

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost October 4, 2026

Welcome!

We delight in having guests and are glad that you have joined us today.

First Lutheran Church

6 Eddy Street
Waltham, MA 02453-7753
781-893-6563

firstlutheranwaltham.org

Follow us on Facebook at
First Lutheran Church - Waltham, MA

The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl,
Pastor tmaehl@rcn.com

Ms. Cynthia Niiler,
Director of Music
and Parish Secretary
firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com

Vicar Jessica Labenski, Intern
firstlutheranwalthamvicar@gmail.com

Today's Worship Leaders

Pastor

Tom Maehl

Vicar

Jessi Labenski

Musician

Cynthia Niiler

Assistant Minister

Sandy Hebert

Acolyte

Zander Diaz

Lector

Pat Clem

Ushers

Holly & Ezra Diaz

A/V

Prakash Pandian

Altar Care

Kate Chittum

Counters

Ted Sjodin

Alan Sieving

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

The congregation is invited to stand

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

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

**Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.**

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

**Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace

with God through ✝ Jesus Christ,

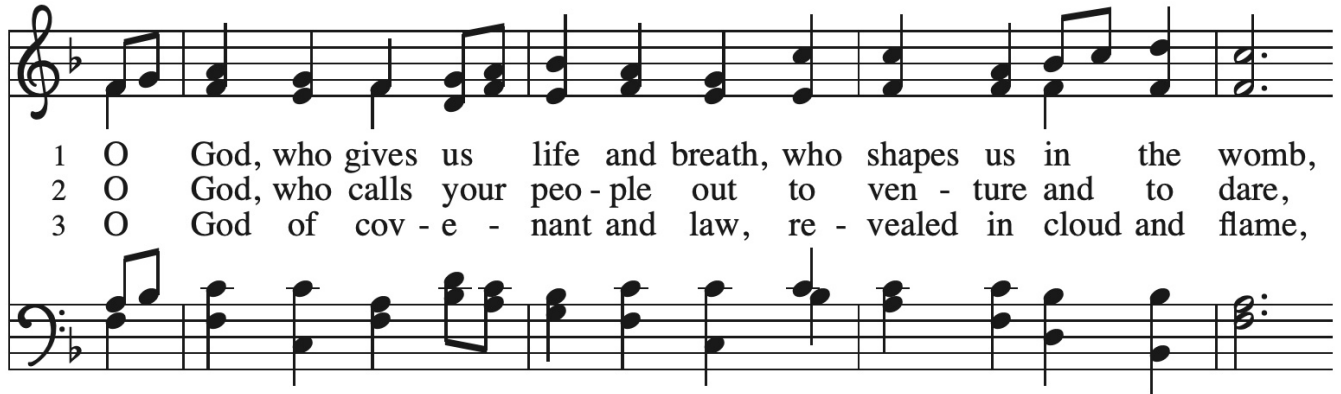
in whom there is no condemnation,

but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.

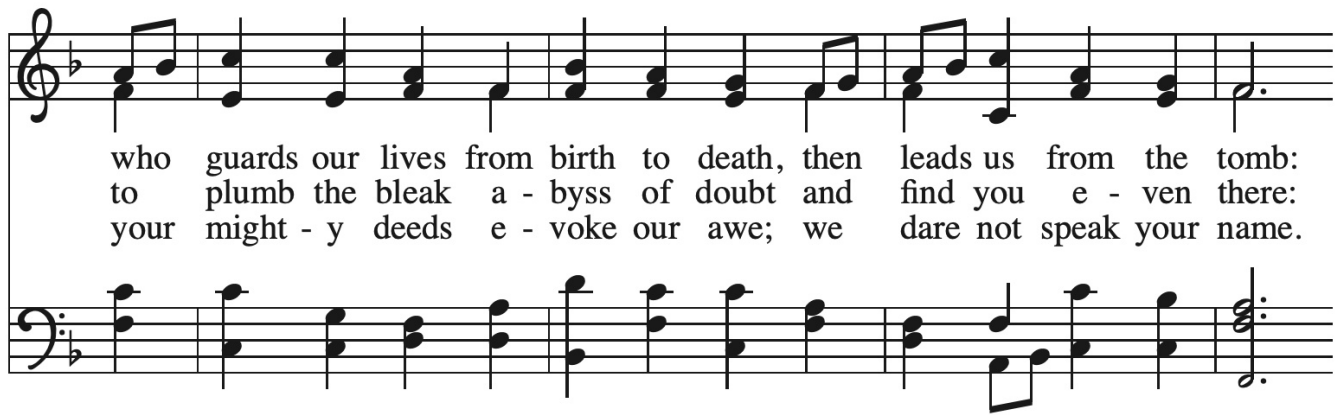
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

