SUNDAY WORSHIP

January 29, 2023
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
St. John's Lutheran Church
Helena, Montana

"Growing in Grace, Walking by Faith, Serving in Love"

Welcome and God's peace be with you. We are thankful you are here and pray that you will experience the presence of Christ in this congregation. Please take a moment to fill out a white Welcome to Worship slip and place it in the offering plate.

Worship in the Christian assembly is biblical and since ancient times the church has drawn upon the scriptures to shape the whole of worship. The Lutheran service is divided into four parts: GATHERING, WORD, MEAL, and SENDING which follow key biblical foundations.

Children are always welcome to worship at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Worship Bags and Children's bulletins are available in the back of the church. Sunday School for ages preschool through 5th grade takes places during worship and all children are welcome to join us! We will take them downstairs following the Children's Sermon, bring them upstairs for communion, and you can pick them up after worship.

All who are baptized are welcome to receive the forgiving and gracious presence of Christ in communion. Those who prefer not to commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.

Please join us in the fellowship hall downstairs following worship for coffee hour.
ALL ARE WELCOME!

GATHERING *(Matthew 18:30)*
(Please respond with the words in ***bold print*** *and stand, as you are able, at the places marked with an *)*

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

***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 makes all things new,
whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.

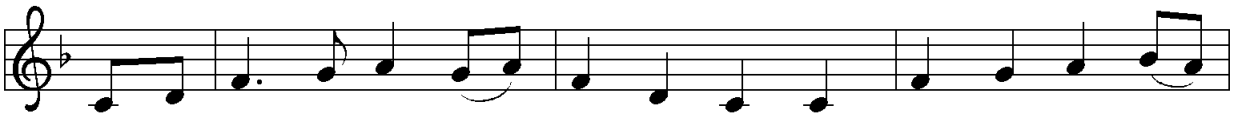
Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

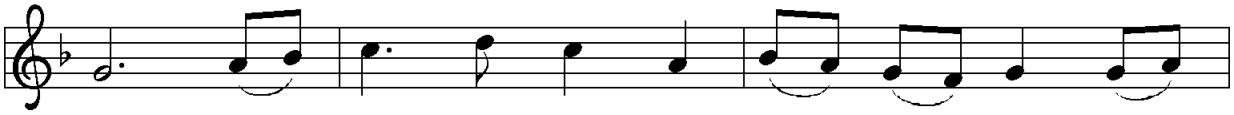
Holy One, source of our renewal,
we confess that we are wrapped up in sin,
and cannot free ourselves.
We have not practiced your righteousness.
Our hearts have turned away from you.
For the sake of the world you so love,
forgive us,
that we may be reconciled to one another
for the glory of your holy name.
Amen.

Thus says our God:
"The former things have come to pass
and new things I now declare."
God's mercy makes us new.
We are forgiven in the name of ✠ Christ our Savior.
Amen.

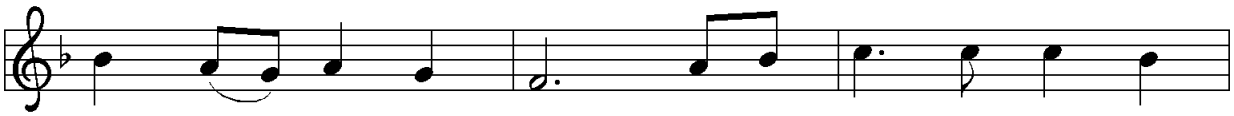
***Gathering Song ……..”All Are Welcome” ELW #641**



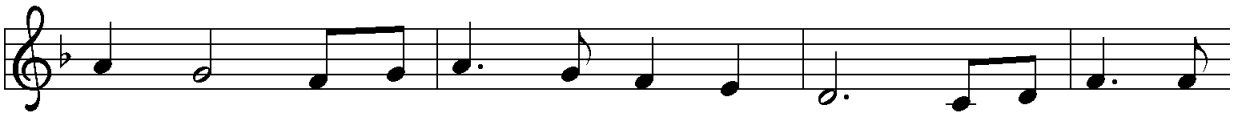
1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly
2 Let us build a house where proph-ets speak, and words are strong and
3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter, wine and
4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the wood and
5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and vi - sions



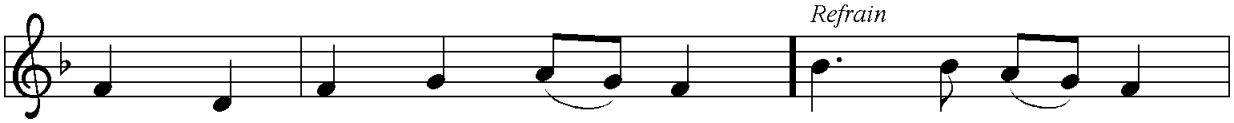
live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how
true, where all God’s chil - dren dare to seek to
wheat: a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground where
stone to heal and strength - en, serve and teach, and
heard and loved and trea - sured, taught and claimed as



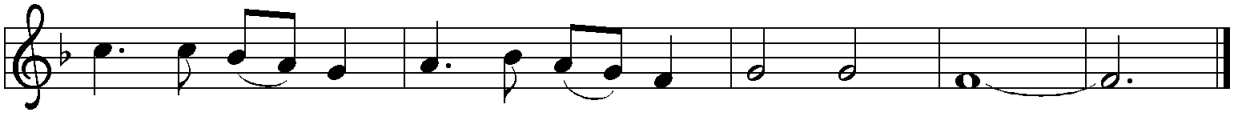
hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
dream God’s reign a - new. Here the cross shall stand as
peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
live the Word they’ve known. Here the out - cast and the
words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of
wit - ness and as sym - bol of God’s grace; here as one we
Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we share in
strang-er bear the im - age of God’s face; let us bring an
laugh-ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace, let this house pro -



Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
claim the faith of Je - sus:
Christ the feast that frees us: All are wel - come,
end to fear and dan - ger:
claim from floor to raf - ter:

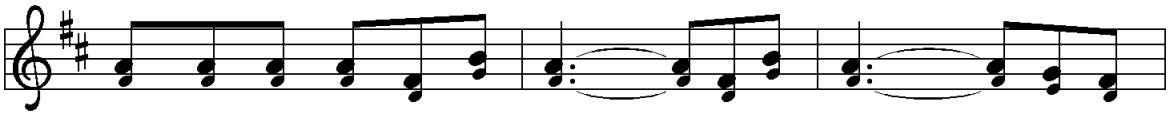


all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

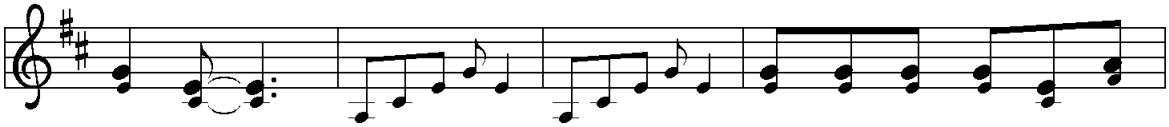
***Greeting**

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.

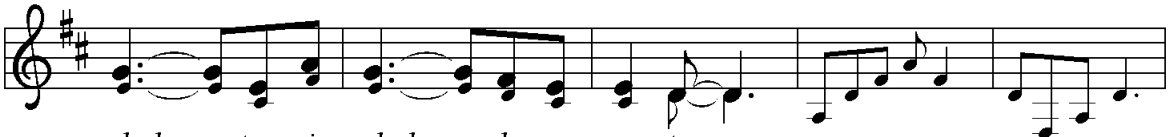
***Kyrie**



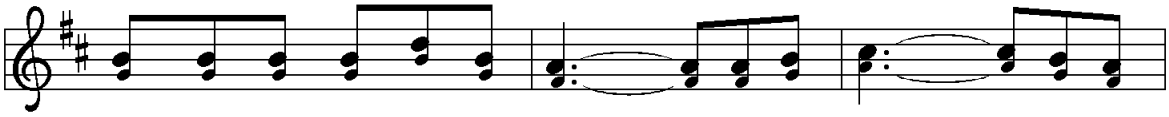
Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie - dad; ten pie - dad de no -
Lord, . . have mer - cy on us; O . . . Lord, have . . .



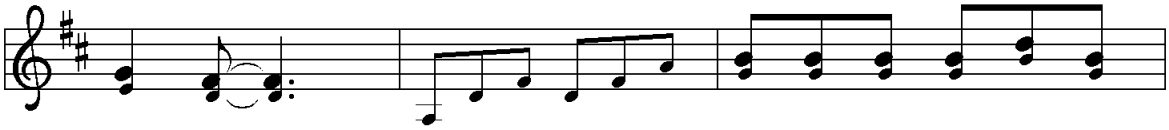
so - tros. Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie -
mer - cy. Lord, . . have mer - cy on



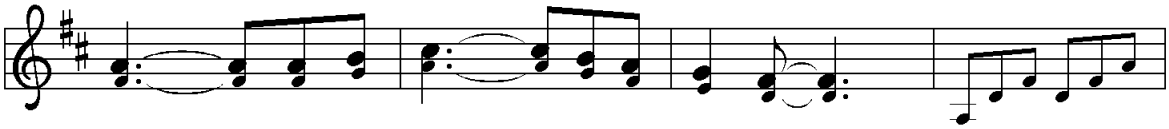
dad; ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
us; O. . . Lord, have . . mer - cy.



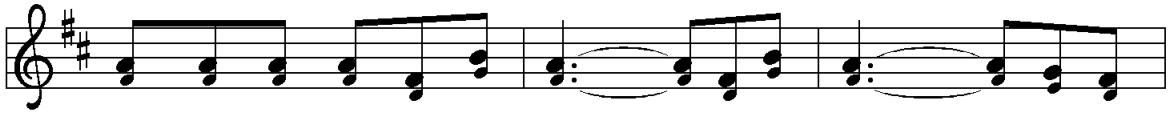
Cris - to, Cris - to, ten pie - dad; ten pie - dad de no -
Christ, . . have mer - cy on us; O . . . Christ, have . .



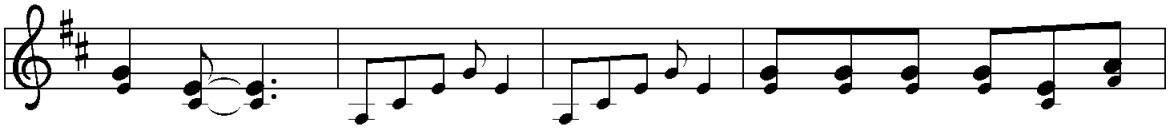
so - tros. Cris - to, Cris - to, ten pie -
mer - cy. Christ, . . have mer - cy on



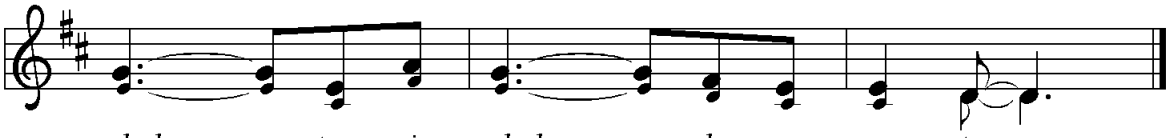
dad; ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
us; O . . . Christ, have . . mer - cy.



Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie - dad; ten pie - dad de no -
Lord, . . have mer - cy on us; O . . . Lord, have . . .

