lift our weep-ing eyes;  
by your days of deep dis-tress in the sav-age wil-der-ness,  
by the cross, the nail, the thorn, pierc-ing spear, and tor-turing scorn,  
by the vault whose dark a-bode held in vain the ris-ing God,

oh, by all your pains and woe suf-fered once for us be-low,  
by the dread, mys-te-rious hour of the in-sult-ing tempt-er's pow'r,  
by the gloom that veiled the skies o'er the dread-ful sac-ri-fice,  
oh, from earth to heav'n re-stored, might-y, re-as-cend-ed Lord,

bend-ing from your throne on high, hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!  
turn, oh, turn a fa-v'ring eye; hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!  
lis-ten to our hum-ble sigh; hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!  
bend-ing from your throne on high, hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!

## NICENE CREED

A Let us profess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

## INVITATION TO LENT

P Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

## CONFESSON OF SIN

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
*Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

Most holy and merciful God,

C **we confess to you and to one another,  
and before the whole company of heaven,  
that we have sinned by our fault,  
by our own fault,  
by our own most grievous fault,  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

P We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength.  
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

C **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

C **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**



## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.  
May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us  
that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life;  
through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

*People may come forward to receive the ashes.  
Ministers mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:*

**Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.**

*After those who desire ashes have received them, the minister continues.*

P Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,  
C **that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

P By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,  
C **bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

P Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.  
C **Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

*A brief silence.*

Guide your church, O God. Accompany all Christians in this season of repentance, and renew our faith in the riches of grace you give to us in baptism. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Heal this earth, O God. Satisfy the needs of every parched place, every diverse ecosystem, every suffering creature. Though all return to dust, grant beauty and purpose to each living thing. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Restore the nations, O God. Let your healing spring up quickly across the world. Give all in authority the will to loose the bonds of injustice and let any who are oppressed go free. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Deliver your people, O God. Comfort any whose hearts are rent by grief, uphold any who are sick, bring food to those who hunger, and give housing to all without shelter. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Bless this assembly, O God. Reconcile us to one another and to you. Strengthen our resolve to fast from evil, open our hands in sharing, and quicken our prayer. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Hold us forever, O God. We thank you for all who now know their treasure in heaven, and for all who on earth proclaimed your abounding, steadfast love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

## PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

*All share a sign of peace and reconciliation.*

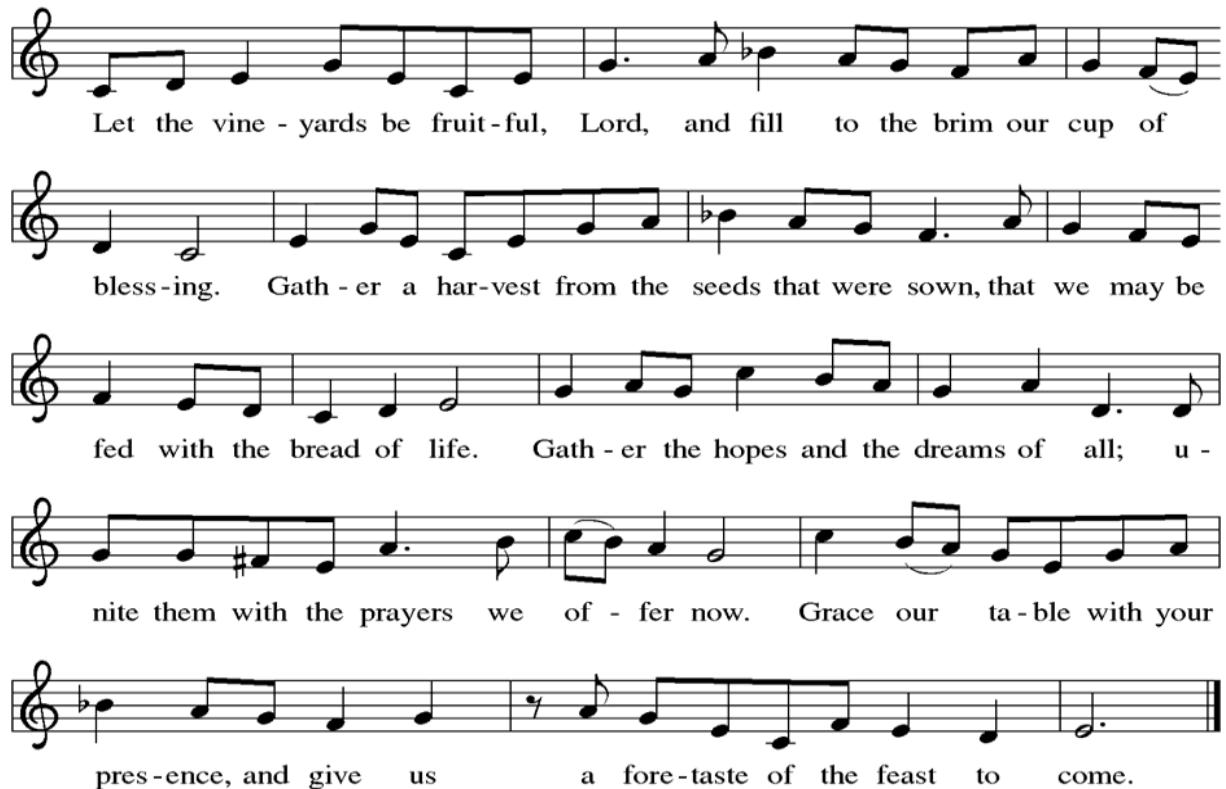
*Please be seated.*

## ANTHEM

*Ashes*

**Conry**

## OFFERTORY

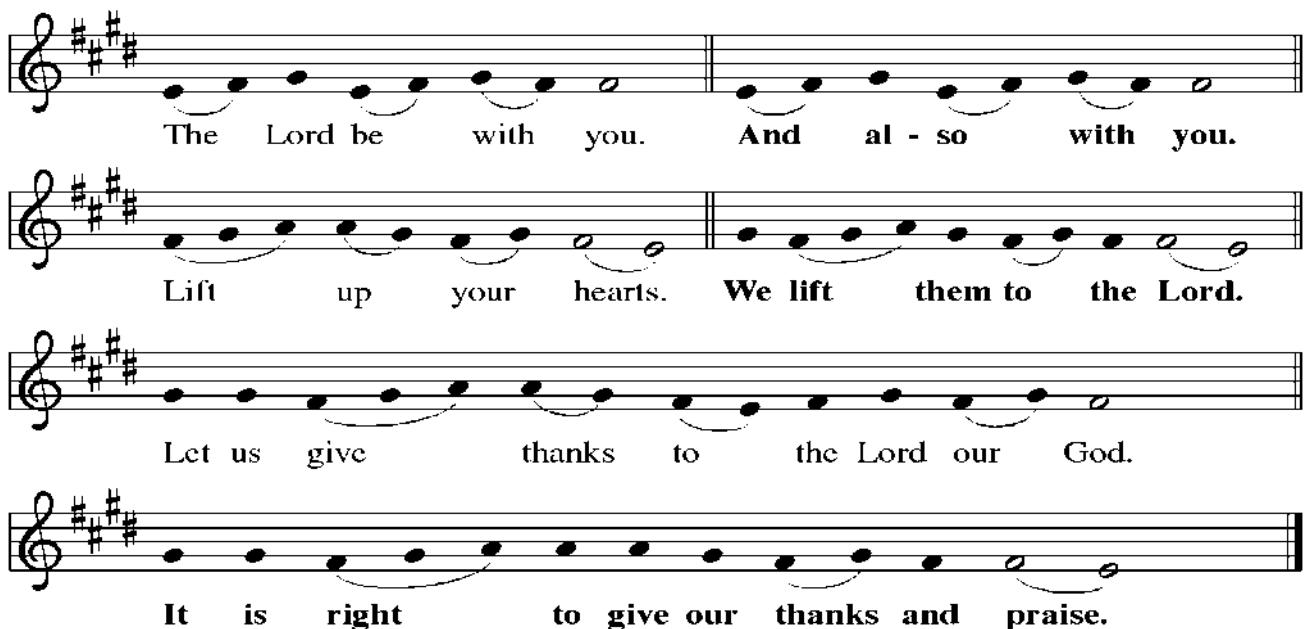


Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble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

