



**Christ  
Lutheran**  
CHURCH

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**March 3, 2024**

## **We Welcome You to Christ Lutheran Church! We are a community of people sharing God's love through Christ and growing together in faith.**

We celebrate all the ways we are made in the image of God, seeking to see God in everyone. We honor and respect each person's age, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity, gender expression, life history, mental well-being, physical ability, relationship status, sexual orientation, skin color, and socioeconomic standing. Together, we strive to love and serve our neighbor and all creation, including working toward racial and social justice. We would love to walk with you on this creative adventure\* of faith, grace, and love.

*\* The first sermon ever preached at Christ Lutheran was titled "A Call to Creative Adventure."*

### **ABOUT WORSHIP**

We gather to worship weekly to hear and remember our shared hope: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ makes all things new, even us.

You will find everything that happens in worship printed in this bulletin, with hymns found in the red hymnals ("ELW") in the seats in front on you.

If you have a prayer request, note it on a yellow card from the seatback holder and pass it to an usher; the other side is for any information you would like about Christ Lutheran. Please feel welcome to remain seated as necessary during the service.

### **CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN CHURCH!**

God's people come in all shapes and sizes – it is a gift to the whole community when the smallest of us are present! Sitting with parents and learning to treasure times of worship is the foundation for helping build a growing faith in a child's life. There's some noise and movement that we expect from little ones - feel free to make use of the **activity bags, doodle pads, bookshelf in the overflow area and cry room at the back of the sanctuary** as needed. Whatever sacrifice of energy and effort you make to include your children in worship is multiplied as the good news of God's love takes root in their lives!

### **WHEN NURSERY CARE IS NEEDED DURING WORSHIP**

A fully equipped and staffed Nursery is available for both infants and toddlers during all services. The Nursery is located west of our gathering area in **Room 110**.

### **RESTROOMS**

Men's and women's restrooms off the Gathering Area and Church Hall have changing tables, as does the all-gender restroom near the nursery. A second all-gender restroom is through the Vestry off the East hallway, past the Welcome Center.

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

**Holy Communion** is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

Our services are on video, and occasional photographs are taken for our website and e-mail news. If you have concerns, please speak to a church staff member.

*Hearing assistance devices are available to those who need help with listening to the service and are located at the entrance to the sanctuary, or please see an Usher for assistance.*

**A Reminder: Please turn off all cell phones during worship services.**

*The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.*

## **GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

### **PRELUDE**

*There in God's Garden*

arr. Kerr

### **WELCOME**

*If you are joining us for the first time, welcome! We'd love to meet you, or if there's anything you'd like to know about the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church, please consider [filling out a Connection Card online](#) (you can point your phone at the graphic to the right) or using a yellow Connection Card in the pew holders.*



***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request (on the backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.*

*If you are worshipping with us via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who writes the law on our hearts,  
who draws all people together through Jesus.  
**Amen.**

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin  
in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God,  
we confess that we are caught in snares of sin  
and cannot break free.  
We hoard resources while our neighbors  
are hungry and cold.  
We speak in ways that silence others.  
We are silent when we should speak up.  
We keep score in our hearts.  
We let hurts grow into hatred.  
For all these things and for sins only you know,  
forgive us, Lord.  
**Amen.**

Here is a flood of grace:  
Out of love for the whole world,  
God draws near to us,  
breaks every snare of sin,  
washes away our wrongs,  
and restores the promise of life through † Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

### **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.**

*Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.*  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

# KYRIE

**☐** In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **☐** For the

**☑** Lord, have mer - cy.

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

**☐** For the peace of the whole

**☑** Lord, have mer - cy.

world, for the well - be - ing of the church of God, and for the u - ni - ty of

all, let us pray to the Lord. **☐** For this ho - ly

**☑** Lord, have mer - cy.

house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise, let us

pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy. A - men

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

A - men

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

A - men

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

Lord of the overturning,  
your passion sweeps away  
the calculating religion,  
the pious profiteering  
which keep us safely outside the holy places:  
may we find our way through the debris  
of all that protected us  
to find your dangerous heart  
and our world upside down;  
through Jesus Christ, our exiled Lord.  
Amen.