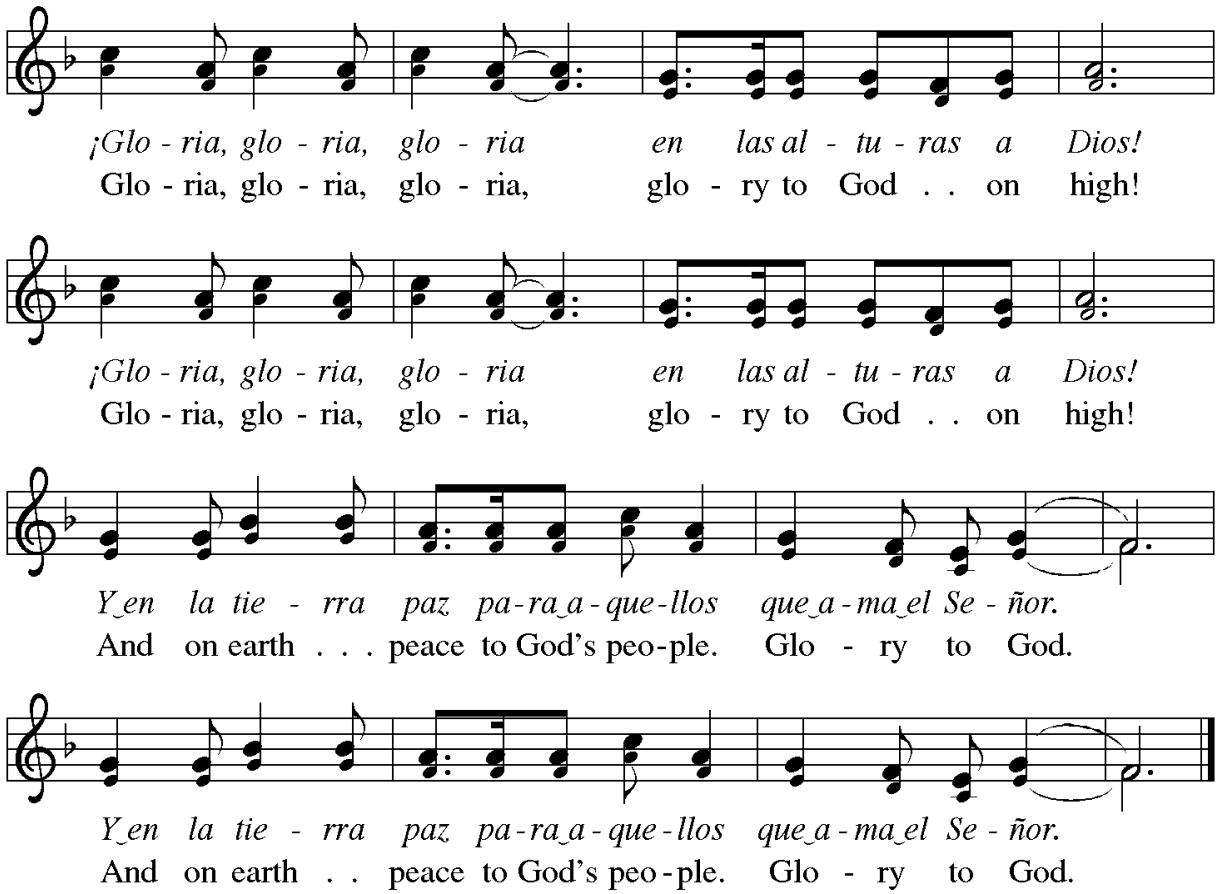


so - tros. Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie -
mer - cy. Lord, . . have mer - cy on



dad; ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
us; O . . . Lord, have . . mer - cy.

***Canticle of Praise**



***Prayer of the Day**

Holy God,

you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD *(John 1:1-5,14)*

First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.

1Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your
voice. 2Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the
earth; for the Lord has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. 3"O my peo-
ple, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! 4For I brought you up from
the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam. 5O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam
son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the
saving acts of the Lord." 6"With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on
high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7Will the Lord be pleased

with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" [8]He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 15

[1]Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?
[2]**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,**
who speak the truth from their heart;
[3]they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.
[4]**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the Lord.**
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.
[5]They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

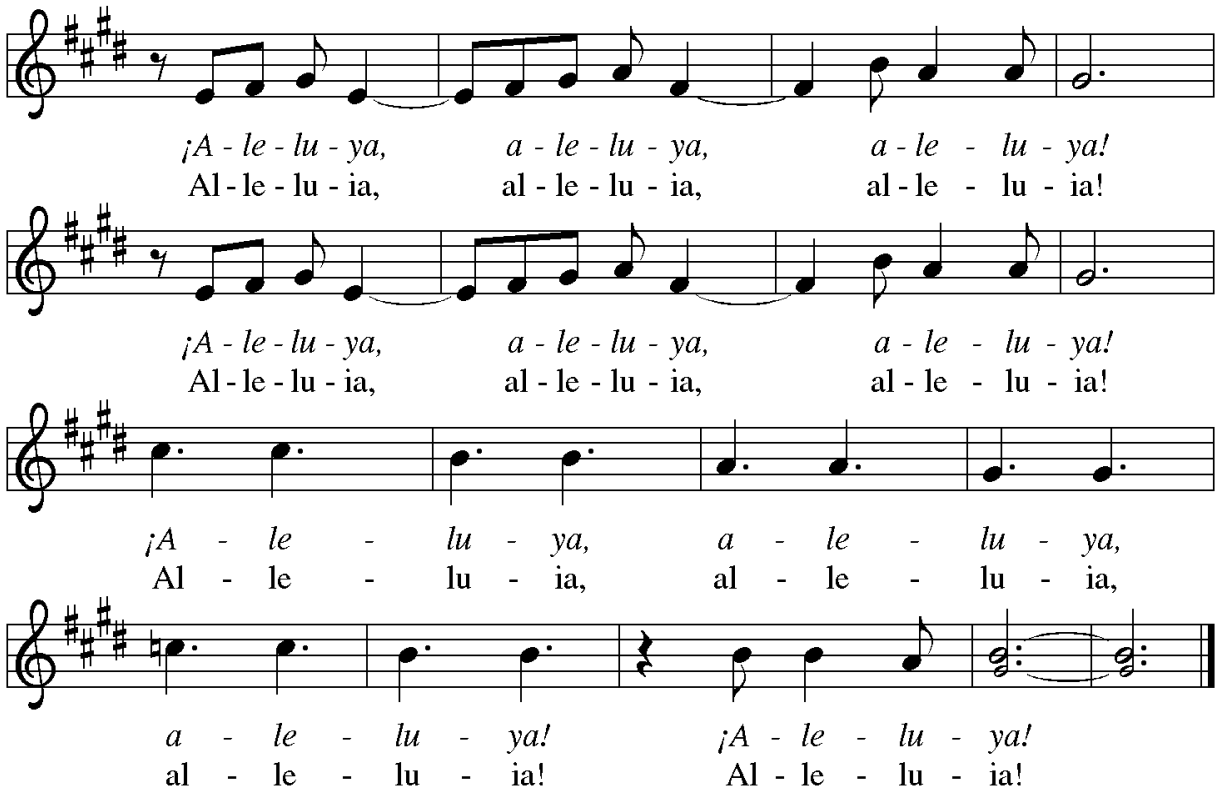
According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

