

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
A Family Connecting in Christ



THREE IN ONE

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WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

At this time our services are for people wearing masks and social distancing!

Please know that even as we experience this awkwardness, your Good Shepherd holds you close to his heart and goes with you to share his love!

To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.

Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church.

We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - www.wels.net.

May 30, 2021

Service of Word & Sacrament

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we remember the so many people who served and sacrificed for the safety of our country.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we observe Trinity Sunday and remember the One, True, Triune God whose serving and sacrifice gives us the safety and security of life with him in heaven.

OPENING HYMN

“Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty”

Hymn 195

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
Who was and is and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
Though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
Only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
Perfect in pow’r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

+ CONFESSION OF SINS AND ABSOLUTION +

M: God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

+ PRAYER AND PRAISE +

LORD, HAVE MERCY

M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: **♪ Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: **♪ Christ, have mercy.**

M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: **♪ Lord, have mercy.**

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C:  Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.



C: O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

Al-might-y God, mer-ci-ful Fa-ther, you crown our life with your love.

You take a-way our sin; you com-fort our spir-it; you make us pure and ho-ly in your sight. You did not spare your on-ly Son, but gave him up for us all. O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth. O Son of God, e-ter-nal Word of the Fa-ther, you came to live with us; you made your Fa-ther known; you washed us from our sins in your own blood. You are the King of glo-ry; you are the Lord! O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God and Father, dwelling in majesty and mystery, filling and renewing all creation by your eternal Spirit, and manifesting your saving grace through our Lord Jesus Christ: in mercy cleanse our hearts and lips that, free from doubt and fear, we may ever worship you, one true immortal God, with your Son and the Holy Spirit, living and reigning, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

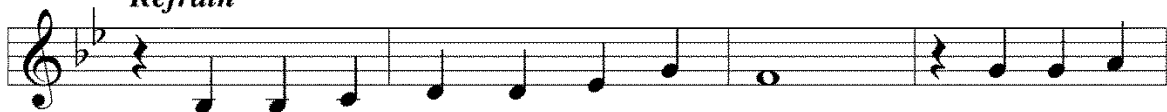
Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

PSALM 150 (CWS)

Refrain



Ho - ly is God, the Lord of hosts! Ho - ly is



God, the Lord of hosts! Ho-ly is God, the Lord of hosts!

Psalm Tone



Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.

Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.

Refrain

Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,

praise him with tambourine and dancing,
praise him with strings and flute,

praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.
Praise the LORD.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,**

**as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

SECOND LESSON

Romans 8:14-17

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 3:1-17

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again. "

"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

"How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

"You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven - the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

A CONFSSION OF FAITH FOR TRINITY SUNDAY

This creed is named after St. Athanasius, a staunch defender of the Christian faith in the fourth century. It was prepared to assist the Church in combating two errors that undermined Bible teaching. One error denied that God’s Son and the Holy Spirit are of one being or Godhead with the Father. The other error denied that Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one person. The Athanasian Creed continues to serve the Christian Church as a standard of the truth. It declares that whoever rejects the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of Christ is without saving faith.

The section of the Athanasian Creed included here is the portion that confesses the Bible’s teaching about the Triune God. This portion serves as a very fitting confession of faith for Trinity Sunday. A translation of the entire text of the Athanasian Creed may be found on pages 132-133 in Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal.

Whoever wishes to be saved must, above all else, hold to the true Christian faith. Whoever does not keep this faith pure in all points will certainly perish forever.

Now this is the true Christian faith: /

**We worship one God in three persons / and three persons in one God, /
Without mixing the persons or dividing the divine being.**

For each person—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—is distinct, but the deity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory and coeternal in majesty.

What the Father is, so is the Son, and so is the Holy Spirit.

The Father is uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Spirit uncreated;

The Father is infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite;

The Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal;

yet they are not three who are eternal, but there is one who is eternal,
just as they are not three who are uncreated, nor three who are infinite,
but there is one who is uncreated and one who is infinite.

In the same way the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty;

yet they are not three who are almighty, but there is one who is almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God;

yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord;

yet they are not three Lords, but one Lord.

For just as Christian truth compels us to confess each person individually to be God and Lord,

so the true Christian faith forbids us to speak of three Gods or three Lords.

The Father is neither made nor created nor begotten of anyone. /

The Son is neither made nor created, but is begotten of the Father alone. /

The Holy Spirit is neither made nor created nor begotten, /

but proceeds from the Father and the Son.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons;
one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

And within this Trinity none comes before or after; / none is greater or inferior, /

But all three persons are coequal and coeternal,

so that, in every way, as stated before, all three persons are to be worshiped as one God, and one God worshiped as three persons.

