REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Serving Absecon - Galloway Township
Rev. Heidi Link – Pastor
Brian Conover - Music Director

Sunday, August 30th, 2026
THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

*** CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**
Let us confess our sin to God.

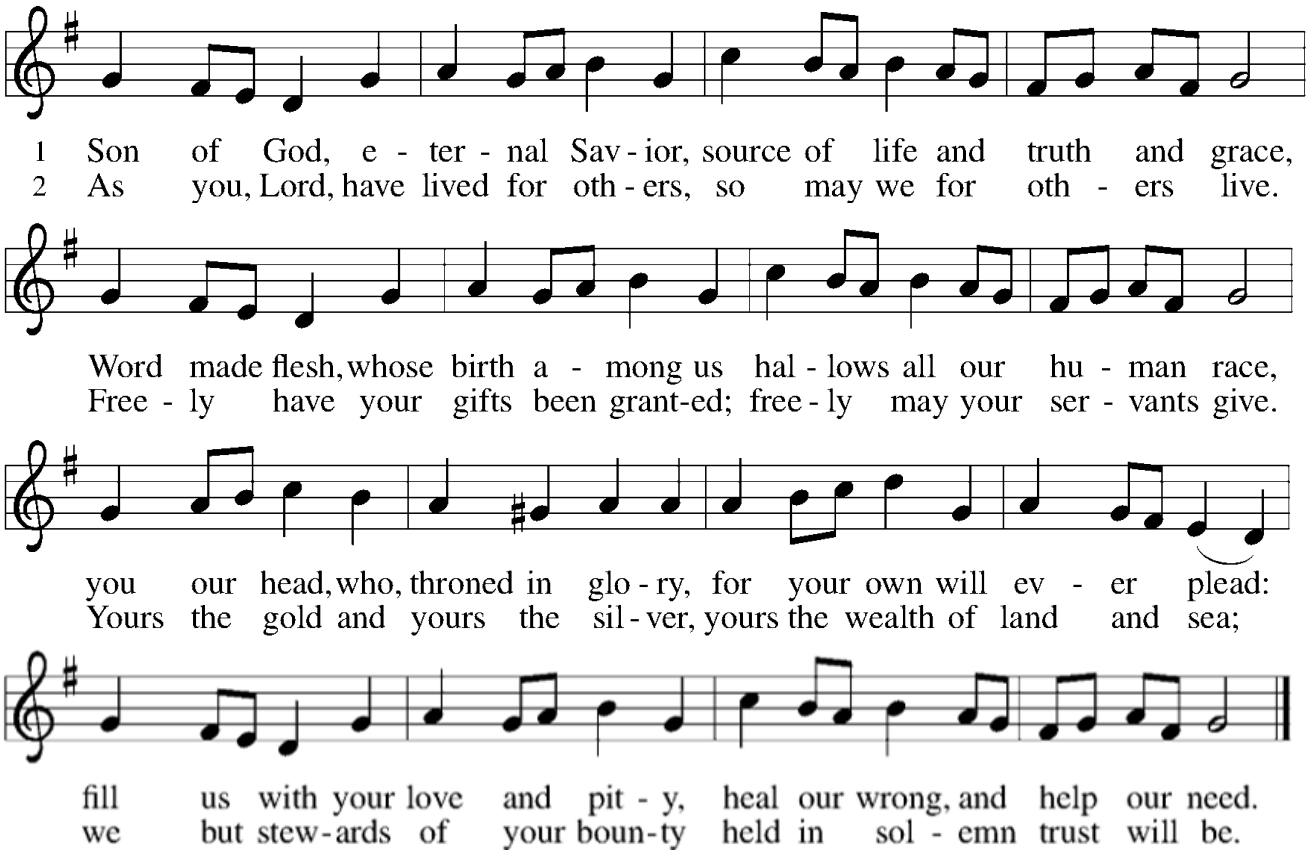
Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen.**

*** OPENING SONG**

Son of God, Eternal Savior



*** - Congregation Stands (If for any reason you are unable to stand during the service, please remain seated.)**

Text: Somerset C. Lowry, 1855–1932
Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollantse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710

* APOSTOLIC GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

Let us pray: O God, we thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 15:15-21