[18]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. [19]For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." [20]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? [21]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. [22]For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, [23]but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, [24]but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the 'wisdom of God. [25]For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. [26]Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. [27]But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; [28]God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, [29]so that no one might boast in the presence of God. [30]He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, [31]in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation**



***Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:1-12**

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

Response after the announcement: Glory to you, O Lord.

1When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to
him. 2Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:
3"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
5"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
6"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
7"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
8"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
9"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
10"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of
heaven.
11"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against
you falsely on my account. 12Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same
way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Response after the reading: The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

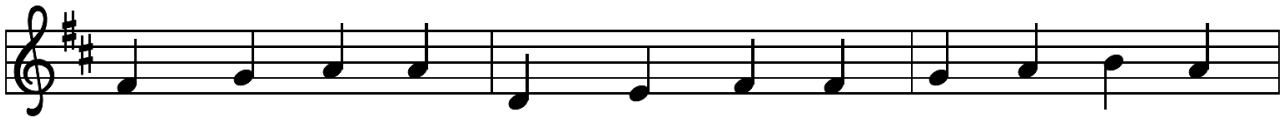
Children's Time

Children in preschool through 5th grade are invited to join us downstairs for Sunday School following the Children's Sermon. We will bring them up for communion and you can pick them up after worship in the Sunday School room downstairs.

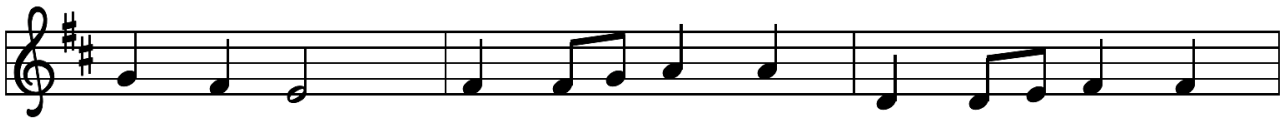
Sermon ……..……..Pastor Keith Weatherford

Silence for reflection follows the sermon

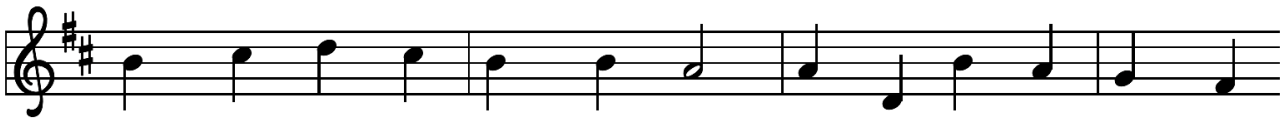
***Hymn of the Day..……..…..…..”Look Who Gathers at Christ’s Table” ACS #977**



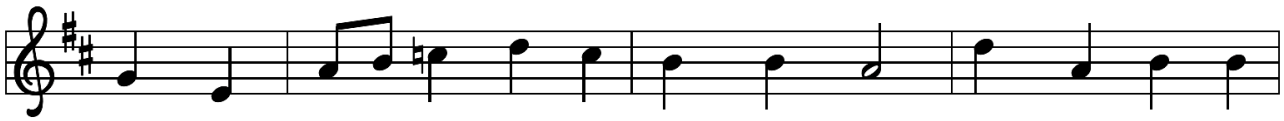
1 Look who gath - ers at Christ’s ta - ble! Hear the sto - ries
2 Clouds of light sur - round the ta - ble; an - cient fol - low -
3 Their sad sto - ries are re - peat - ed in a thou - sand
4 Bring your joy and bring your sad - ness, and pre - pare to



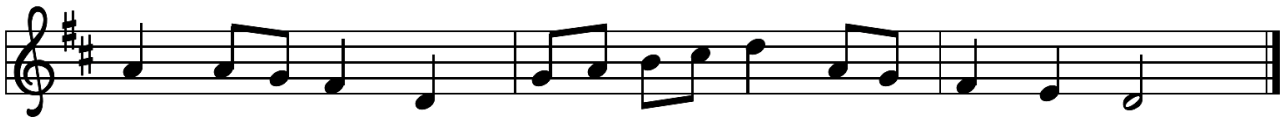
that they bring. Some are weep - ing; some are laugh - ing;
ers ap - pear, saints con - fess - ing how they wres - tled
dif - f’rent ways, but they share one thing in com - mon:
be sur - prised by the host whose hands are wound - ed,



some have songs they want to sing. Oth - ers ask why they’re in -
with their guilt, their doubt and fear. Pe - ter tells of his de -
they all end in thanks and praise for the host who has in -
who will o - pen wide your eyes when he bless - es bread and



vit - ed, bur - dened by the wrong they’ve done. Christ in - sists they
ny - ing Christ was ev - er in his sight; Paul re - lates his
vit - ed north and south and east and west to con - verge a -
breaks it— truth and man - na from a - bove!— and then pass - es



all are wel - come. There is room for ev - ’ry - one.
fruit - less ef - forts to ob - lit - er - ate the light.
round this ta - ble, where all life is fed and blest.
wine that wa - kens in your heart the taste of love.

