

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ST. MARK

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FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT March 22, 2026

In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome the newly baptized as we remember God's unfailing promise in our baptism.

WELCOME CHILDREN OF GOD TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

Guests—please take a moment to fill out a guest card located in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. We would like to acknowledge your time with us and extend a friendly hand of hospitality.

*Please **turn all cell phones off** or on vibrate before the worship service begins.*

**Stand as you are able, in body or spirit.*

*The responses of the people are printed in **bold**.*

GATHERING

CHORAL PRELUDE *From deep distress and troubled thoughts* Tune: BOURBON
Ps 130, Isaac Watts (1674-1748) Alice Parker

*We gather in the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

*CONFESSION

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Sit or kneel.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For failing to recognize your coming reign,

and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,

and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For disregarding voices from the margin,

and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,

and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace. **Amen.**

*GATHERING 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.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933

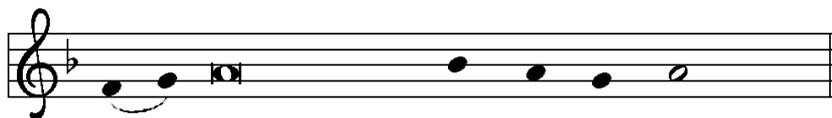
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*GREETING

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.



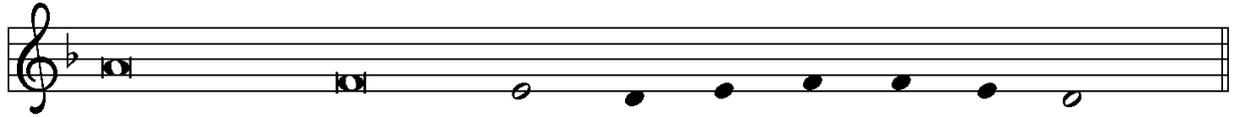
For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



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.



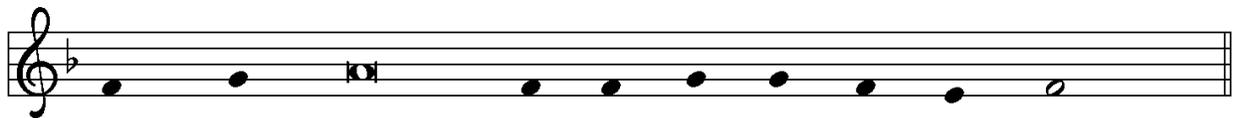
For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor-ship and praise,



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

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING

EZEKIEL 37:1-14

Because Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a promise that Israel as a nation, though dead in exile, will live again in their land through God's life-giving spirit. Three times Israel is assured that through this vision they will know that "I am the Lord."

A reading from Ezekiel:

¹ The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³ He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." ⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵ Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord." ⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. ¹¹ Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' ¹² Therefore prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

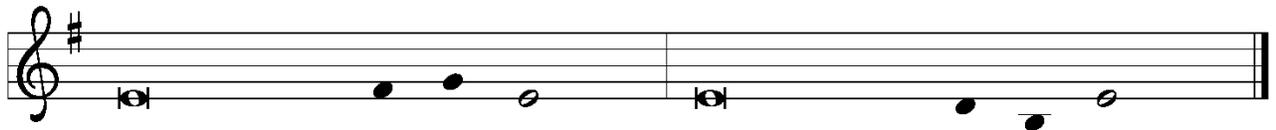
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The refrain is sung by all at the beginning of the Psalm and then at each R.

Refrain



Tone



- ¹ Out | of the depths
I cry to | you, O Lord;
- ² **O Lord, | hear my voice!**
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my | supplication.
- ³ If you were to keep watch | over sins,
O Lord, | who could stand?
- ⁴ **Yet with you | is forgiveness,**
in order that you | may be feared. R
- ⁵ I wait for you, O Lord; | my soul waits;
in your word | is my hope.
- ⁶ **My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch | for the morning,**
more than those who keep watch | for the morning.
- ⁷ O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is | steadfast love;
with the Lord there is plen- | teous redemption.
- ⁸ **For the Lord shall | redeem Israel**
from | all their sins. R

SECOND READING

ROMANS 8:6-11

For Paul, Christian spirituality entails living in the reality of the Holy Spirit. The driving force behind our actions and values is not our sinful desire for self-satisfaction but the very Spirit by which God raised Jesus from the dead and will also raise us from the dead.