15 O LORD, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.
In your forbearance do not take me away;
know that on your account I suffer insult.
16 Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart,
for I am called by your name,
O LORD, God of hosts.
17 I did not sit in the company of merrymakers,
nor did I rejoice;
under the weight of your hand I sat alone,
for you had filled me with indignation.
18 Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?
Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail.
19 Therefore thus says the LORD:
If you turn back, I will take you back,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious and not what is worthless,
you shall serve as my mouth.
It is they who will turn to you,
not you who will turn to them.
20 And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,
for I am with you
to save you and deliver you,
says the LORD.
21 I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 26:1-8

1 Give judgment for me, O LORD, for I have lived with integrity;
I have trusted in the LORD and have not faltered.
2 **Test me, O LORD, and try me;**
examine my heart and my mind.
3 For your steadfast love is before my eyes;
I have walked faithfully with you.
4 **I have not sat with the worthless,**
nor do I consort with the deceitful.
5 I have hated the company of evildoers;
I will not sit down with the wicked.
6 **I will wash my hands in innocence, O LORD,**
that I may go in procession round your altar,
7 singing aloud a song of thanksgiving
and recounting all your wonderful deeds.
8 **LORD, I love the house in which you dwell**
and the place where your glory abides.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

Refrain: **Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!** *(Repeat)*

Oh, how right it is to give thanks to Him, our creator and our king;
We sing out our praise to the holy one; We rejoice, we rejoice in our God! *(Repeat Refrain)*

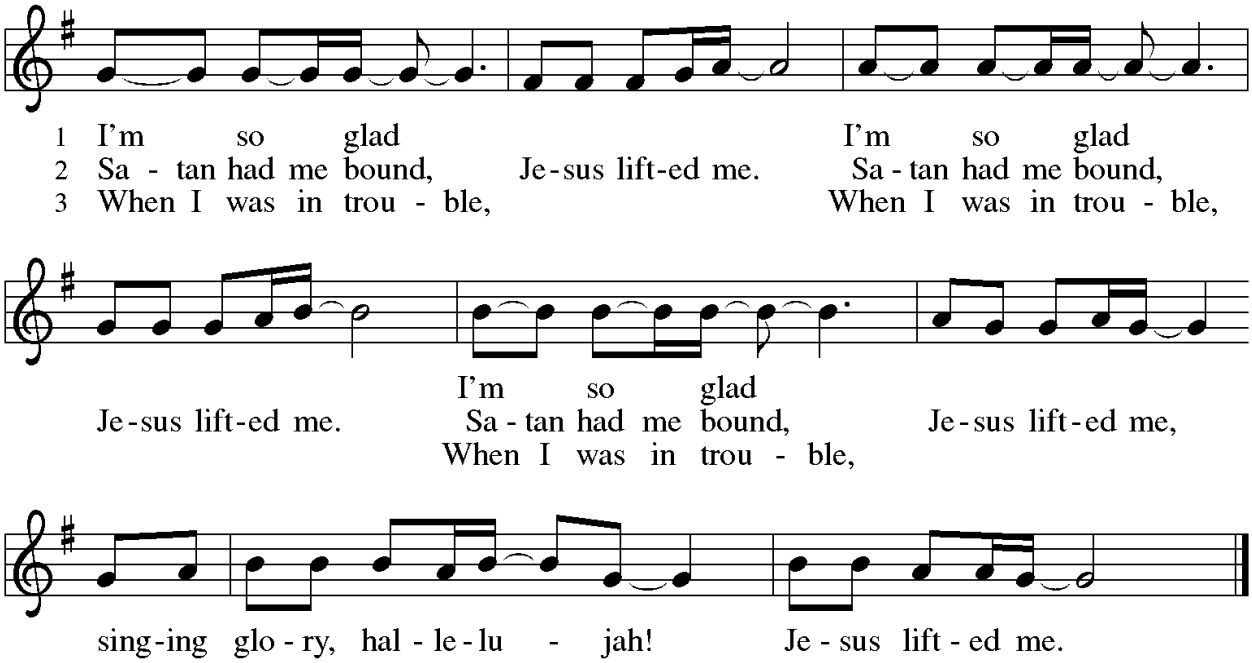
SECOND READING: Romans 12:9-21

9 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; 10 love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18 If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." 20 Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

*** SONG OF PRAISE**

I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me



Text: African American spiritual
Music: JESUS LIFTED ME, African American spiritual

*** THE WORD OF GOD: Matthew 16:21-28**

A reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew.