***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**

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

***Prayer Response**

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Response at the conclusion of the prayers of intercession: **Amen.**

***Sharing of the Peace**

(...Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19))

As Christ welcomed everyone, let us open our hearts and lives
and be like Christ to everyone we meet. The peace of the Lord be with you,
And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say **Peace be with you** *or similar words. Then the assembly is seated.*

MEAL *(Matthew 25:35)*

(An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need and the communion table is set.)

Offertory Anthem.....St. John's Sanctuary Choir

"Like a Mighty Stream" by M. Hogan and J. Jacobson

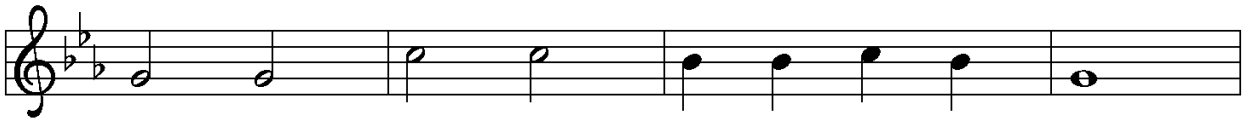
***Offering Prayer**

Liberating God,
you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free.
Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power,
and shape us as people of your justice and freedom.
You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior,
Amen.

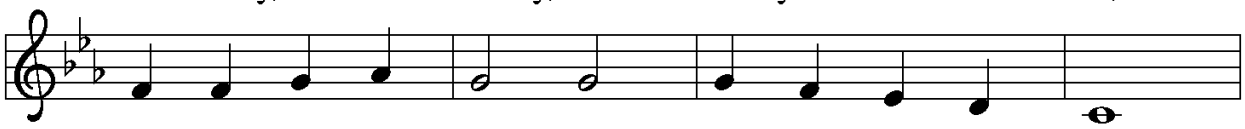
***The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

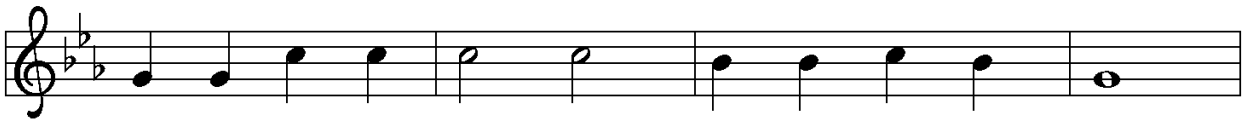
The thanksgiving continues with the preface for the day; the assembly responds with the "Holy, Holy, Holy" on the next page:



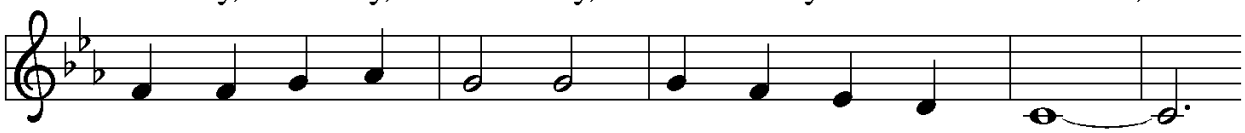
San - to, san - to, san - to_es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . . God,



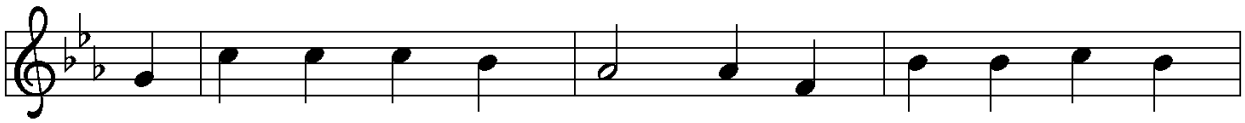
Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to_es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.



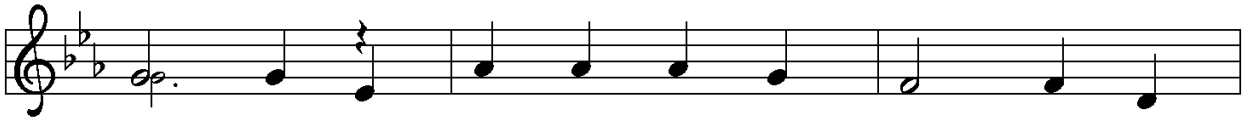
San - to, san - to, san - to, san - to_es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,



Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to_es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.