A reading from Romans:

⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who

raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

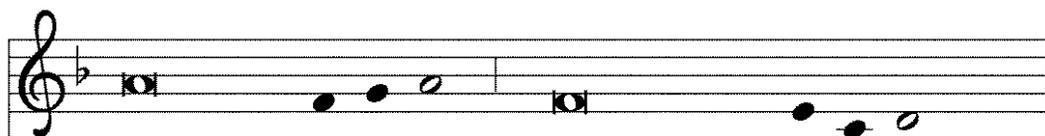
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

All sing refrain. Choir will sing verse. All repeat refrain.



Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ.



I am the resurrection and the life;
whoever believes in me will never die.

*GOSPEL READING

JOHN 11:1-45

THE DEATH OF LAZARUS

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 11th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

11 ¹⁻³ A man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. This was the same Mary who massaged the Lord's feet with aromatic oils and then wiped them with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Master, the one you love so very much is sick." ⁴ When Jesus got the message, he said, "This sickness is not fatal. It will become an occasion to show God's glory by glorifying God's Son."⁵⁻⁷ Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, but oddly, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed on where he was for two more days. After the two days, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."⁸ They said, "Rabbi, you can't do that. The Jews are out to kill you, and you're going back?"⁹⁻¹⁰ Jesus replied, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in daylight doesn't stumble because there's plenty of light from the sun. Walking at night, he might very well stumble because he can't see where he's going."¹¹ He said these things, and then announced, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. I'm going to wake him up."¹²⁻¹³ The disciples said, "Master, if he's gone to sleep, he'll get a good rest and wake up feeling fine." Jesus was talking about death, while his disciples thought he was talking about taking a nap.¹⁴⁻¹⁵ Then Jesus became explicit: "Lazarus died. And I am glad for your sakes that I wasn't there. You're about to be given new grounds for believing. Now let's go to him."¹⁶ That's when Thomas, the one called the Twin, said to his companions, "Come along. We might as well die with him."

¹⁷⁻²⁰ When Jesus finally got there, he found Lazarus already four days dead. Bethany was near Jerusalem, only a couple of miles away, and many of the Jews were visiting Martha and Mary, sympathizing with them over their brother. Martha heard Jesus was coming and went

out to meet him. Mary remained in the house.²¹⁻²² Martha said, “Master, if you’d been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. Even now, I know that whatever you ask God he will give you.”²³ Jesus said, “Your brother will be raised up.”²⁴ Martha replied, “I know that he will be raised up in the resurrection at the end of time.”²⁵⁻²⁶ “You don’t have to wait for the End. I am, right now, Resurrection and Life. The one who believes in me, even though he or she dies, will live. And everyone who lives believing in me does not ultimately die at all. Do you believe this?”²⁷ “Yes, Master. All along I have believed that you are the Messiah, the Son of God who comes into the world.”²⁸ After saying this, she went to her sister Mary and whispered in her ear, “The Teacher is here and is asking for you.”²⁹⁻³² The moment she heard that, she jumped up and ran out to him. Jesus had not yet entered the town but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When her sympathizing Jewish friends saw Mary run off, they followed her, thinking she was on her way to the tomb to weep there. Mary came to where Jesus was waiting and fell at his feet, saying, “Master, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

³³⁻³⁴ When Jesus saw her sobbing and the Jews with her sobbing, a deep anger welled up within him. He said, “Where did you put him?”³⁴⁻³⁵ “Master, come and see,” they said. Now Jesus wept.³⁶ The Jews said, “Look how deeply he loved him.”³⁷ Others among them said, “Well, if he loved him so much, why didn’t he do something to keep him from dying? After all, he opened the eyes of a blind man.”³⁸⁻³⁹ Then Jesus, the anger again welling up within him, arrived at the tomb. It was a simple cave in the hillside with a slab of stone laid against it. Jesus said, “Remove the stone.” The sister of the dead man, Martha, said, “Master, by this time there’s a stench. He’s been dead four days!”⁴⁰ Jesus looked her in the eye. “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”⁴¹⁻⁴² Then, to the others, “Go ahead, take away the stone.” They removed the stone. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, “Father, I’m grateful that you have listened to me. I know you always do listen, but on account of this crowd standing here I’ve spoken so that they might believe that you sent me.”