21 From that time on, [after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah,] Jesus began
to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands
of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. 22 And
Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never
happen to you." 23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a
hindrance to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

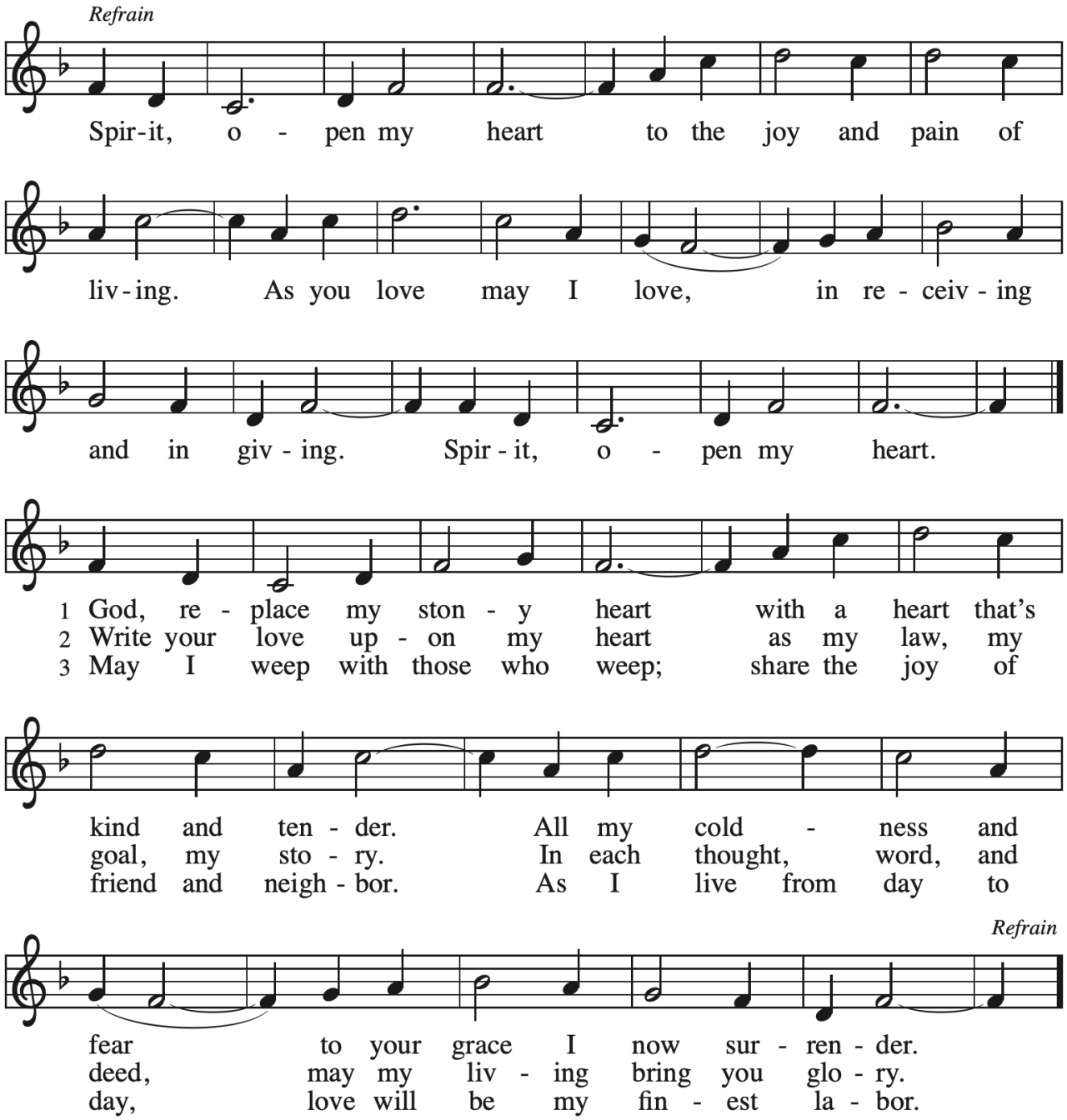
24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves
and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For those who want to save their life will lose it,
and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit them if they
gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?
27 "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he
will repay everyone for what has been done. 28 Truly I tell you, there are some standing here
who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Spirit, Open My Heart