Whoever wishes to be saved must have this conviction of the Trinity.

Have you ever read the Athanasian Creed and thought: “I don’t get it”? Or the book of Revelation or anyplace else in the Bible and thought: “I don’t get it”? If so, our lesson is a great place to go when those “I don’t get it” feelings are getting you down.

In our lesson Nicodemus didn’t get it. Now Nicodemus was no dummy. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council. He was a Pharisee, an expert on religious living. And Nicodemus knew something of Jesus - **“we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”** Sounds good, but it doesn’t really tell us what Nicodemus was thinking. Was he curious ... wondering and wanting to find out how Jesus fit in, and how he, Nicodemus, should fit in with Jesus? Or did Nicodemus think he had the answers and he was there to tell Jesus how to fit in?

Either way, Jesus wasn’t interested in fitting in. Sure, Nicodemus looked and sounded good and respectable. Some people might have thought Nicodemus would have been the perfect “in” for Jesus to get in with Jerusalem’s movers and shakers. But no matter how good Nicodemus sounded, Jesus didn’t want to fit into Nicodemus’ paradigm, his way of thinking. So, instead of accepting Nicodemus’ nice-sounding words, Jesus takes a shot at Nicodemus’ thinking; he drops a bunker-buster on Nicodemus’ foundation. He says: **“I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”**

How was that a bunker-buster for Nicodemus’ foundation? As a Pharisee Nicodemus had his way to see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus and the Pharisees believed that by their good living they would bring in the kingdom of God. Their goodness would bring in God’s goodness. But Jesus would have none of that. He doesn’t try to massage or work around Nicodemus’ thinking; Jesus rejects it. No one can work their way into the Kingdom of God. It’s not our doing; it’s done for us. We are born into the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus doesn't know what to do with that. **"How can a man be born when he is old? Surely he can't enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born?"** I won't pretend to know why Nicodemus said what he said. Instead, what did Jesus say? He doesn't back down. **"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. [Why?] Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."** Do you see how separate Jesus sees flesh and spirit? Flesh doesn't give birth to the spirit; flesh doesn't give birth to godliness. Flesh gives birth to flesh; sinners give birth to sin. By ourselves, by our nature, we can't work, perform, obey, fear, love, or trust our way into the Kingdom of God. By ourselves we can't do what it takes to be right by God.

What a blow to Nicodemus. What a blow to the Pharisee in us. All my natural goodness can't get me one step or one breath in the kingdom of God. By myself I am outside the kingdom of God, outside the approval of God, outside the promise of God. By myself, the rule of God condemns me.

But Jesus didn't stop there, did he? Jesus hasn't left us by ourselves. There is a way to life with God. Not by what we do, but by what is done for us. The Spirit gives birth to spirit. By water and the word the Spirit gives us a new birth, a new life in the kingdom of God. By water and the Word the Spirit makes you alive as the children of God in the family of God. By water and the Word the Spirit makes you alive in God's inner circle to see and to be part of God's ruling, to see and be part of God working his rightness in this world. By water and the Word, the Spirit makes you alive and right for heaven.

I imagine you know some people who don't see it that way. Nicodemus wasn't getting it either - **"how can this be?"** So what did Nicodemus need? Some more explaining? More proof? Or maybe more busting? Jesus saw something in Nicodemus that needed more busting - **"You are Israel's teacher and do you not understand these things?"** And if Nicodemus was thinking: "If I just had my questions answered, then I ..." Jesus has an answer for that: **"I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?"** Before I get all "How can this be?" with God - "show me, prove to me" ... "I can't believe it unless I understand it" ... I

want to remember - when God tells me something, it's not for me to decide how, when, where, or if it makes sense to me, or seems good and right to me ... it's not for me to decide what I need from God before I believe him.

As Jesus told Nicodemus, none of us has been to heaven ... no one around us has been to heaven ... none of the great thinkers of our day has been to heaven to give us the great answers we might think we need. But Jesus has been in heaven and he has come from heaven to tell us what heaven wants us to know. And this is what heaven wants us to know –

“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” If Nicodemus had any thoughts about getting Jesus to fit in with his Pharisees, Jesus wasn't going for it. Instead, if Nicodemus wanted to be part of the Kingdom of God, Nicodemus would have to change his thinking to fit in with Jesus. As a Pharisee Nicodemus was waiting for the Messiah to come as conquering King to make life right for the right and to judge the rest. But that's not what Jesus came for. Instead Jesus came to be lifted up and sacrificed [think of the cross] for a world of people grumbling and complaining and fighting against God.