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

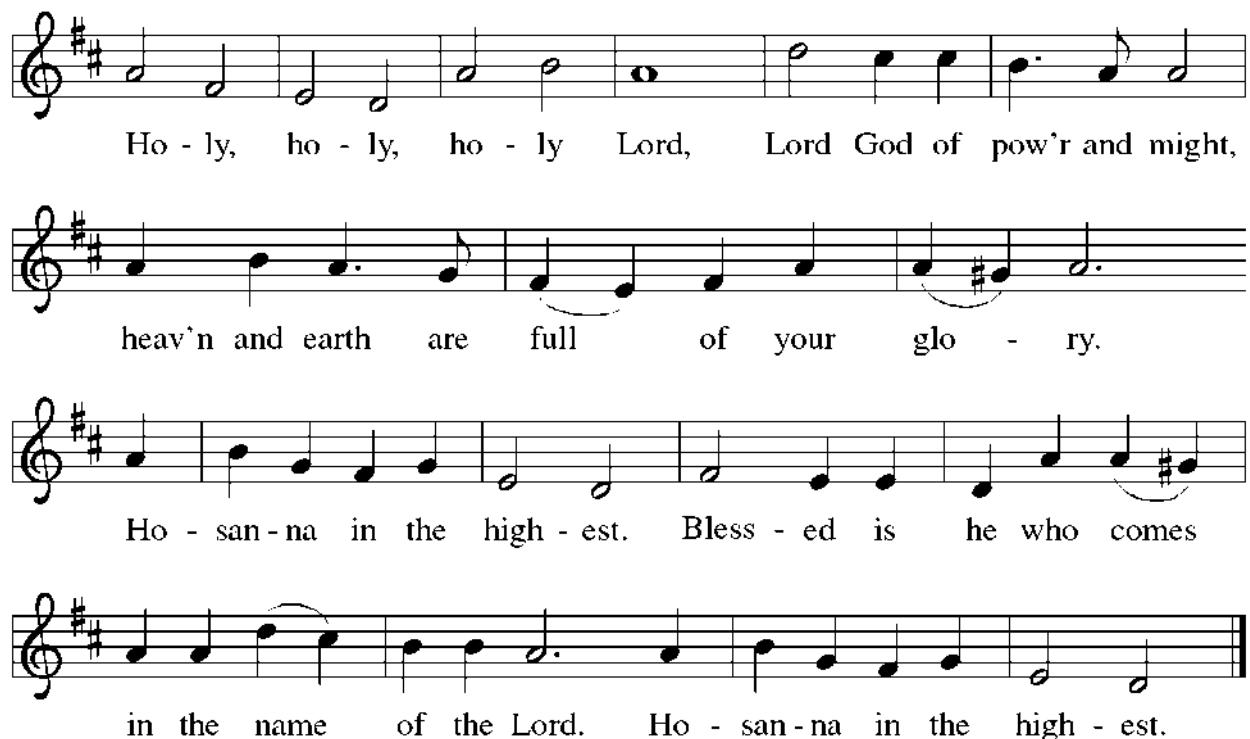
A Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal.  
Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness.  
Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace.  
We pray this in your name. C Amen.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P 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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise you name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n 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.

P You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.  
You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish  
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world  
to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

**P** Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,  
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,  
and the promise of his coming again,  
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,  
not as we ought but as we are able;  
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving  
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,  
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,  
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ  
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,  
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,  
may be formed to live as your holy people  
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

**P** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Taste and see that the Lord is good. All are welcome at the table of the Lord.

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Communion will be received at the head of the Sanctuary. Starting with the section closest to the sound room and worshippers may make way to the chancel rail and receive the communion elements. Elements at in-person worship are red wine and white grape juice. All bread is gluten-free.



## LAMB OF GOD



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



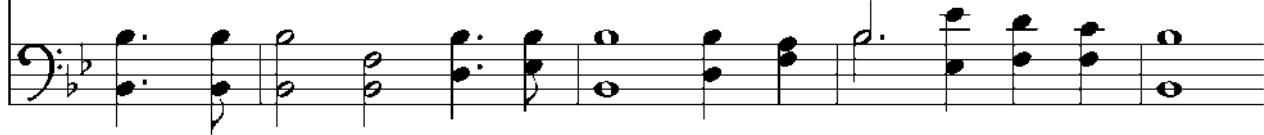
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

## HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

### *Rock of Ages, Cleft For Me* ELW 623



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thec;  
 2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;  
 3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; sim - ply to thy cross I cling.  
 4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,  
 could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,  
 Na - ked, come to thee for dress; help-less, look to thee for grace;  
 when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure; cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.  
 all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.  
 foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.  
 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.



HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

*Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling*

ELW 608

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for  
 2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for  
 3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for

you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,  
 you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,  
 you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain

watch - ing for you and for me. "Come home, come home!"  
 mer - cies for you and for me? Come home, come home!  
 par - don for you and for me.

You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,  
 Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

## **COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

C **Amen**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

P The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

*Restore in Us, O God*

ELW 328



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -  
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from  
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -  
4 Three-per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.  
fruit-less fear un - furl our lives like spring-time bud and flow'r.  
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.  
we, when all our search-ing ends, may see you face to face.

## DISMISSAL

A Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
C **Thanks be to God.**



Worship Assistants

**Assisting Minister:** Beth Fenner

**Greeter:** Bob Howle

**Usher:** Mary Howle, Toni Durandetta

**Reader:** Nancy Goyda

**Sound:** Paul Warren

**Streamer:** Gerry Teig

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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