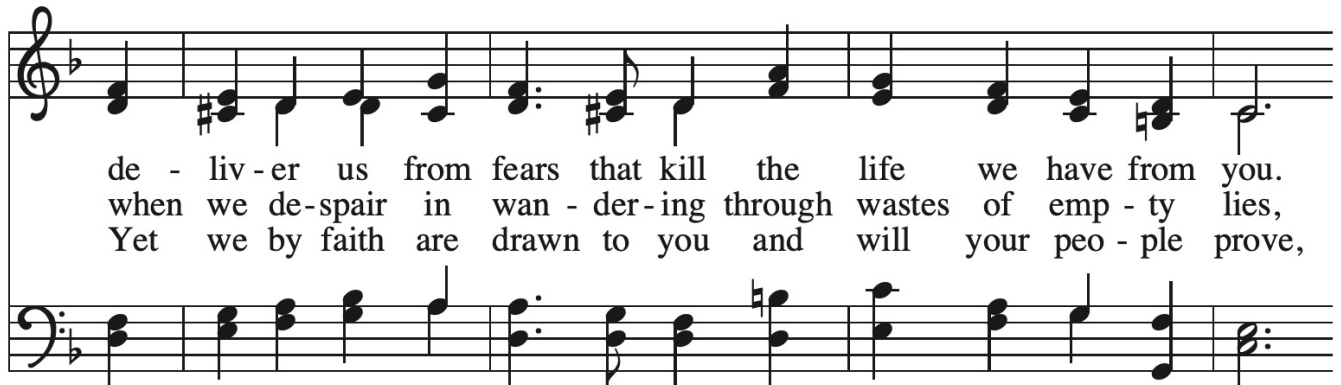
Gathering Hymn: "O God, Who Gives Us Life"



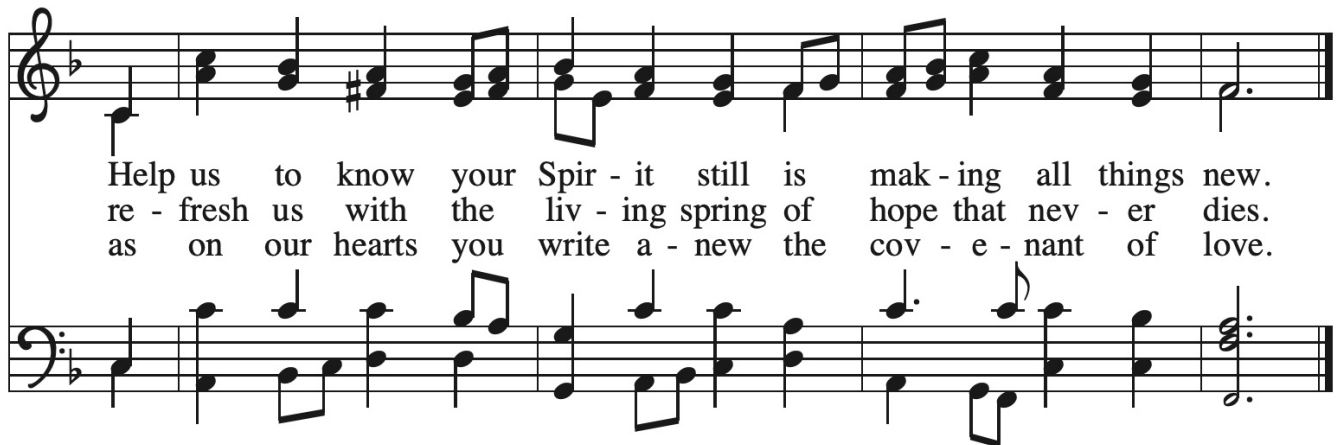
1 O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
2 O God, who calls your peo - ple out to ven - ture and to dare,
3 O God of cov - e - nant and law, re - vealed in cloud and flame,



who guards our lives from birth to death, then leads us from the tomb:
to plumb the bleak a - byss of doubt and find you e - ven there:
your might - y deeds e - voke our awe; we dare not speak your name.



de - liv - er us from fears that kill the life we have from you.
when we de - spair in wan - der - ing through wastes of emp - ty lies,
Yet we by faith are drawn to you and will your peo - ple prove,



Help us to know your Spir - it still is mak - ing all things new.
re - fresh us with the liv - ing spring of hope that nev - er dies.
as on our hearts you write a - new the cov - e - nant of love.

Greeting:

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

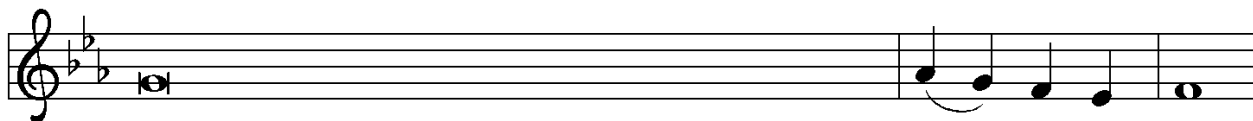
Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



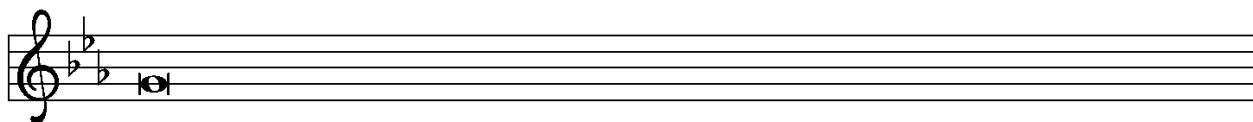
Lord, have mer - cy.