⁴³⁻⁴⁴ Then he shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And he came out, a cadaver, wrapped from head to toe, and with a kerchief over his face. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him loose.”⁵⁻⁴⁸ That was a turning point for many of the Jews who were with Mary. They saw what Jesus did, and believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

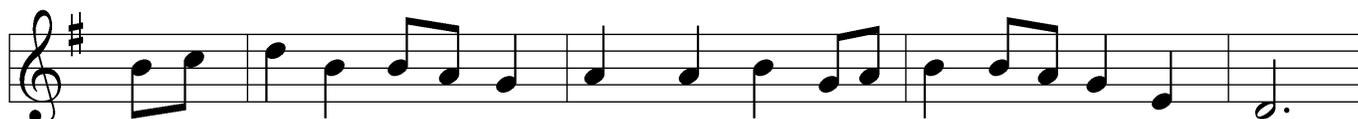
SERMON



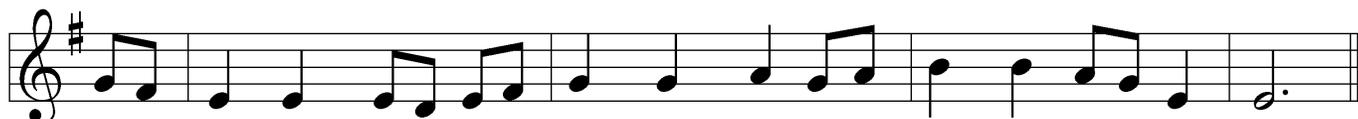
1 Christ is the life of all that is, God's pure cre - a - tive Word,
 2 Christ is the death of all that is, a broad and beck - 'ning tomb,
 3 Christ is the death of all that is, a bright, con - sum - ing fire,
 4 Christ is the life of all that is, Be - gin - ning and the End;



whose pow'r be - yond and through all space the worlds to Be - ing stirred.
 who wel - comes us from well - worn ways to dark - ness of the womb.
 whose flames re - quire our pri - or self as kin - dling for the pyre.
 cre - a - tive force, most peace - ful death, trans - form - ing burn - ing brand.



Christ is the life be - yond all time, cre - a - tion's birth and breath,
 Christ is the death, the sink - ing down past all de - sire and fear,
 Christ is the death of dust - y days of un - cre - a - tive strife,
 Christ is the life, in whose wise love cre - a - tion lives and dies



whose la - bor brings all things to be and brings all things to death.
 whose prom - ise in the gen - tle dark bids new - ness to ap - pear.
 for out from fire we tread up - on the thresh - old of new life.
 and thus for - ev - er - more shall bless the Source, the liv - ing Christ.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien

Music: KINGSFOLD, English melody

Text © 1989 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress

*APOSTLES' CREED

Living together in trust and hope we confess what we believe:

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 PEOPLE

*The assisting minister prays the petition. The congregation responds to the petitions that end "Lord in your mercy with: "**hear our prayer.**" and those that end "O, God we give you thanks" with: "**Thanks be to God**"*
*The prayers conclude with the pastoral petition followed by a congregational "**Amen.**"*

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O, God we give you thanks. **Thanks be to God.**

Into your hands... Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

*THE PEACE

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

MEAL

OFFERING ANTHEM

Where Shall I be?
African American Spiritual

Arr William Grant Still
(1895-1978)

Where shall I be when the first trumpet sounds? Where shall I be when it sounds so loud,
When it sounds so loud that it wakes up the dead; Where shall I be when it sounds?
I'll try on my robe when the first trumpet sounds. I'll try on my robe when it sounds so loud,
when it sounds so loud that it wakes up the dead. Where shall I be when it sounds?