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
Music: WILD MOUNTAIN THYME, Irish melody; adapt. Alfred V. Fedak, b. 1953
Text © 1996 Pilgrim Press. All rights reserved.
Music © 2011 Alfred V. Fedak

*** APOSTLE'S CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 INTERCESSION**

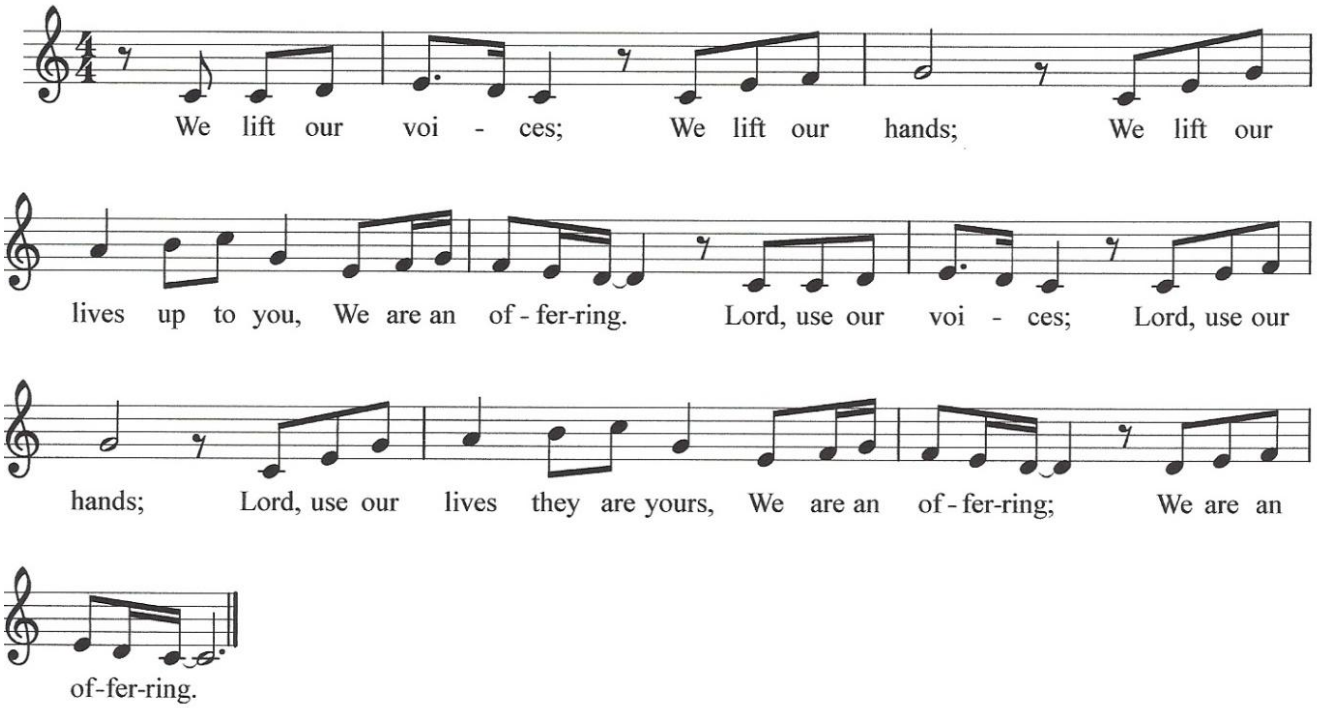
With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.
A brief silence.
For the church in every land, that its mission and ministry is anchored in the love of Christ. When threats or challenges arise, teach us to take up our cross and follow you in faith. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.
For the well-being of your creation, that all that lives and grows on the earth may thrive. Bring relief to areas ravaged by droughts, floods, fires, storms, and other disasters (*especially*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.
For the nations and all in authority, that they seek to live in peace with one another. Bless the work of international and diplomatic organizations and all who work to bring peace to a world scarred by violence. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.
For all those in need, that they be satisfied. Ensure all your children have safe access to food, water, shelter, and medical care. Bring healing to all who bear wounds in body, mind, and spirit (*especially*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.
For the congregation gathered here to serve you, that they remain strong in faith and united in purpose. Guide our committees, study groups, and other meetings toward honesty and humility, always seeking genuine love. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.
Here other intercessions may be offered.
For the faithful departed, that their witness continues to strengthen and guide the church. Renew our hope in your promises in this life and the life to come. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.
Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