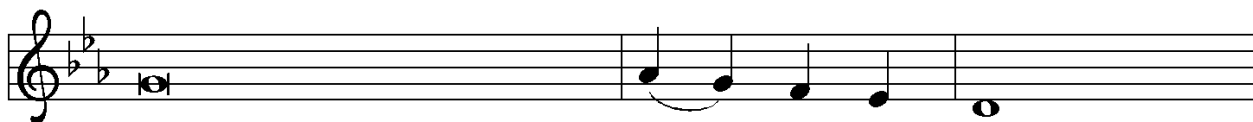
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



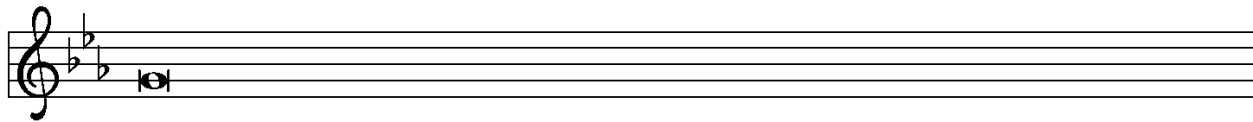
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



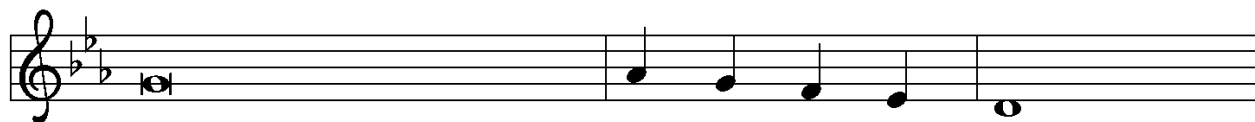
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

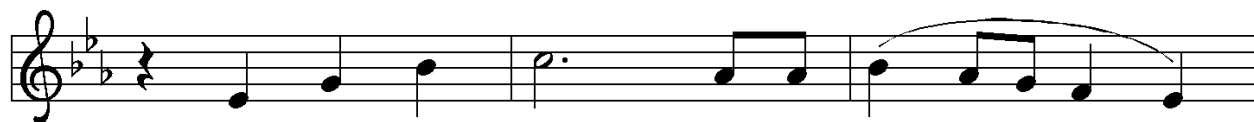


Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

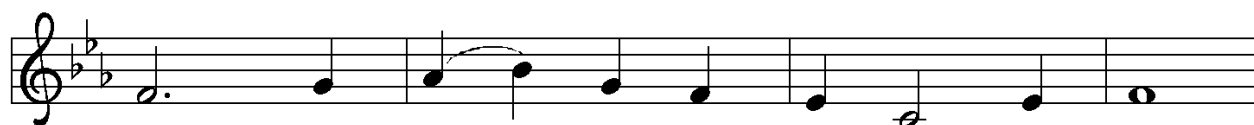


A - men, a - men.