## **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.*

## **CHILDREN'S TIME**

*The assembly is seated as children are invited for a time together.*

## **HANDBELL ANTHEM**

*At the Cross*

Larson

## **READING: Exodus 20:1-17**

*After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.*

<sup>1</sup>God spoke all these words:

<sup>2</sup>I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; <sup>3</sup>you shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup>You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, <sup>6</sup>but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup>You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup>Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>10</sup>But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the

alien resident in your towns. <sup>11</sup>For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

<sup>12</sup>Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

<sup>13</sup>You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup>You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup>You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### PSALM: Psalm 19

*The congregation is invited to sing the psalm refrain when indicated (R). Verses will be chanted alternately by the leader and the people.*

#### Refrain

The com - mand - ment of the LORD  
gives light to the eyes.

#### Psalm Tone

G A B C B A G

<sup>1</sup>The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,  
and the sky proclaims its | maker's handiwork.

<sup>2</sup>**One day tells its tale | to another,  
and one night imparts knowledge | to another.**

<sup>3</sup>Although they have no | words or language,  
and their voices | are not heard,

<sup>4</sup>**their sound has gone out into all lands,  
and their message to the ends | of the world,  
where God has pitched a tent | for the sun.**

<sup>5</sup>It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;  
it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.

<sup>6</sup>**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens  
and runs about to the end of | it again;  
nothing is hidden from its | burning heat. R**

<sup>7</sup>The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re- | vives the soul;  
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom | to the simple.

<sup>8</sup>**The statutes of the LORD are just and re- | joice the heart;  
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light | to the eyes.**

<sup>9</sup>The fear of the LORD is clean and en- | dures forever;  
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous | altogether.

<sup>10</sup>**More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,  
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. R**

<sup>11</sup>By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,  
and in keeping them there is | great reward.

<sup>12</sup>**Who can detect one's | own offenses?  
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.**

<sup>13</sup>Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;  
let them not get dominion | over me;  
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.

<sup>14</sup>**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable | in your sight,  
O LORD, my strength and | my redeemer. R**

### **READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25**

*The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.*

<sup>18</sup>The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written,  
“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and

God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.*



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is



gra - cious and mer - ci - ful, slow to



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



bound - ing in stead - fast love.

## HOLY GOSPEL: John 2:13-22

*Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.*

The Holy Gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup>The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup>Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." <sup>18</sup>The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" <sup>19</sup>Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." <sup>20</sup>The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" <sup>21</sup>But he was speaking of the temple of his body. <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples

remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

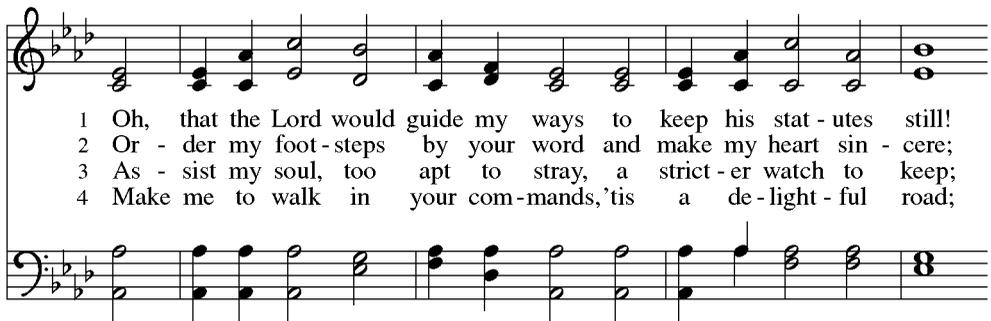
The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

*The assembly is seated. Time for reflection follows the sermon.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY      ELW #772      *Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways*

*The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.*



1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways to keep his stat - utes still!  
2 Or - der my foot - steps by your word and make my heart sin - cere;  
3 As - sist my soul, too apt to stray, a strict - er watch to keep;  
4 Make me to walk in your com - mands, 'tis a de - light - ful road;



Oh, that my God would grant me grace to know and do his will!  
let sin have no do - min - ion, Lord, but keep my con - science clear.  
and should I e'er for - get your way, re - store your wan - d'ring sheep.  
nor let my head or heart or hands of - fend a - gainst my God.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.  
Music: EVAN, William H. Havergal, 1793–1870