Why? **“For God so loved the world [not just the religious, not just those looking good, but God so loved the world] that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”**

This meeting between Jesus and Nicodemus has been the gospel lesson for the Festival of the Holy Trinity for hundreds and hundreds of years. Isn't it a great fit? For people who would get stuck on the how of the Trinity, the how of who God is, Jesus' lesson is clear - “don't get stuck on the how; just believe.” At the same time Jesus gives us something wonderful to believe. He shows us God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the Father, loving the world with an unconditional, undeserved love, giving his Son for the world to save the world. God the Son sacrificing himself for the world, taking our guilt as his own, paying

for our sin, saving us for life with God. And God the Spirit making us alive to see and believe that love of God, alive to live in that love with God.

When we're stuck on some "I don't get it," follow Jesus and let yourself get stuck on this - **"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."** God sent Jesus for you! Let's stay stuck on that. Amen.

HYMN

"God, Loved the World So that He Gave"

Hymn 391

God loved the world so that he gave His only Son the lost to save
That all who would in him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ is the solid rock of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death.
All who confide in him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.

God would not have the sinner die--His Son with saving grace is nigh.
His Spirit in the Word does teach How we the blessed goal may reach.

Be of good cheer, for God's own Son Forgives the sins that you have done.
You're justified by Jesus' blood; Baptized, you are a child of God.

When you are sick, when death draws near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves my soul from death--This is the anchor of my faith!

Glory to God the Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To you, O blessed Trinity, Be praise now and eternally!

PRAYER AND 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 SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Individually packaged wafers are gluten-free.)

M: The Lord be with you.



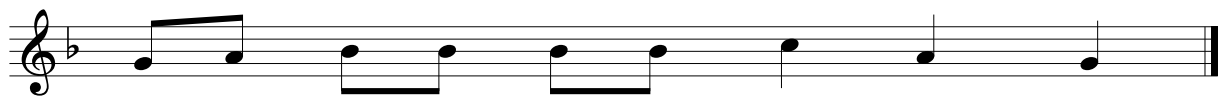
And al - so with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up to the Lord.

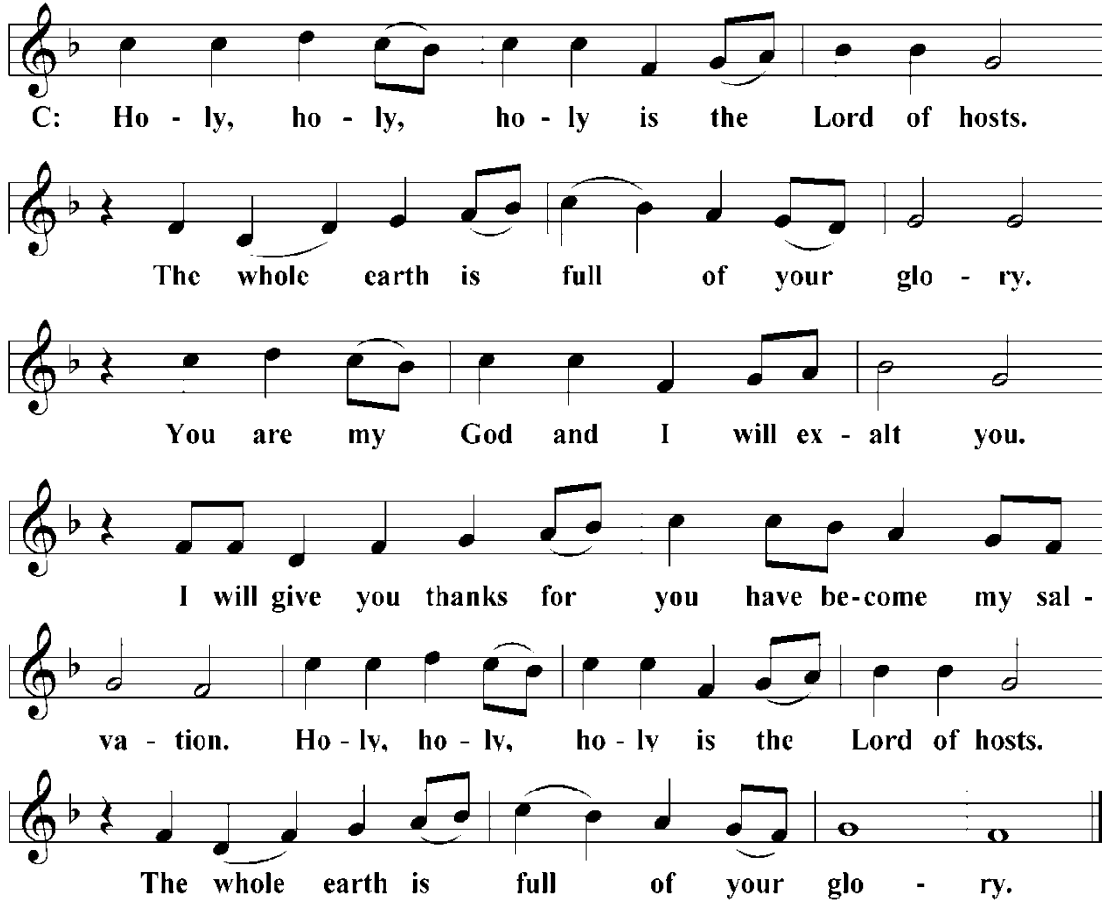
M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.