Hymn of Praise



Glo - ry to God in the high -



est, 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



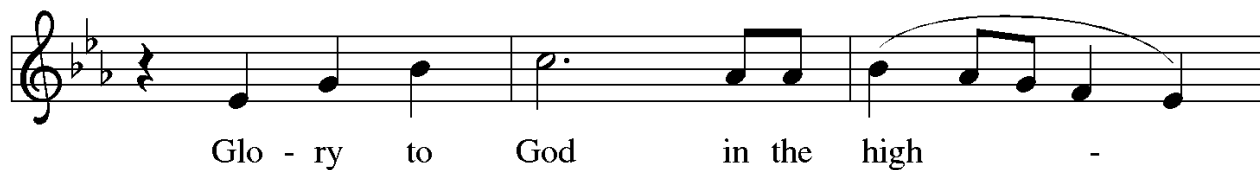
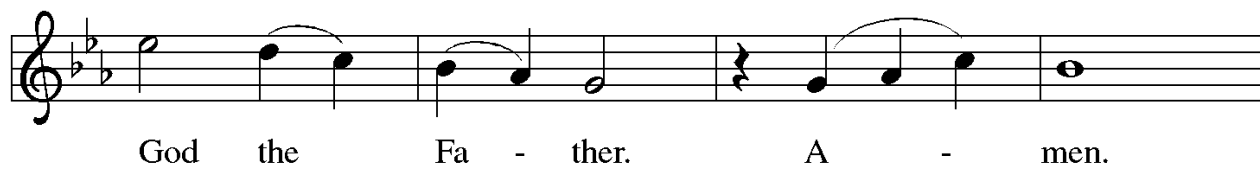
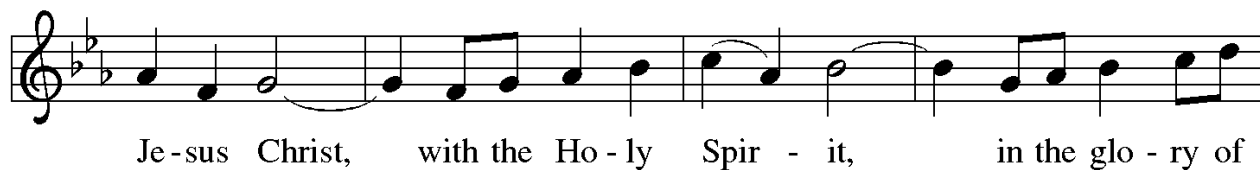
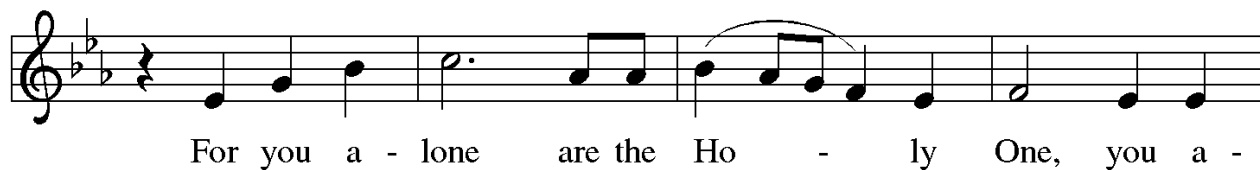
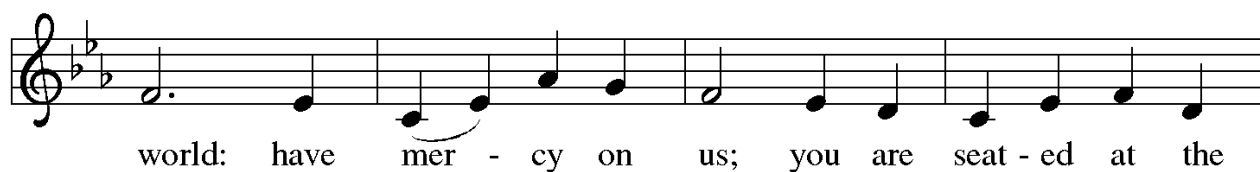
praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus



Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



The Prayer of the Day

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

HEARING GOD'S WORD

The congregation is seated

First Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

I will sing for my beloved
my love song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.
He dug it and cleared it of stones
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded rotten grapes.
And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.
What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield rotten grapes?
And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.
I will make it a wasteland;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.
For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his cherished garden;
he expected justice but saw bloodshed;
righteousness but heard a cry!

The word of the Lord.

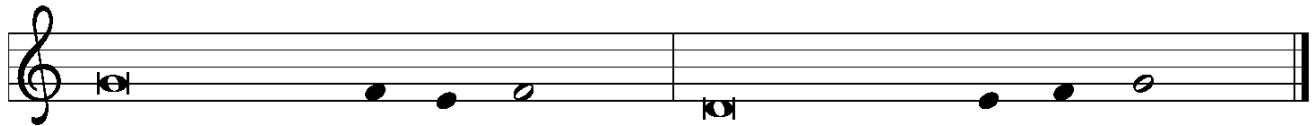
Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 80:7-15

Refrain:



Tone:



Refrain

Restore us, O | God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.
You have brought a vine | out of Egypt;
you cast out the nations and | planted it.
You cleared the | ground for it;
it took root and | filled the land.
The mountains were covered | by its shadow
and the towering cedar trees | by its boughs.

Refrain

You stretched out its tendrils | to the sea
and its branches | to the river.
Why have you broken | down its wall,
so that all who pass by pluck | off its grapes?
The wild boar of the forest has | ravaged it,
and the beasts of the field have | grazed upon it.
Turn now, O | God of hosts,
look | down from heaven;
behold and | tend this vine;
preserve what your right | hand has planted.

Refrain

Second Reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

[Paul writes:] If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation is invited to stand

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Matthew 21:33-46

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord

[Jesus said:] "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. Then he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes'?

"Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

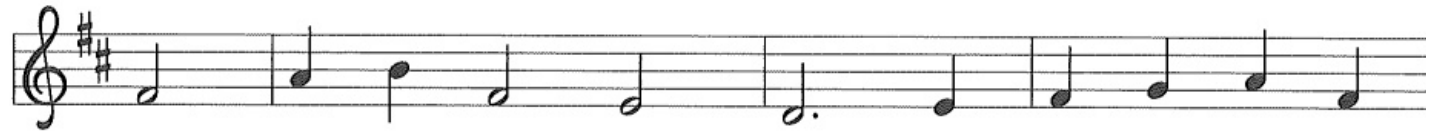
The congregation is seated

Children's Sermon

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

The congregation is invited to stand

Hymn of the Day: "My Song Is Love Unknown"



1 My song is love un - known, my Sav - ior's love to
 2 He came from his blest throne sal - va - tion to be -
 3 Some - times we strew his way and his sweet prais - es
 4 We cry out, we will have our dear Lord made a -



me, love to the love - less shown that they might
 stow; the world that was his own would not its
 sing; re - sound - ing all the day ho - san - nas
 way, a mur - der - er to save, the prince of



love - ly be. Oh, who am I that
 Sav - ior know. But, oh, my friend, my
 to our king. Then "Cru - ci - fy!" is
 life to slay. Yet cheer - ful he to



for my sake my Lord should take frail flesh and die?
 friend in - deed, who at my need his life did spend!
 all our breath, and for his death we thirst and cry.
 suf - f'ring goes that he his foes from thence might free.