*** OFFERING SONG**



*** OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

*** THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

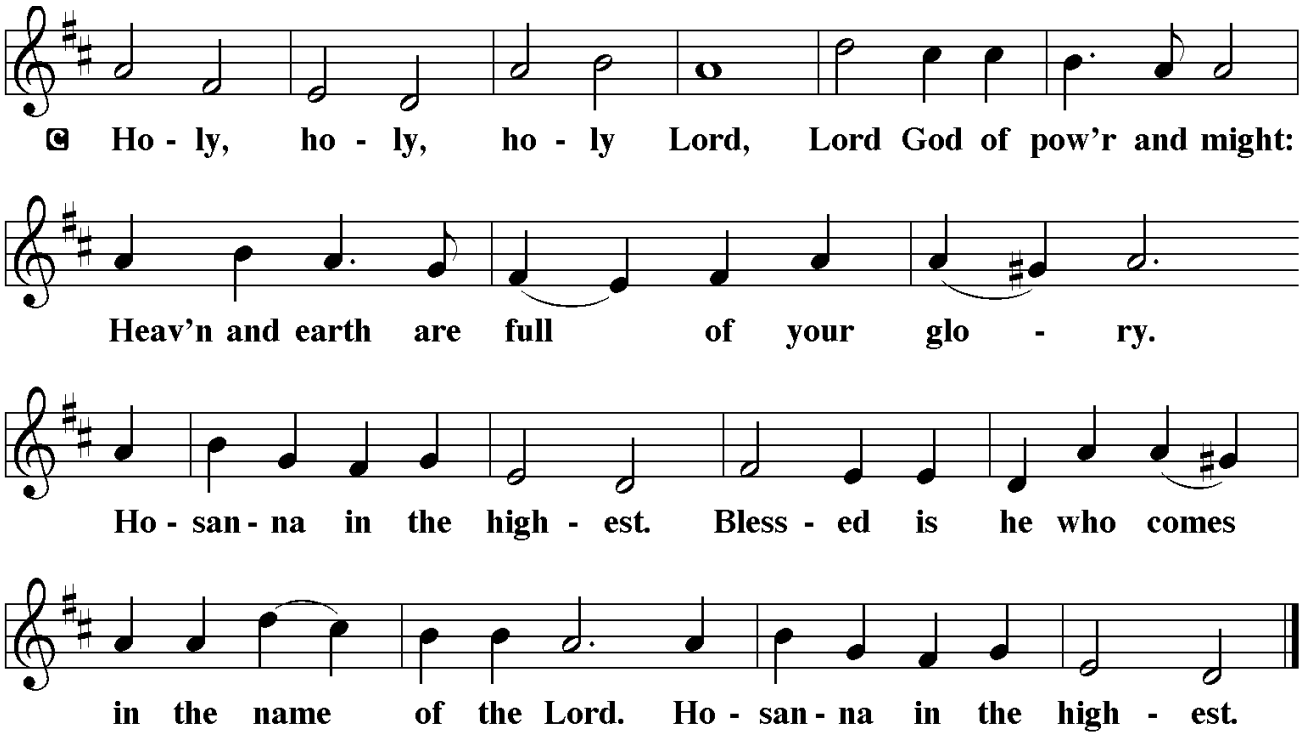
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary…*(Here the minister continues with the preface appropriate to the day or season, concluding:)* we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



*** WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

With Thanksgiving, we remember that in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying: " Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in 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 in remembrance of me."

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Amen.

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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**