Ray Frick, *tenor* Jan Frick, *soprano*

*THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

*PREFACE DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

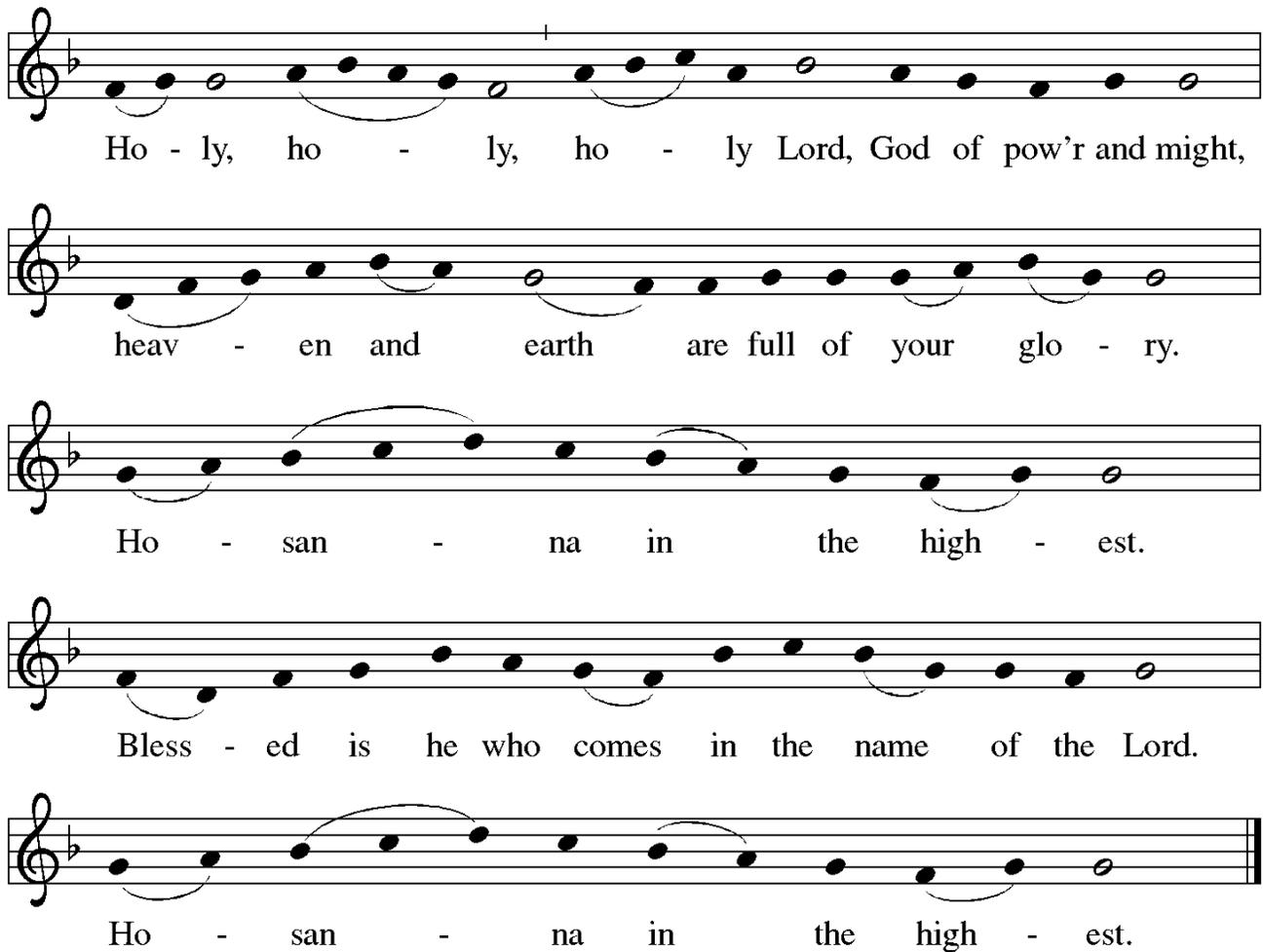
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed ... unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r 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.

*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

With boldness and confidence, we pray as Christ taught us:



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

*COMMUNION INVITATION

Come to the table.