5 In life no house, no home
 my Lord on earth might have;
 in death no friendly tomb
 but what a stranger gave.
 What may I say? Heav'n was his home
 but mine the tomb wherein he lay.

6 Here might I stay and sing—
 no story so divine!
 Never was love, dear King,
 never was grief like thine.
 This is my friend, in whose sweet praise
 I all my days could gladly spend!

Prayer List

Members of our First Lutheran

Community: Glow, Bethany, and Roland Adams; Joyce Anderson; Jen Biter; Ardeith Froeberg; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Lovequist/Shread family; Kathryn McCowan; Don & Britta McNemar; Kerry Meaney; Cynthia Niiler; Joan Niiler, Stacey Reed; Karson Sprague; Flavio Vallejos; Valarie Waters.

Friends and Family: Rhona Chen; Emily Dallman; Evan DaRos; Sheila Dumbrowik; Wendy Fournier; Lisa Fugger; Neil Galloway; Jay Higham; Josh Kalisa; Sylvia & Chris Lee-Thompson; Mark Lewis; Nathan Maehl; Pappas family; Roland Pesch; Rachel and sons; Lynn Reihart; Bill Sanderson; Brian Schmitz; Roger & Margie Schroeder; JoAnn Shade; Fay Sieving; Betsy Smith; Wilson Viertel; Chip Weinkauff; Jim Wroe; Marlys Yu.

For our partners: Santuario Luterano, the Spanish speaking Lutheran congregation in Waltham. For other organizations we actively support: the Waltham Family School, the Waltham Community Day Center, Chaplains on the Way, WATCH, Camp Calumet, and ELCA World Hunger.

Apostles' Creed

**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 Intercession:

Response: Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The congregation is seated

Offering is Gathered

Musical Offering

Another way to collect the offering.

Our church provides both spiritual, physical and emotional nourishment for all who attend in person and online. We invite you to consider donating to support the mission of our church, as we work to support programs in the church, in the community, and for the online community.

To make your offering through credit card, scan the code to the left.



The congregation is invited to stand

Congregational Offertory



3 Lord, we share in this com-mu - nion as one fam-'ly of God's chil - dren,



rec - on-ciled through you, our broth-er, one in you with God our Fa - ther.



Give us grace to live for oth - ers, serv-ing all, both friends and strang-ers,



seek - ing jus-tice, love, and mer - cy till you come in fi - nal glo - ry.

Offering Prayer

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

Amen.

About Communion

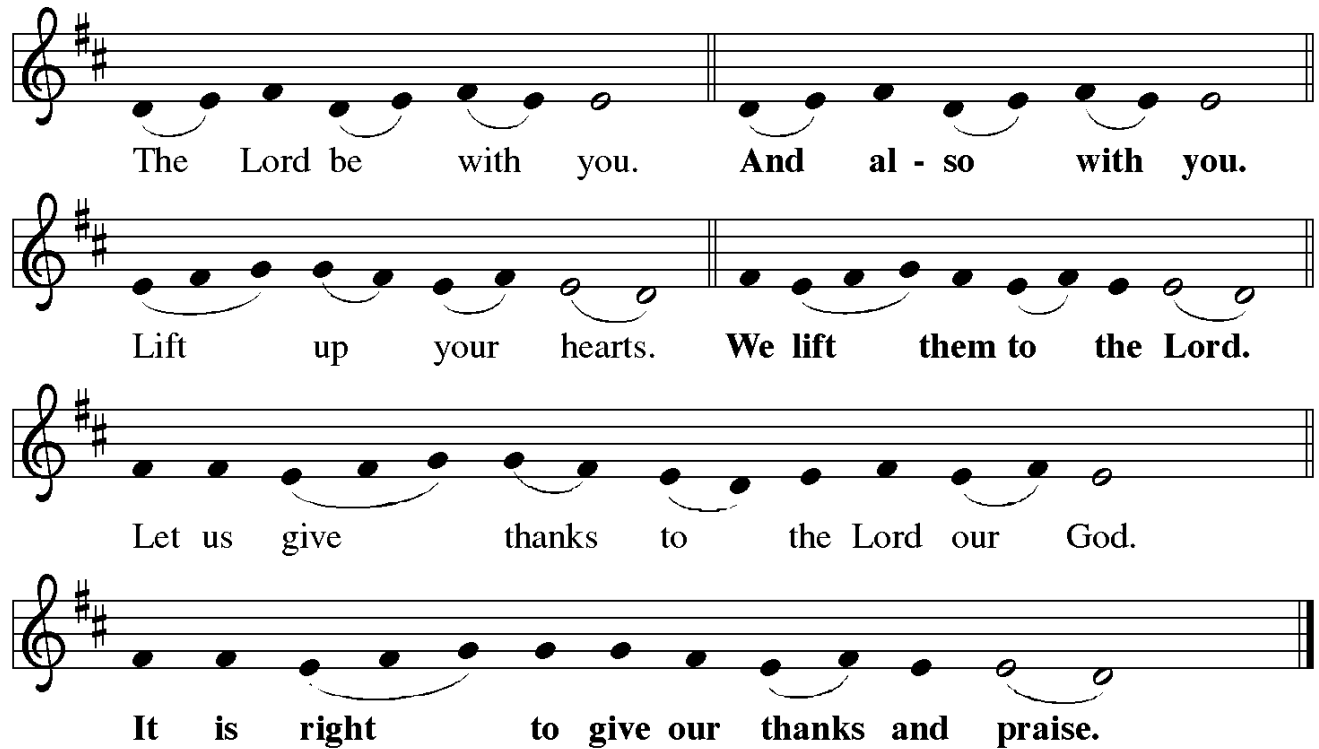
We believe that Jesus Christ is present in the bread and wine we share and therefore he is the host of the meal. In his name, we welcome all who desire to commune.