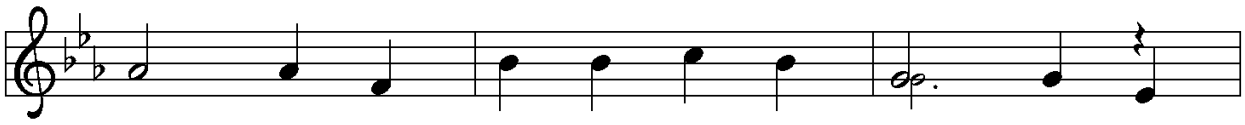


Ho - san - na en el cie - lo, ho - san - na en la
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na here on

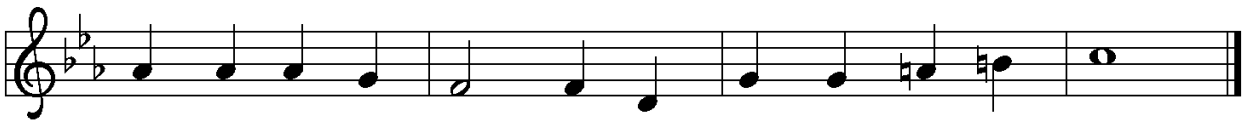


tie - rra. Ben - di - to el que vie - ne_en el
earth. . . . . Blest is he who comes in the

nom - bre del Se - ñor. Ho - san - na en el
name . . . of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the



cie - lo, ho - san - na en la tie - rra. Ben -
high - est, ho - san - na here on earth. . . . .



di - to el que vie - ne_en el nom - bre del Se - ñor.
Blest is he who comes in the name . . . of the Lord.

***Words of Institution**

The presiding minister continues, using an appropriate form and the Thanksgiving includes this acclamation:

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

***Lords Prayer**

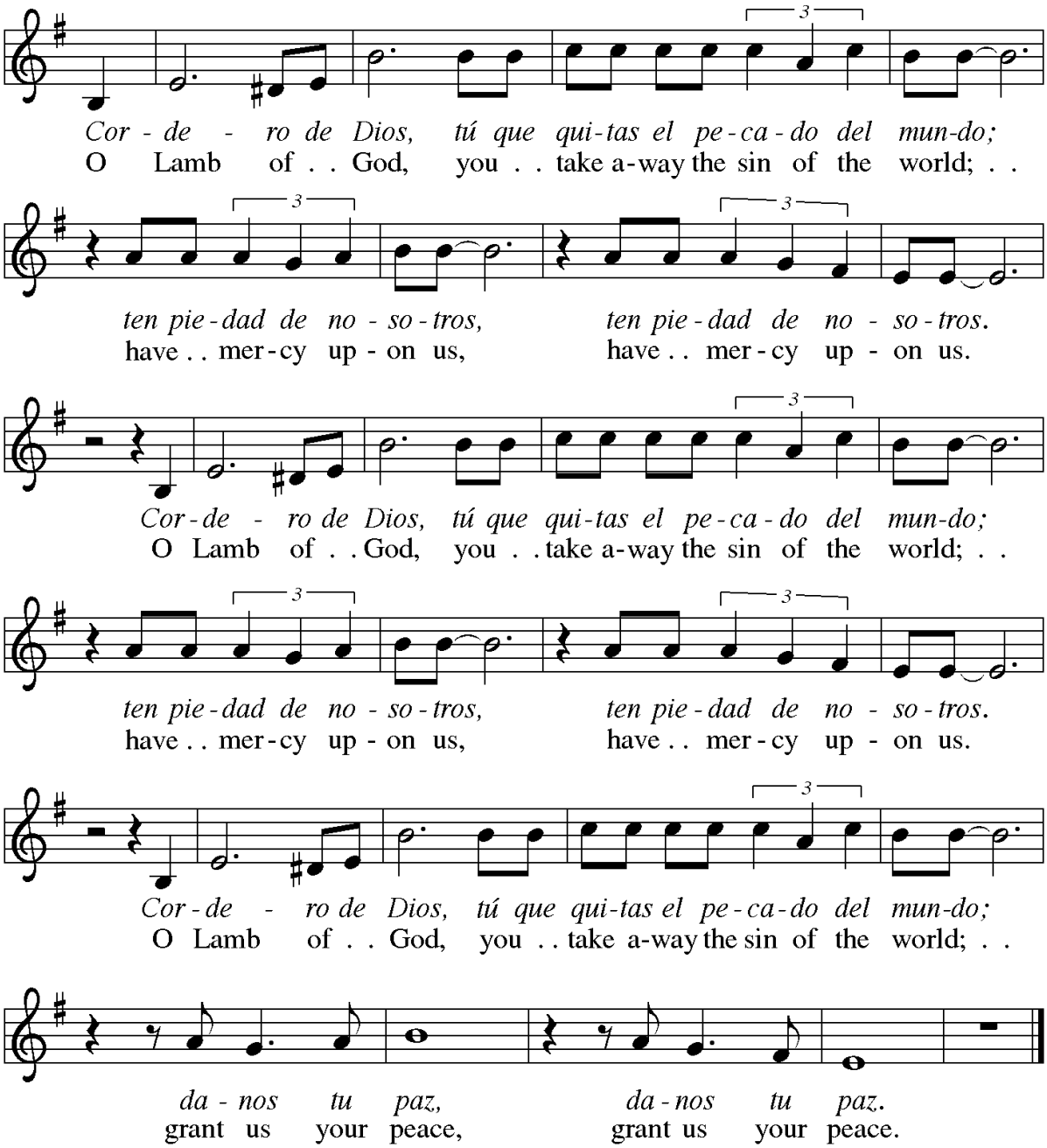
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

