



## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Sunday, March 30, 2025

Holy Communion  
9:30 a.m.

**United Lutheran Church  
Oak Park, Illinois**

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*Welcome to United Lutheran Church! If you're new to worship, **parts for everyone to say or sing are bolded**, and parts that the worship leaders will say are unbolded. A brief description about themes of our worship today:*

The psalm sets the tone this day: "Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!" Happy are those who have "become the righteousness of God" in the merits of Christ Jesus. Happy are those for whom the forgiveness of God has "rolled away . . . the disgrace" of former times. Happy is the father at the return of his prodigal son. Happy are we that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Rejoice!

### PRELUDE

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (*standing*)

In the name of the Father,  
and of the † Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful God,  
**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.**  
**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,**  
**by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**  
**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**  
**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**  
**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.**  
**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will**  
**and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**  
**Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved you even when you were dead in sin,  
and rescued you, making you alive together with Christ.  
By grace you have been saved.  
In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.  
Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit,  
that Christ may live in your hearts through faith,  
and bring forth from you daily works of love.  
**Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN (PURPLE HYMNAL 1004)

*Faith Begins by Letting Go*

1 Faith be - gins by let - ting go, giv - ing up what had seemed sure,  
2 Faith en - dures by hold - ing on, keep - ing mem - 'ry's roots a - live  
3 Faith ma - tures by reach - ing out, stretch - ing minds, en - larg - ing hearts,

tak - ing risks and press - ing on, though the way feels less se - cure:  
so that hope may bear its fruit; prom - ise - fed, our souls will thrive,  
shar - ing strug - gles, liv - ing prayer, bind - ing up the bro - ken parts;

pil - grim - age both right and odd, trust - ing all our life to God.  
not through mer - it we pos - sess but by God's great faith - ful - ness.  
till we find the com - mon - place ripe with wit - ness to God's grace.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944  
Music: RATISBON, J. G. Werner, *Choralbuch*, 1815  
Text © 1996 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

**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

Let us pray.

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (*sitting*)

*Mission of the Month: New Moms*

## FIRST READING

**Joshua 5:9-12**

A reading from Joshua.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

<sup>10</sup> While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. <sup>11</sup> On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. <sup>12</sup> The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

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

*The cantor and the assembly alternate in singing the verses.*



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.  
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- <sup>1</sup> Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,  
and whose sin is | put away!
- <sup>2</sup> **Happy are they to whom the LORD im- | putes no guilt,  
and in whose spirit there | is no guile!**
- <sup>3</sup> While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,  
because of my groaning | all day long.
- <sup>4</sup> **For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;  
my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.**
- <sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt.  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave  
me the guilt | of my sin.
- <sup>6</sup> **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of  
trouble;**  
**when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them.**
- <sup>7</sup> You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble;  
you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.
- <sup>8</sup> **"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go;  
I will guide you | with my eye.**
- <sup>9</sup> Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding;  
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near  
you."
- <sup>10</sup> **Great are the tribulations | of the wicked;  
but mercy embraces those who trust | in the LORD.**
- <sup>11</sup> Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice | in the LORD;  
shout for joy, all who are | true of heart.

## SECOND READING

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

**2 Corinthians 5:16-21**


<sup>16</sup> From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view;  
even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know  
him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup> So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:  
everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! <sup>18</sup> All this is  
from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the

ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. <sup>20</sup> So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

### LENTEN ACCLAMATION (RED HYMNAL 176)



Let your stead - fast love come to us, O Lord.  
Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Text: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*  
Music: Robert Buckley Farlee, b. 1950  
Text and music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

*Cantor: I will arise and go to my fa-<sup>1</sup>ther and say,\*  
I have sinned against heaven<sup>1</sup> and before you. (Luke 15:18)*

## GOSPEL

**Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

The holy gospel according to Luke,  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] <sup>2</sup> And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

<sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable: <sup>11b</sup> “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup> When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields

to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup> He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup> But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ <sup>20</sup> So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup> for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup> Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup> Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

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

**SERMON** (*sitting*)



HYMN OF THE DAY (standing) (RED HYMNAL 802)

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

1 Let us ev - er walk with Je - sus, fol - low his ex - am - ple pure,  
 2 Let us suf - fer here with Je - sus, and with pa - tience bear our cross.  
 3 Let us glad - ly die with Je - sus. Since by death he con - quered death,  
 4 Let us al - so live with Je - sus. He has ris - en from the dead

through a world that would de - ceive us and to sin our spir - its lure.  
 Joy will fol - low all our sad - ness; where he is there is no loss.  
 he will free us from de - struc - tion, give to us im - mor - tal breath.  
 that to life we may a - wak - en. Je - sus, you are now our head,

On - ward in his foot - steps tread - ing, trav - 'lers here, our home a - bove,  
 Though to - day we sow no laugh - ter, we shall reap ce - les - tial joy:  
 Let us mor - ti - fy all pas - sion that would lead us in - to sin;  
 we are your own liv - ing mem - bers; where you live, there we shall be

full of faith and hope and love, let us do our Sav - ior's bid - ding.  
 all dis - com - forts that an - noy shall give way to mirth here - af - ter.  
 and the grave that shuts us in shall but prove the gate of heav - en.  
 in your pres - ence con - stant - ly, liv - ing there with you for - ev - er.