- An usher will direct you to come forward, and you may either kneel or stand at the altar rail.
- *Bread*: The pastor will place bread in your hands, which you may then consume. We have gluten free bread available; indicate to the pastor/vicar if that is your preference.
- *Wine/Juice*: the assistant will then offer a tray of individual glasses (juice in the center ring). The acolyte will follow with a tray for empty glasses. Also, you may skip the wine altogether trusting that Christ is fully present in the bread.
- Children and adults who do not yet commune are welcome to come to the altar for a blessing.
- If walking is difficult for you, please inform an usher, then stay in your pew and the pastor will come to you.

SHARING THE LORD'S SUPPER

The congregation is invited to stand

The Great Thanksgiving



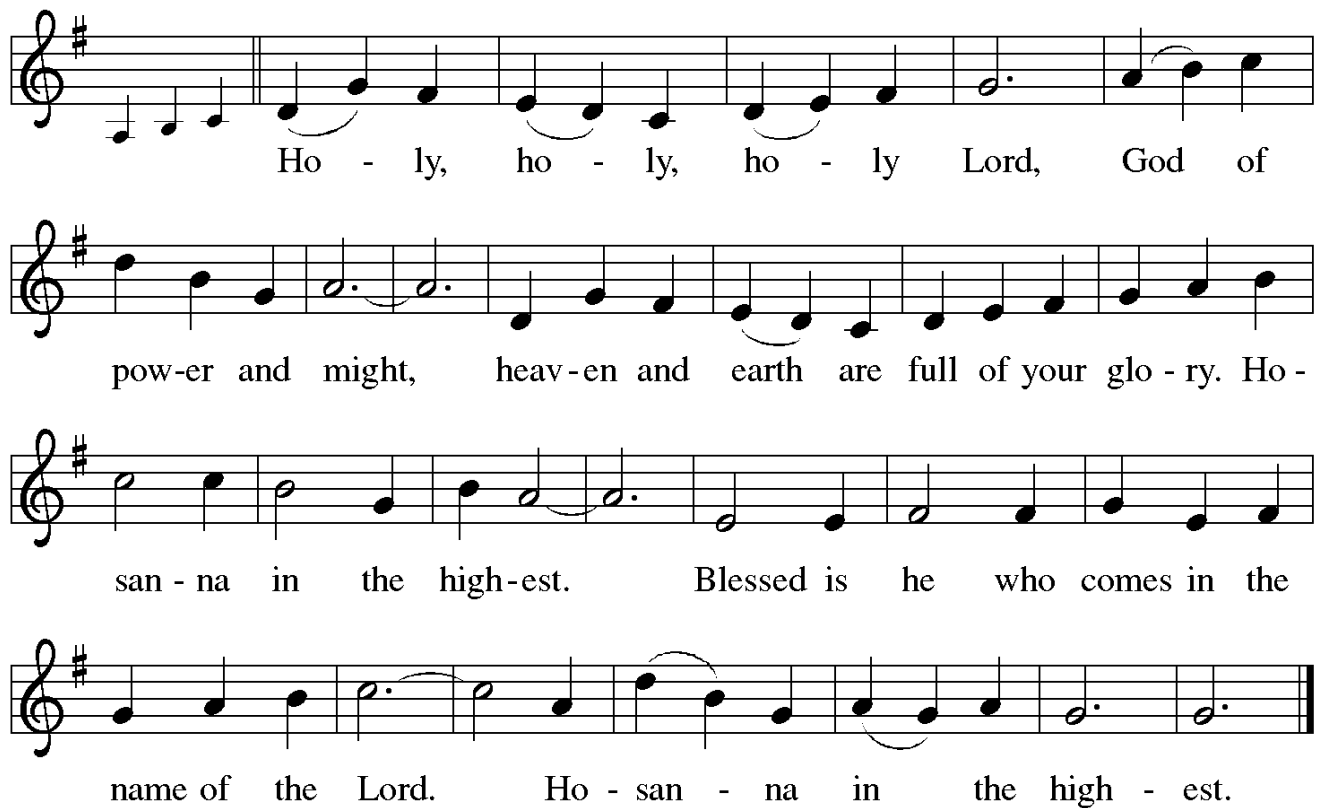
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

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.