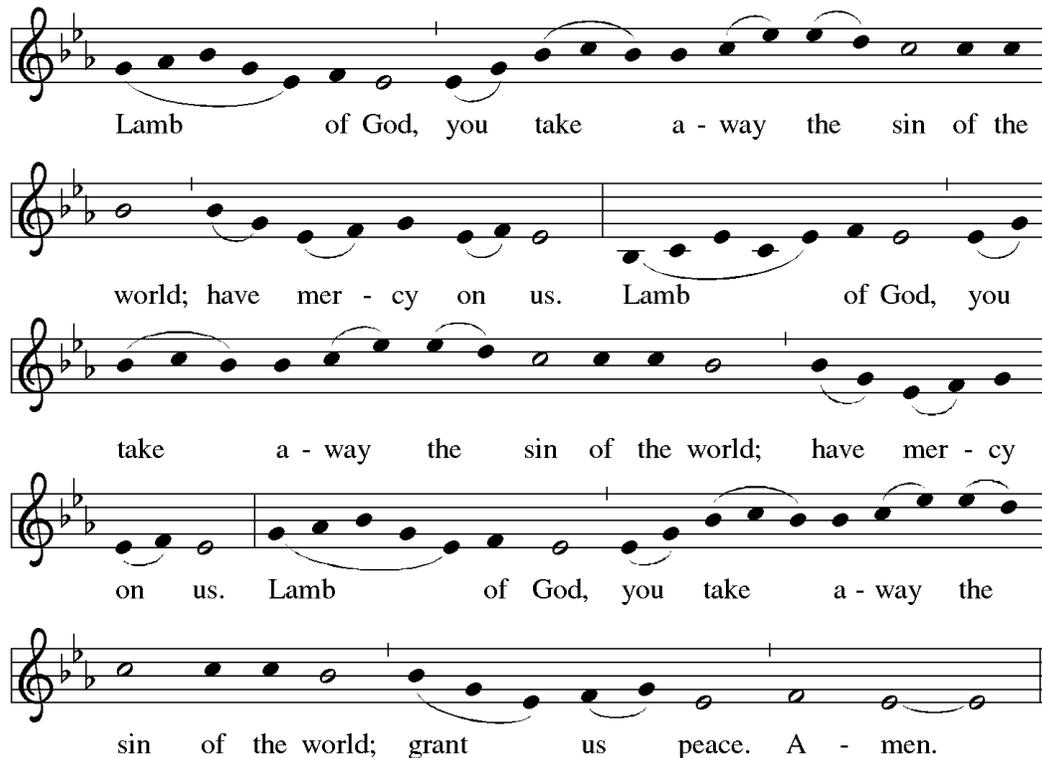
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

*All are welcome to partake of the Holy Sacrament. Inform the pastor if you need a **gluten-free host**. Grape juice is available in the center rings of the wine tray. Children or adults who do not or choose not to partake of the sacrament today may come forward and receive a blessing. Please indicate you would like a blessing by crossing your arms over your chest in the form of an X*

COMMUNION HYMNS

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. A - men.

I am the bread of life

(Choir sings verses, congregation sings refrain)

Based on John 6

Suzanne Toolan
Arr. Richard Proulx



And I will raise you up, and I will
raise you up, and I will raise you
up on the last day.

PRAYER IN THE ABSENCE OF COMMUNION

Those not receiving communion are invited to pray the following while communion is being distributed:

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the bread of life and the cup of salvation. I believe that you are truly present in the sacrament of Holy Communion. I am baptized into your death and resurrection. I seek you daily and worship and adore you. When I cannot receive you in the eucharistic bread and wine, I pray that you continue to come into my heart and soul, as you always have, through Confession and Forgiveness, through the proclamation of your holy Word, and through the prayers of your people; that I may remain united to you by your all-powerful and ever-present Holy Spirit. Let me receive you and be nourished by your abundant grace. Be for me the manna in my wilderness, the bread of angels for my very human journey, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and solace in the hour of my death. I pray this, trusting that you are my life, my peace, and my everlasting joy. Amen.