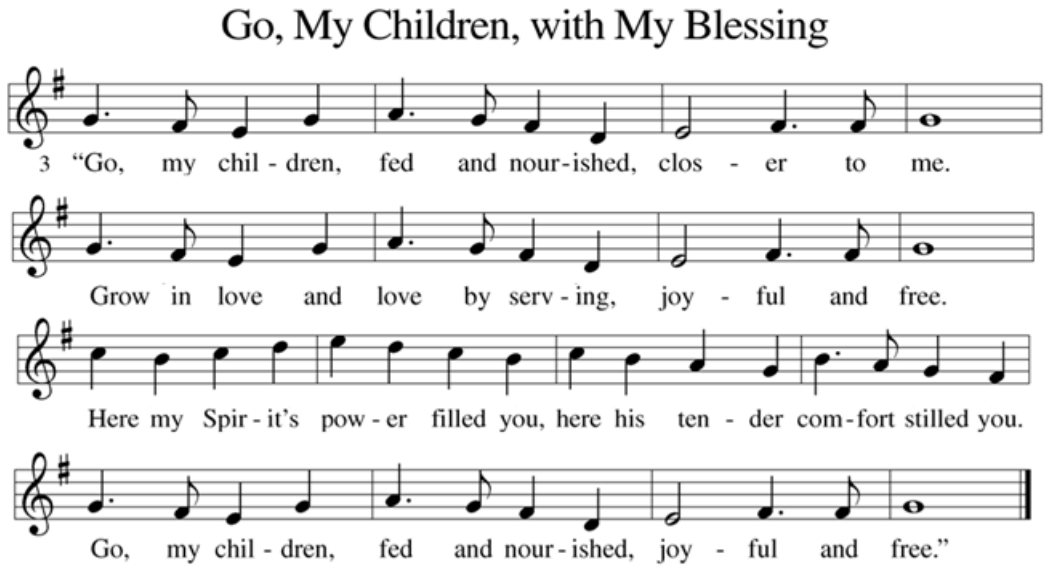
Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

We come.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

(BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS who believe that the risen Christ is present in the Eucharist to forgive sin and renew life are invited to either come to the altar area for communion as directed or share at your pew. If you come forward, you will receive the elements. If you choose to receive at your seat, please remain there, kneel as you are able, and receive the elements using the communion packets available from the ushers. If there are other special needs, please speak to an usher.)

*** POST COMMUNION BLESSING**
The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen

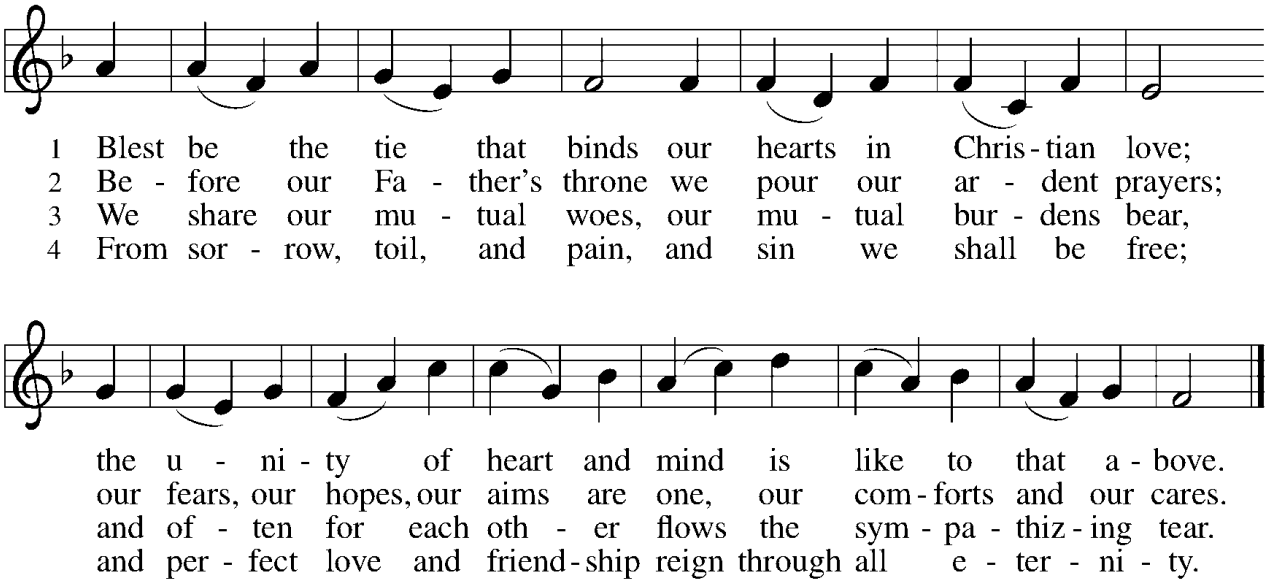
*** POST COMMUNION HYMN**

*** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**
Let us pray: Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

*** BLESSING**
And now a blessing: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always. **Amen.**

*** CELEBRATIONS!**

*** CLOSING SONG**

Blest Be the Tie That Binds



Text: John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.
Music: DENNIS, Johann G. Nägeli, 1773–1836, adapt.

*** SENDING**

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

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