***Invitation**

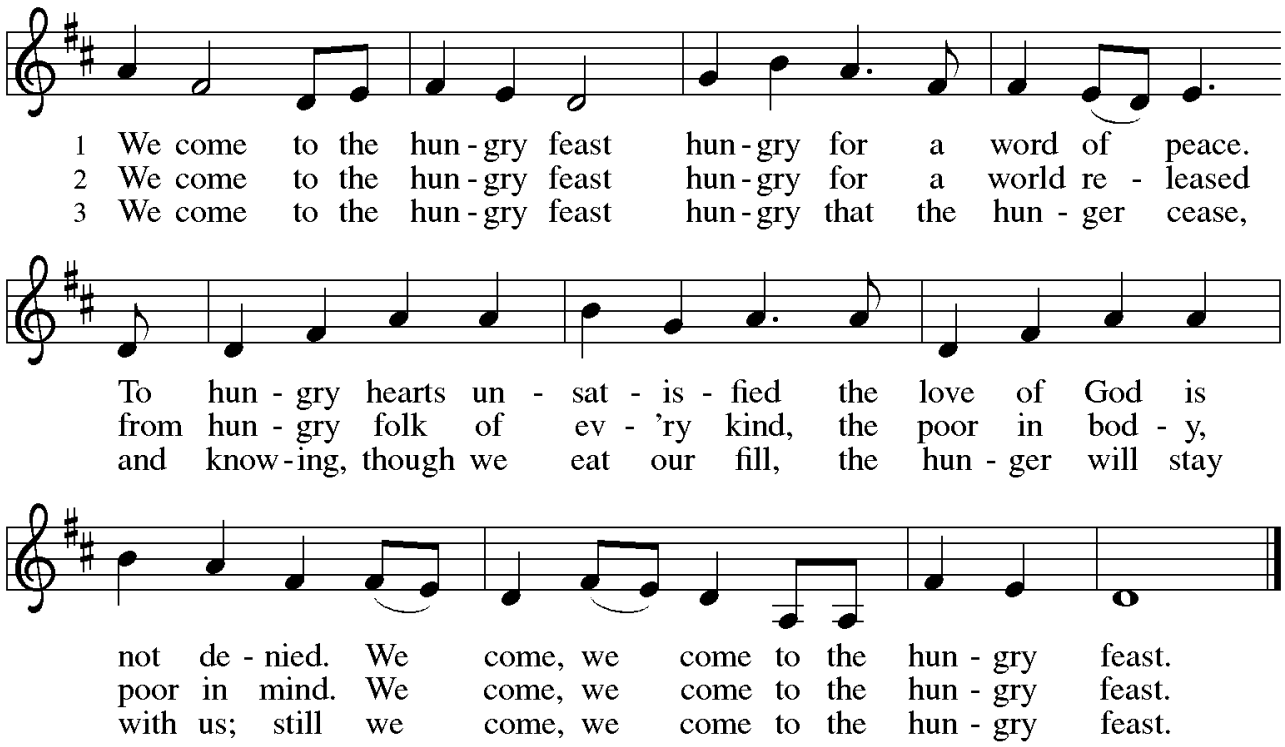
Come and taste the joy of God!

(We celebrate open communion and all who are baptized are welcome to receive the forgiving and gracious presence of Christ in communion. Those who prefer not to commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.)

Lamb of God



Communion Hymn ……..."We Come to the Hungry Feast" ELW #479



Prayer After Communion

Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table.
Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you.
Amen.

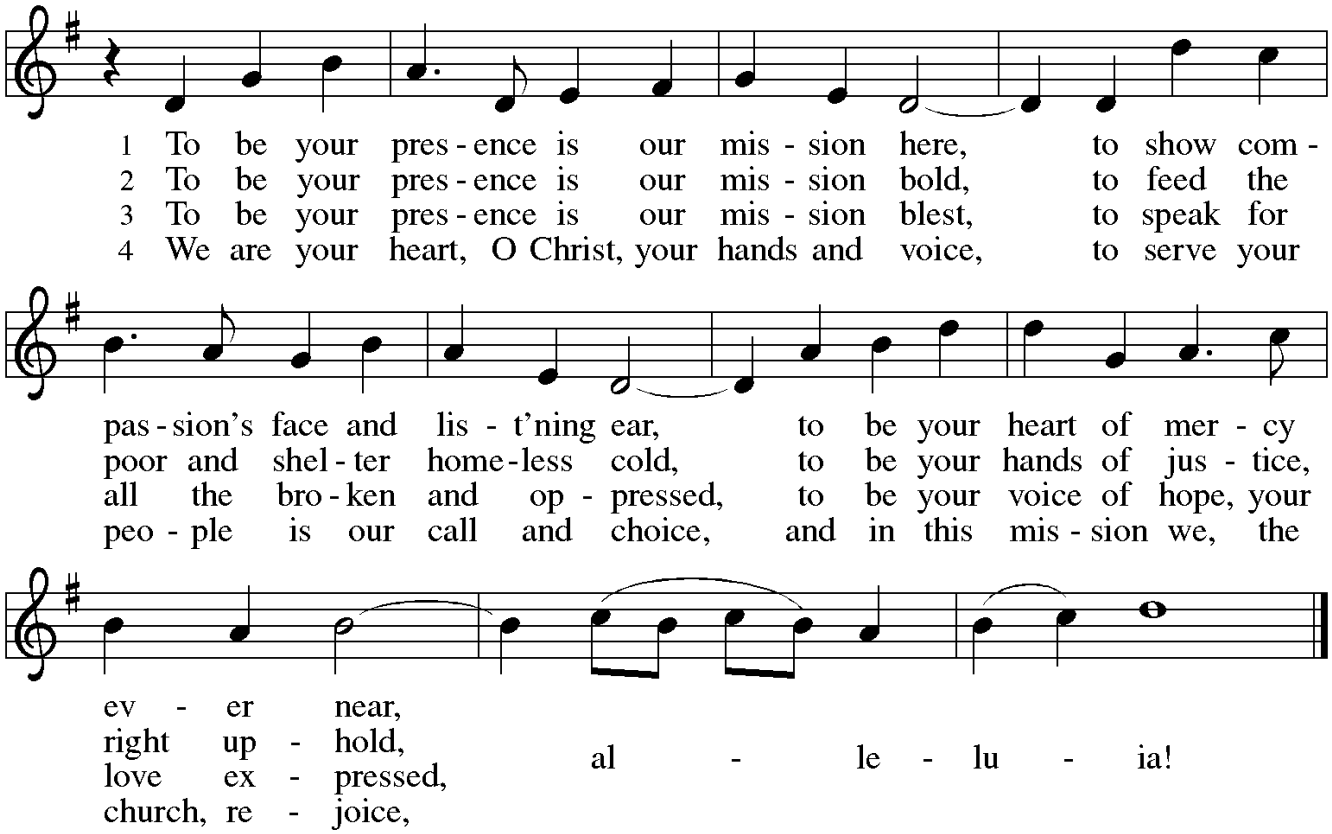
Sending of Communion

SENDING *(John 20:21)*

***Blessing**

The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod ✠ bless, strengthen, and uphold you, today and always.
Amen.