*SACRAMENTAL BLESSING

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

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

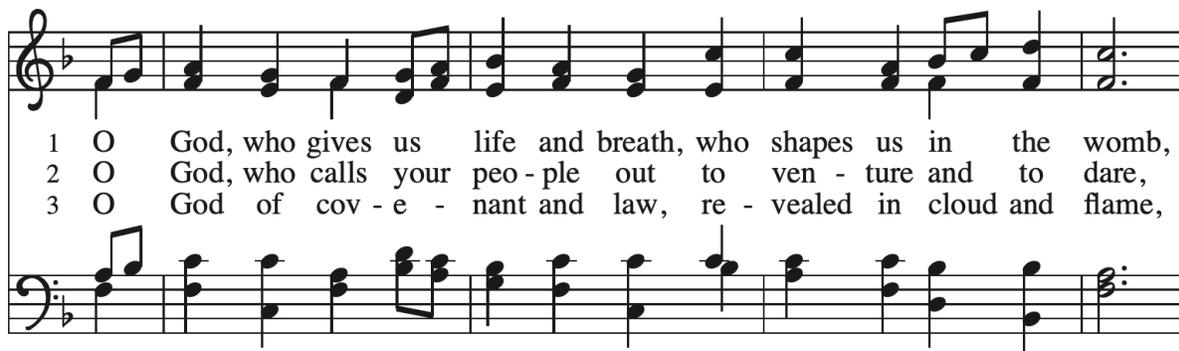
SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