Holy, Holy, Holy



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. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Eucharistic Prayer

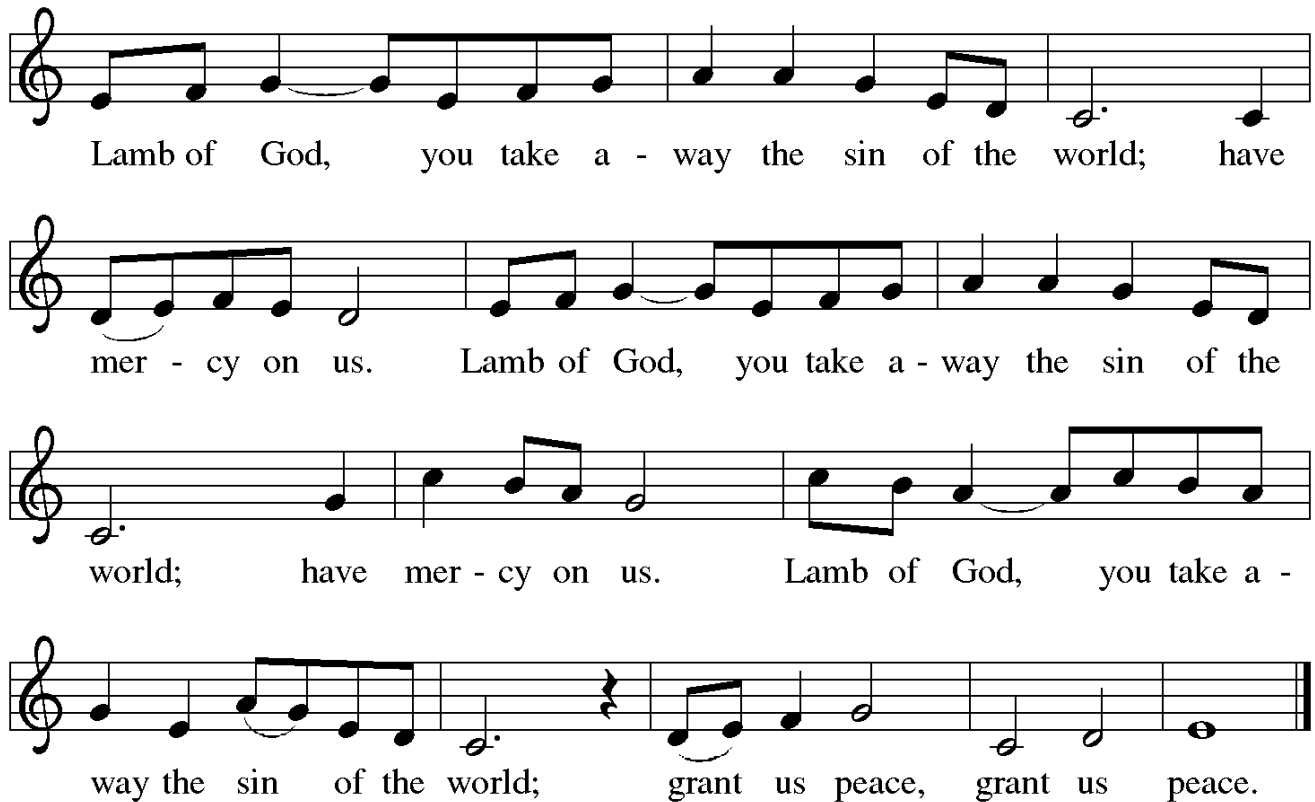
Lord's Prayer

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

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

The congregation is seated

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.

Distribution of Communion

Communion Hymns:

"Jesus Loves Us!"

Jesus loves us this we know.
Hear God's Word! He tells us so!
At his table bread and wine,
we the branches, he the vine.

Refrain: Yes, Jesus loves us
Yes, Jesus loves you
Yes, Jesus loves me
His Word is strong and true!

Jesus calls us to the world,
hope and joy to be unfurled.
Tell good news in word and deed,
serve all those in want or need.

Refrain

We are people of "The Way,"
Justice guides us day to day.
Called to serve in love and joy,
No one can our hope destroy!

Refrain

Fight oppression, never cease!
Strive for justice, strive for peace!
'mong the faithful live with zeal
Hear the word and share the meal!

Refrain

Text by : Dody Matthias
after Anna B. Warner

"We Come to the Hungry Feast"



1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,



To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay



not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

The congregation is invited to stand

Post-Communion Prayer

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

Amen.

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"O God, Who Gives Us Life"

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944 © 1990 Hope Publishing Company

Music: English Melody; arr. Arthur S. Sullican, 1842-1900

"My Song Is Love Unknown"

Text: Samuel Crossman, 1624-1683, alt.