***Sending Hymn ……...……..……"To Be Your Presence" ELW #546**



***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

MINISTERING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor Keith Weatherford,
Preaching & Presiding
Angela Conley, Technology and Sound
Dodie Walsh, Organ
Connie Conley, Choir Director
Christina Tielking & Renee Slocum,
Bell Choir Directors
Bella Twoteeth, Sunday School Teacher

Kate Lee, Marie Lee, EB Slocum,
Ayla Mundinger-Adsay
Acolytes

Christian Wilde-Spiger, Cliff Roessner
Ushers

Rebekah French
Lector

Rebekah French, Jennifer Wintersteen
Ron & Deanne Stegmann
Communion Servers

Judy Kembel, Noma Middlestead,
Linda Roessner
January Altar Guild

In our prayers: Liam Menahen, Marcus Mosness, Bruce Gottwig, Kendra Atkinson, Kurt Breigenzer, Glenn Monson, Vicki Alpiner, Bob Sorensen, Derek French, Larry Brandvold, Deb Berg, Anne Tennant, Meg Biggs and family, Karen Sturm, Erma Polich, Payan Teeters, Dale Twingley, Richard Bomar, Rueben, Emma Rose Plute, Jeff Shirley, Jeremy Stockstad, Rosita Moe, Tatiana Ceaicovschi, Chris Gibbs, Randy Holmes, Lester Anderson

For those who have died and now rest in God's merciful care:
Barbara Williams, Loretta Slocum, Jerry Alpiner and all the Saints in heaven

For those in residential living centers, extended care or homebound:
Rosita Moe, Hazel Aasved, Esther Fuehrer, Marge Mihelish, Julie Wolff, Adeline Rasmussen, Susan DeBree, Bill Mattfeldt, Carl Mattfeldt, Marge Jacobson, Troy & Jimmie McGee, Karen Nave, Mary Gardinier

For those who are deployed and getting ready to deploy: Grayson Alm

Missionaries: Willie, Anne, and Micah Langdji in Cameroon
Missionaries around the world

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

Sunday, January 29th: Annual Meeting at 10:45 am followed by a potluck in the Fellowship Hall
Wednesday, February 1st: Midweek Connection with Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp
5:30 pm-Dinner
6:30 pm-Worship w/Holy Communion
7:00 pm-Study for adults and FLBC with all youth
Thursday, February 2nd: Crafters Meeting at 1:00 pm
Sunday, February 5th: Worship w/Holy Communion
Special guest Margie Fiedler, Executive Director from Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp
Sunday, February 12th: Installation of Pastor Keith Weatherford at 2:00 pm, potluck to follow

Gretchen Away February 1-6

*****The Deadline for the weekly bulletin is Wednesday at Noon.***
The Deadline for the March Herald is Wednesday, February 15th

INSTALLATION OF PASTOR KEITH WEATHERFORD
AT ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

You are invited to the Service of Holy Communion and Installation on Sunday, February 12th at 2:00 pm, as the people of St. John's welcome their new pastor, Rev. Keith Weatherford. Special guest preacher will be Bishop Dr. Laurie Jungling, Bishop of the Montana Synod with Rev. Brenda Frelsi, associate to the bishop of the Montana synod, officiating. All are invited to worship in person. The service will also be livestreamed via our Facebook page. Clergy who attend are invited to process. The color of the day will be green. There will be a potluck reception following the service.

BOLD WOMAN SUNDAY—MARCH 5TH

We are taking nominations for consideration for our 2023 Bold Woman. Please submit names to Mait Board or Rebekah French by February 12th.

WORSHIP SERVERS NEEDED

There are many, wonderful ways to help serve during our worship service each week! We are always looking for greeters, lectors, communion servers, ushers, and acolytes. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex. If you have any questions please speak with Pastor Keith or call the office.

REQUEST FROM THE QUILTERS
We are looking for more people to cut and sew quilt tops at home. Fabric is available. Please speak with Mildred and Linda for more information.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE INFORMATION
In our highly mobile society we know that our current household contact information needs to be reviewed and updated. Please help us update our records by completing the form that went out in the January Herald or by picking one up in the narthex today. **Please return it by January 29th.** You may drop the form off at church in the collection box at the back of the sanctuary, return it via mail, or send a response via email. Thank you!

JANUARY SOCIAL MINISTRY OFFERING-ELCA WORLD HUNGER
Money gifts this month will be given to ELCA World Hunger, supporting domestic and international projects related to healthcare, food security, clean water, and education. ELCA World Hunger works with local partners, who identify the needs, to address hunger at the root causes. Our missionaries, Willie and Anne Langdji, help to oversee these projects in West Africa.* Other ELCA leaders receive World Hunger Grants to work with food banks and community meals in urban and rural America. Here is a prayer for your mealtimes this month: "Blessed be God who is our bread. May all the world be clothed and fed. Amen." Please send in your offerings this month to the office or place them in the pew offering envelopes and mark the "Social Ministry" box.
**They are impressed with the wise use of World Hunger funds in their region.*