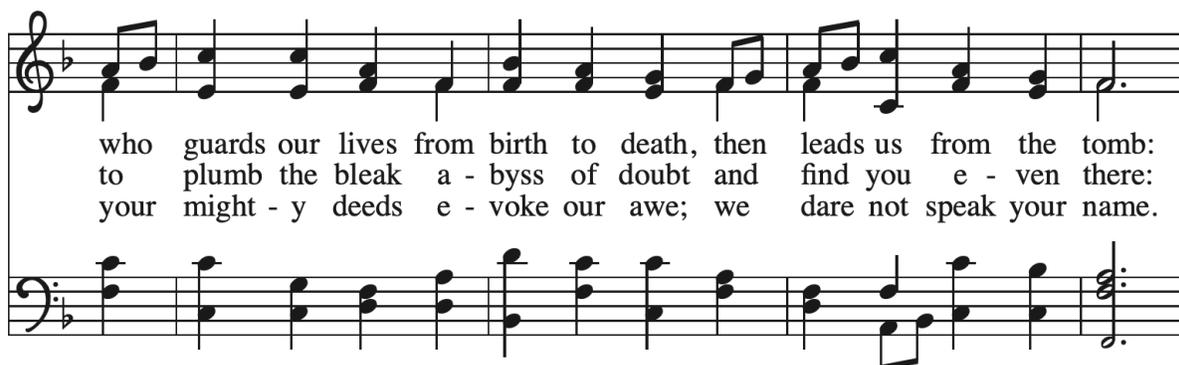
*BENEDICTION

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

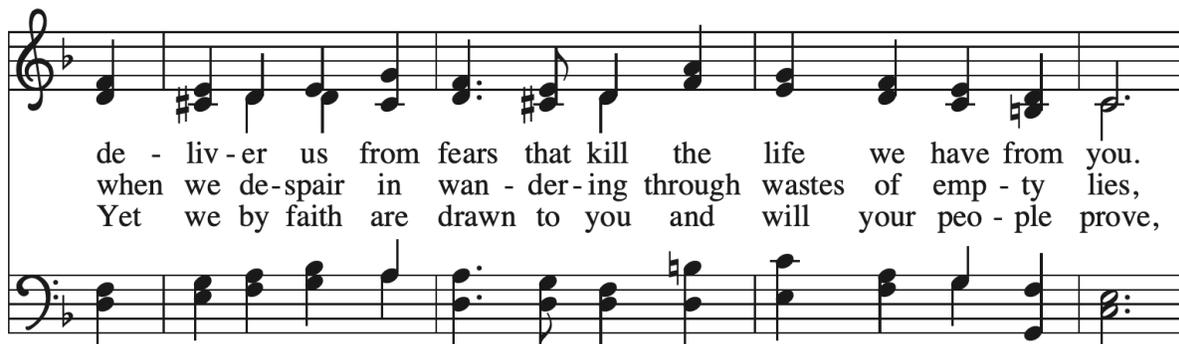




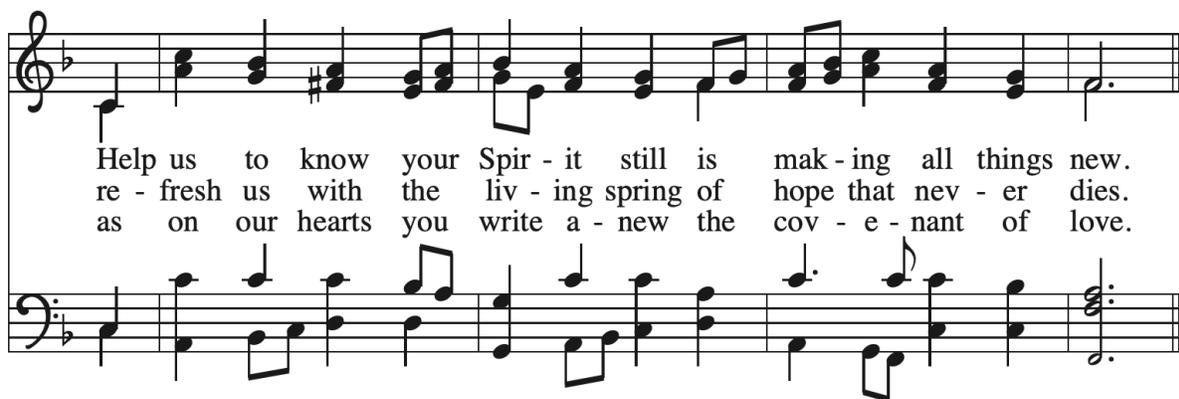
1 O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
2 O God, who calls your peo - ple out to ven - ture and to dare,
3 O God of cov - e - nant and law, re - vealed in cloud and flame,



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.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: NOEL, English melody; arr. Arthur S. Sullivan, 1842-1900

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*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Fughetta

William H. Clarke
(1840-1913)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **There is no Bible Study this evening. Instead, please join us at 5:00pm for a special concert: Tenuto**, Hartford's own one-on-a-part a cappella vocal ensemble performs a full-length program at St. Mark. We invite everyone to come out and soak in an evening of close harmony, good ears, and beautiful singing. Not to be missed!
- **Lenten Weekday Prayer Offices:** Please join us for Matins via Zoom Tuesdays at 9:00am. Join us Thursdays in Lent for Soup and Bread at 6:15pm, followed by Vespers (in-person & Zoom) at 7:00pm. Please sign up to bring soup or bread on the sign-up sheet on the narthex bulletin board. **We still need people to sign up for March 26.** Thank you.
- **PLEASE consider donating to the "Snow Heart" Project to help offset the cost of this winter's snow removal.** Choose a doily heart from the window in the lounge. Write your envelope # or last name on the heart. Place your heart and donation in the envelope provided. Drop the envelope in the collection plate or place it in the financial secretary's drawer. *Thank you from the bottom of our HEARTS.* ❤️❤️
- **TODAY is the deadline to order Easter flowers.**
- **Please join us for a special Congregation Meeting on Sunday, April 12, following worship, to vote on changes to the church constitution.**
- **Easter Egg Hunt April 2nd:** Following last year's enthusiastic response to the Easter Egg Hunt, St. Mark will once again hold it for the VRABE ESL children and their families on April 2nd after the classes are done for the day. **We are asking for donations of small, wrapped Easter candy that can fit within plastic Easter Eggs. Please leave the candy in the box labelled 'Easter Egg Hunt'.** For more information, please contact Deb Gresens or Jan Frick.

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR:

Sunday, March 22	9:00am	Service of Word and Sacrament Followed by Coffee Hour Sponsored by Godfellas
	5:00pm	Tenuto Concert
Tuesday, March 24	9:00am	Matins via Zoom
Thursday, March 26	6:15pm	Soup & Bread
	7:00pm	Lenten Vespers
	7:30pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, March 29	9:00am	Palm/Passion Sunday Service of Word and Sacrament Sponsored by GF & Friends

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