Music: John Ireland, 1879-1962 ©1924 John Ireland, admin. The John Ireland Trust

"We Come to the Hungry Feast"

Text and music: Ray Makeever, b. 1943 © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress

"The Church of Christ, in Every Age"

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000 © 1971 Hope Publishing Company

Music: William Knapp, 1698-1768

SENDING

Benediction

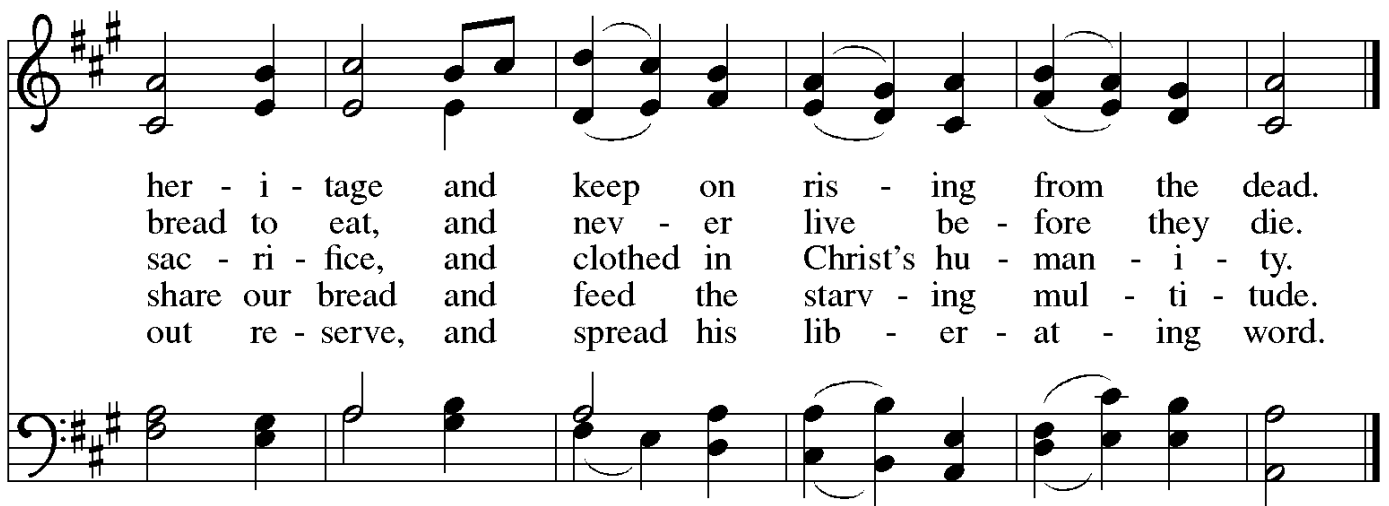
Sending Hymn: "The Church of Christ in Every Age"



1 The church of Christ, in ev - 'ry age be - set by
 2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
 3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
 4 For he a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
 5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -



change, but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
 of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
 church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
 fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
 be - dience to our Lord; to care for all, with -



her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
 bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
 sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
 share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
 out re - serve, and spread his lib - er - at - ing word.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

DROP OFF YOUR DRAWERS: UNDERWEAR DRIVE



PLEASE DROP OFF AT FLC BY
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25TH

We are collecting adult-sized underwear and tube socks for guests at the Waltham Community Day Center:

- Men's boxers or boxer-briefs of all sizes - brand new (no tighy-whities)
- Women's of all sizes - brand new
- Tube socks of all sizes for all genders

For more information, or if you have questions, please contact
justiceandserviceflc@gmail.com

Announcements

Fall Adult Retreat to Vermont: Join us in Vermont for our annual weekend of adult fellowship, study, discussion, and renewal. We gather on Friday evening after dinner and depart before lunch on Sunday morning. The suggested cost is \$280 per person (\$430 for a single room). For anyone with challenging financial circumstances, we invite them to pay whatever they deem to be a manageable amount. If you plan to attend, you may sign up in the Pearson Room at church, email Pastor Maehl at tmaehl@rcn.com.

Ballot Question Discussion: Learn more about the ballot questions! **Wednesday, 10/14 via Zoom from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm.** This will give us an opportunity to come together, as a community, to talk through both sides of some of the questions that are appearing on the mid-term ballot!

Name Tags! If you would like a name tag and do not yet have one, please fill out a pew card and place it in the offering plate.

Blessing Box restocking: Twice a week we need people to check on our general blessing box - refilling it with items from the Pearson Room and occasionally emptying out some items. You can find a sign up in our This Week email. Thank you!

WFCF Farm shares—Pick up help: *One slot is still open on 10/6:* Can you do this pick up?

Coffee Hosts Needed! Can you help foster community by hosting coffee? Sign up in the Pearson Room or by using the link in the This Week email. First time hosting? We're happy to provide instructions.





First Lutheran's Welcome Statement

Walking together in God's love, we rejoice in the diversity of God's wonderfully made children. We celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and non-binary people and all members of our human family regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, age, marital status, physical and mental ability, faith history, economic status, education, family configuration, or immigration status. We renounce the sin of racism and all forms of discrimination. We welcome all to join us in worship, leadership, participation in rites and sacraments of the church, and fellowship on our journey of nurturing faith, doing justice, and serving all.