It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. In perfect unity with his Son and the Holy Spirit, he is the source, guide, and goal of our lives now and always. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.
You are my God and I will ex - alt you.
I will give you thanks for you have be - come my sal -
va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

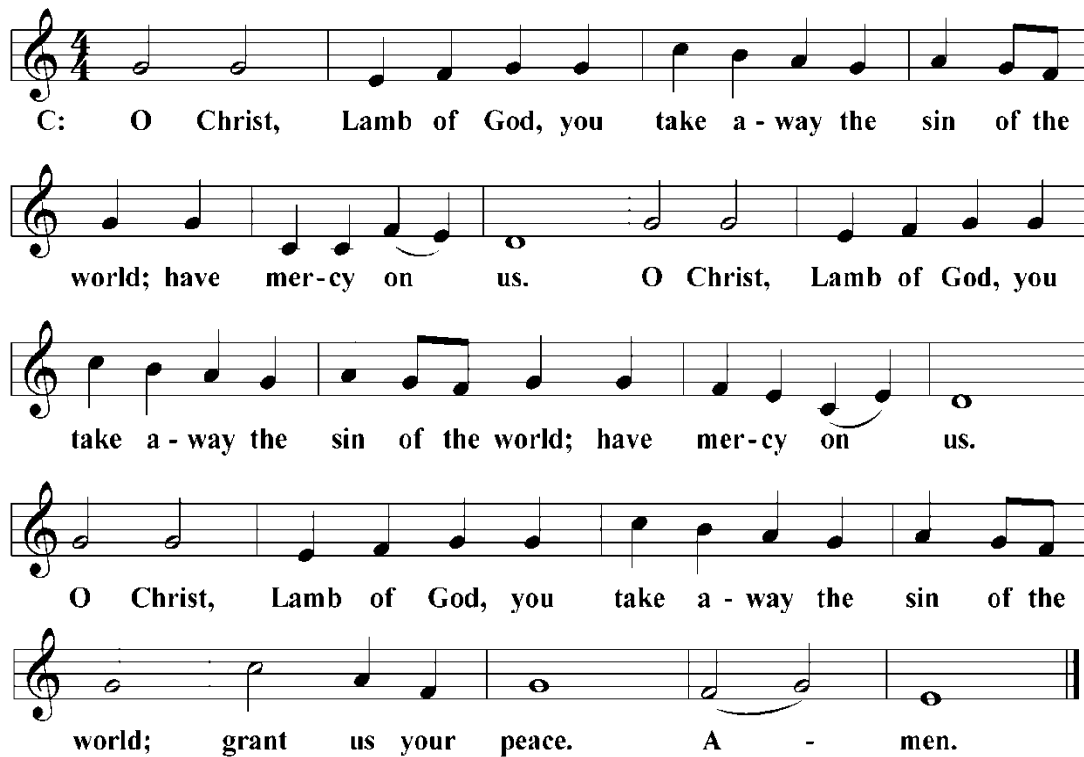
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C: A - men.

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us your peace. A - men.

BEFORE COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord, I am not worthy to be a guest at your holy table. But you are the friend of sinners, and you will not cast me out. This bread is your body, which bore my sins upon the tree. This wine is your blood, which purifies me from all guilt. At your invitation, I come rejoicing. Receive me, my Savior.

AFTER COMMUNION PRAYER

Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, for nourishing me in this sacrament with your body and blood. You have given me forgiveness, life, and salvation. Let me always remain in you as a branch remains in the vine. Send me out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

CLOSING PRAYER

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Hymn 334

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him, all creatures here below;

Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

OFFERING

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