## 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.

*\*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.*

## PRAYERS

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

You alone are God. We thank you for the gift of sabbath rest. Awaken the church to the mystery of your presence and give us glad hearts as we receive the good news of your deliverance. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You renew creation. Drive out those who would make the earth a marketplace. Protect rainforests, mountaintops, oceans, and wilderness areas from commercial exploitation. Unite nations, policymakers, and businesses in efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You judge the nations. We pray for an end to war and strife in every land, especially Israel and Palestine, Ukraine, Myanmar, Sudan, and the Sahel. Strengthen international efforts to negotiate peace and provide humanitarian aid to people fleeing from conflict. Empower the churches and tend to the people of the United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You bring healing and hope. We give thanks for physicians, nurses, researchers, therapists, and public health workers who prevent and treat illness. We pray for any who are sick. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You abide with your people. Sustain any in this community undergoing life transitions: marriage, divorce, childbirth, adoption, moving, graduation, employment change, or a death in the family. We pray for those preparing for baptism. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

You bring life from death. With Perpetua and Felicity, we remember our loved ones who have died, confident that they have new life in you. May we trust that nothing can separate us from your love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

**STEWARDSHIP SHARING**                      *“Who, me?”*

**SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*We invite those worshipping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the chat, and for those in person we turn to offer them our greeting of peace before sharing a sign of peace with one another: **Peace be with you!***

**MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

**OFFERING**

*This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the participation and support of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts with*

**Valpo New Creation Men’s Shelter/Resale Shop** [newcreationempowers.org](http://newcreationempowers.org) + [www.facebook.com/newcreationresaleshop](http://www.facebook.com/newcreationresaleshop) and **Gabriel’s Horn** [www.gabrielshelter.org](http://www.gabrielshelter.org)



*If you wish to give electronically, use the QR code or browse to our secure on-line portal at [clcvalpo.org/give](http://clcvalpo.org/give) or use [our CLC app](#) (download at [clcvalpo.org/app](http://clcvalpo.org/app)).*

**OFFERTORY**

*What Wondrous Love is This*

Manz

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

*The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.*

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

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

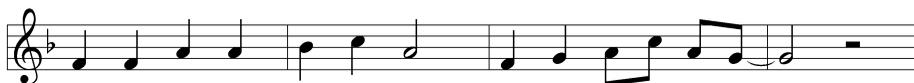
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## SANCTUS

*(An ancient practice invites us to make the sign of the cross in honor of Jesus at the words "Blessed is he.")*



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. Ho-san - na. 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.

## TABLE PRAYER

### LORD'S PRAYER

*Children: The Spirit makes us one. We pray as Jesus taught us:*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Bread for the journey.

A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

**Thanks be to God!**

*The assembly is seated.*

### DISTRIBUTION

*The pastor invites those worshipping via **livestream** to commune:*

The body of Christ, given for you.

**Amen (receive the bread)**

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**Amen (receive the cup)**

**In-person distribution:** When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. **WINE** is lighter-colored and **GRAPE JUICE** is dark; they are received via individual cups in the trays. **USED GLASSES** are placed in the basket located near the ramp. **GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE**, please indicate to the server that you require this.

# 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.

COMMUNION HYMNS: ACS #927 *Christ Is the Life*



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



Word, whose pow'r be - yond and through all space the  
 tomb, who wel - comes us from well - worn ways to  
 fire, whose flames re - quire our pri - or self as  
 End; cre - a - tive force, most peace - ful death, trans -



worlds to Be - ing stirred. Christ is the life be - yond all  
 dark - ness of the womb. Christ is the death, the sink - ing  
 kin - dling for the pyre. Christ is the death of dust - y  
 form - ing burn - ing brand. Christ is the life, in whose wise



time, cre - a - tion's birth and breath, whose la - bor  
 down past all de - sire and fear, whose prom - ise  
 days of un - cre - a - tive strife, for out from  
 love cre - a - tion lives and dies and thus for -



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

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953  
 Music: COE FEN, Kenneth Naylor, 1931-1991  
 Text © 1989 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress  
 Music © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

ACS #1086 *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.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944  
 Music: NOEL, English melody; arr. Arthur S. Sullivan, 1842–1900  
 Text © 1990 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

*When all have returned to their places, the assembly stands.*

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

**Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Generous God,

at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.

As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,

now make us one loaf to feed the world;

in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

**Amen.**

## **SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

## **INVITATIONS**

*Brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.*

## **BLESSING**

Beloved,

we are God's own people,

holy, washed, renewed.

God bless you and keep you,

shower you with mercy,

fill you with courage,

and ✠ give you peace.

**Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ELW #803

*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the  
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the  
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and  
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a

prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I  
 death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that  
 love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and  
 pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,

count but loss and pour con - tempt on all my pride.  
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.  
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?  
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
 Music: HAMBURG, Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

*Children join the pastors to send us in mission*

**DISMISSAL**

*Children: Go in peace. Share your bread.*

**Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

*Jesu, Meine Freude*

J.S. Bach

**Worship Leaders**

	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Joanie Furuness	Libby Novak
Lector	Linda Mapes	Becky Fry
Prayer Assistant	Kathy Sutherland	Phil Hahn
Communion Assistants	Betty Lockett Bob Lockett	Phil Hahn
Ushers	Don MacMillan Tim Sutherland	Jeri Simms Lucas Ecklund-Baker Jackson Ecklund-Baker
Sound/Light	Lance Nolting	Jeff Peiffer
Video/Livestream	-----	Tony Reinhold
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even	
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch	
Worship Participants	Celebration Ringers Handbell Ensemble Adam Gibson-Even, cantor Lois Felten, flute	
Communion Baker	Angela Wehner	

## COMMEMORATIONS

Week of March 3, 2024

### March 7

#### **Perpetua and Felicity and companions, martyrs at Carthage, died 202**

In the year 202 the emperor Septimius Severus forbade conversions to Christianity. Perpetua, a noblewoman, Felicity, an enslaved woman, and other companions were all catechumens at Carthage in North Africa. They were imprisoned and sentenced to death. Perpetua's father, who was not a Christian, visited her in prison and begged her to lay aside her Christian convictions in order to spare her life and spare the family from scorn. Perpetua responded and told her father, "We know that we are not placed in our own power but in that of God."

### ***Stewardship Snippet***

*"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. – Exodus 20:17*

God commands what **not** to do but expects us **to do** the opposite in grateful response to divine abundance. Instead of coveting what others have, we are to cultivate a spirit of generosity that helps us love and serve our neighbors.

## **Ecumenical Prayer Cycle**

This week we pray for the churches and people of **Ireland; United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales.**

### **We give thanks for:**

- the many distinct cultures in these islands and how literature, music, dance, and other traditions rooted here, have enriched people around the world
- the economic and other aid that consistently have come from the area to those in the world who are most in need
- the many who have emigrated to other parts of the world, and in turn, the immigrants from these lands who are now turning the United Kingdom and Ireland into increasingly multi-ethnic, multireligious societies
- the positive contributions Great Britain has made in world history and that church leaders have played in the ecumenical and interfaith movements

### **We pray for:**

- the healing of scars and memories that linger after times of colonization
- overcoming barriers so that all might experience welcome as these countries become more genuinely multi-ethnic and multi-faith
- resolving differences and political tensions over how Great Britain should relate to the rest of Europe
- dealing with the challenges of increasing secularism and the emergence of new ways of expressing religion and spirituality

## God's Zeal Makes Us Clean

In this penitential season, we hear the words of God's law revealed on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:1-17). The law was given to guide Israel, newly rescued from slavery in Egypt, to become a community reflecting God's love and holiness. However, this law, no matter how full of love it is, will always carry the sting of accusation for us because our hearts have strayed from God's gracious purpose. We aren't capable of fully following the law because we are still captive to the powers of sin and death, so the commandments will always reveal our trespasses. We should not be surprised that God's word convicts even those who have been called into the community of faith. After all, Jesus cleansed even the temple, reacting against sin within the very heart of religious life.

These scenes on Mount Sinai and in the temple don't just concern people of times long past. They draw us in as well. In the mysteries of holy baptism and holy communion, we become the house of the Lord. Joined to Christ by grace, we are, together, the body of Christ and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is zealous for the holiness of his body, desiring that those who have been united to him would walk in love and truth.

Our great assurance, though, is that the living Word of Jesus is greater even than the revelation on Sinai. Where the law can only convict, Jesus forgives. Where the law reveals our bondage to fear and pride, Jesus brings joyful freedom. In Christ, his body the church dies to sin and then, by grace, rises to new life, made clean and holy.

Let us not fear the one who calls us into holiness and cleanses the temple with zeal. The law reveals where sin has brought death to our souls. But Jesus has passed through death into a glorious resurrection to make us into a living temple, where God's mercy can be found in abundance for us and for the world.

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Portions from *Prayers for an Inclusive Church* by Steven Shakespeare.