Faith - ful Lord, with me a - bide; I shall fol - low where you guide.  
 Je - sus, here I share your woe; help me there your joy to know.  
 Je - sus, here with you I die, there to live with you on high.  
 Je - sus, let me faith - ful be; life e - ter - nal grant to me.

Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626-1681; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.  
 Music: LASSET UNS MIT JESU ZIEHEN, Georg G. Boltze, 18th cent.  
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## APOSTLES' CREED<sup>1</sup>

**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.**

### **In our prayers**

Betty Ann Richeson, Iheanyi (brother of Ngozi), Gerhard Huebner, Joe Aguilera,  
Martha Thompson, Carol Horn, Jeanne and Earl Koeller,  
Don Zelenko, Joan and Susie Gartner, Mark Chesney, Tyler Cooper Kersten,  
Monica Culpepper, Carol Andrews, Edie Glavey, Michael Nee,  
Helen (friend of Kathy G).

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** (*standing*)

*Following each petition:*

God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude:* Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

**Amen.**

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<sup>1</sup>**What is this and why do we do it?** Reciting the ancient creeds together is an action that connects the church of each generation to the promises made in baptism and to the earliest followers of Christ. The act of saying the creeds embodies how Christian faith is both individual and it is shared across generations. If you are new to worship, or if you haven't been baptized or confirmed, or if you aren't sure at this time if you can mean what you are invited to say, remaining silent during the creed is also welcome and permitted.

## PEACE

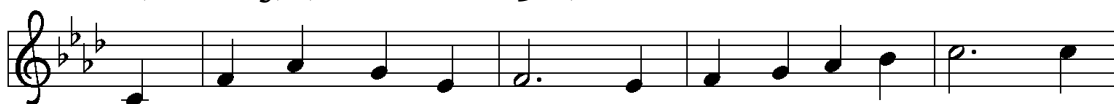
The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## OFFERING

*At the end of worship today you may leave an offering in the plate on the table at the entrance to the sanctuary where the bulletins are, or you use our website <unitedlutheranchurch.org> and the giving tab on the menu bar. There is also a QR code printed on the last page of the bulletin.*

## OFFERING HYMN (*standing*) (RED HYMNAL 328)

## *Restore in Us, O God*



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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## OFFERING PRAYER (*assisting minister*)

Let us pray,

Gracious Provider,

you set your immense treasures among us,  
opening your heart to the world.

As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,  
deepen our commitment to sharing those  
treasures with others,  
through our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING (*standing*)

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,  
you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness you did not abandon us,  
but guided us into the path of love and light.  
In every age you sent prophets  
to make known your loving will for all humanity.  
The cry of the poor has become your own cry;  
our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.  
In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant  
to preach good news to the afflicted,  
to break bread with the outcast and despised,  
and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

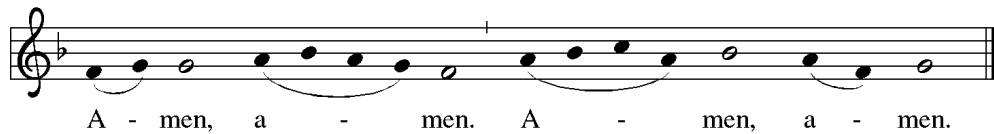
Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,  
we await the day when Jesus shall return  
to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.  
Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

**Amen.**

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate,  
to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup  
with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world.  
Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

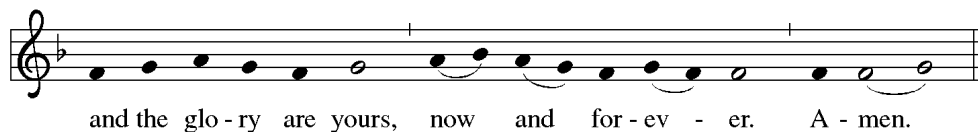
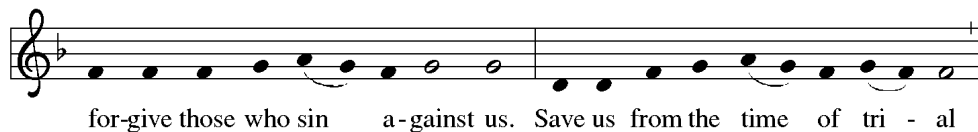
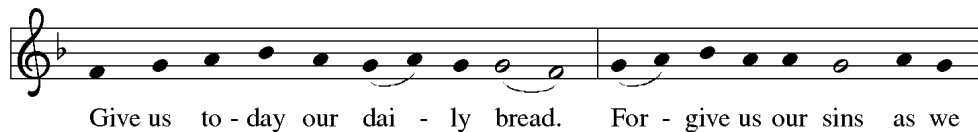
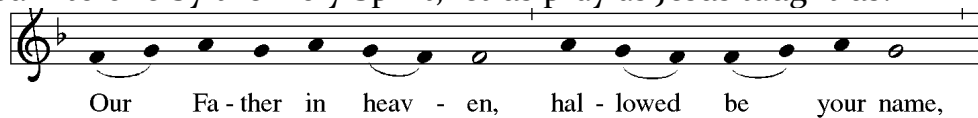
**Amen.**

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age,  
that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection,  
we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.  
Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.



### LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:



## INVITATION TO THE TABLE

All who are hungry, come!  
The feast of grace is spread.

## COMMUNION

*All are welcome to commune. Worshipers seated on the pulpit side come forward in the center aisle first to receive the bread. Then turn to pick up an empty cup for wine or a prepackaged cup of grape juice. An assisting minister will pour wine from the pouring chalice into the empty cup. Return used cups to a tray near the head of the side aisle as you return to your seat.*

## COMMUNION SONG

### 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.

COMMUNION HYMN (PURPLE HYMNAL 1034)

*When It Seems the Day Will End*

1 When it seems the day will end, and all  
2 When it seems the day will end, sink - ing  
3 When it seems the day will end, and a

light gives way to fear, we will speak your name a -  
low un - der our skin, we are dead and born a -  
cold - ness fills our bones, we will walk the way you've

gain to re - mind us you are here.  
gain, and with you now en - ter in.  
been, and our hearts will be your home.

*Refrain*

New life ris - ing, New life ris - ing, ash - es fall - ing, ash - es fall - ing,  
joy and weep - ing, joy and weep - ing, in your call - ing. in your call - ing.

Text: Justin Rimbo, b. 1980  
Music: HUMBLE WALK, Justin Rimbo  
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**RESTORING OF COMMUNION VEIL**

*You are invited to intentional contemplative prayer during the pause while the ministers restore the veil after communion.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (standing)**

Let us pray.  
Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

**SPECIAL BLESSING OF FAREWELL (standing)**

*As Jennifer Szymanski and Katie return to Tennessee*



**BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

May the Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG (PURPLE HYMNAL 1000)

*God's Work, Our Hands*



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,  
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,  
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,  
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,  
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,  
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,  
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,  
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,  
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,  
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.  
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.  
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.  
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,  
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,  
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,  
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.  
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.  
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.  
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954  
 Music: EARTH AND ALL STARS, David N. Johnson, 1922–1987  
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**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, remember the poor. **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

QR code link to access United's online giving page.  
Thank you. Your financial giving makes our ministry possible.



### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

*Presiding Minister:* Pastor Ole Schenk;  
*Director of Music:* Dr. Cacie Miller; *Cantor:* John Koster;  
*Assisting Minister:* Darlene Hug; *Reader:* Cynde Kuck;  
*Audio Technician:* Tom Guenther; *Zoom Technician:* Chris Galaviz;  
*Usher:* Patrick O'Meara; *Altar Guild:* Marie Kruse;  
*Sunshine Club:* Lynda Prischman; *Bread Baker:* Gloria Mitka

**Welcome to all** worshipping with us this morning. We invite everyone to commune with us. Join us for a time of fellowship after worship in the fellowship hall on the main level of the building.

**Please record your name** and address on a white communication card, check off additional items as appropriate, and place the card in an offering plate as you leave.

**Interested in membership** at United Lutheran Church or would you like more information on participating in an activity or event? Please call or email the church office (contact information below).

**Midweek Moments** is a weekly email newsletter containing announcements from United Lutheran Church and you can subscribe to it on the *news page* of our website. Printed copies of the latest edition of Midweek Moments are also available on the tables with the worship bulletins at either entrance.

Find us on **Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/unitedlutheranoakpark/>

**Call** the church office: 708-386-1576.

**Email** the church office: [office@unitedlutheranchurch.org](mailto:office@unitedlutheranchurch.org).

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