



SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Sunday, March 1, 2026

Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.

United Lutheran Church
Oak Park, Illinois

*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:*

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (*standing*)

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God +
whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may in truth perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (*1 John 1:8-9*)

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.

*Silence is kept for reflection **

In the mercy of almighty God,
Jesus Christ was given to die for you,
and for his sake God forgives you all your sins.
As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ,
and by Christ's authority alone,
I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,
in the name of the Father, and of Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

* We confess together, supported by one another. The silence gives us the opportunity to confess on our own. You may find the words we recite together helpful in your own confession and/or admission to God of where you need God's help. Alternatively, you may use this time as you need as we prepare to enter worship.

GATHERING HYMN (RED HYMNAL 666)

What Wondrous Love Is This



1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What
2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when
3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing; to
4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on; and



won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is this
I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when I was sink - ing down
God and to the Lamb I will sing; to God and to the Lamb,
when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm free,



that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my
be - neath God's righ-teous frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my
who is the great I AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will
I'll sing God's love for me, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing



soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul?
soul, for my soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul.
sing, I will sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, I'll sing on; and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

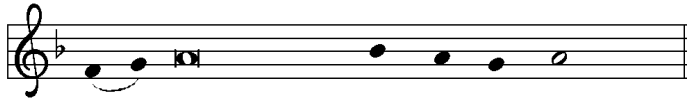
Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt.

Music: WONDROUS LOVE, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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 (RED HYMNAL, page 156-157)



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,



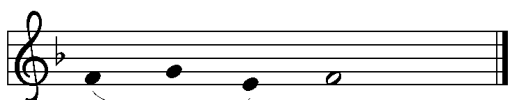
let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, 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

Genesis 12: 1-4a

A reading from Genesis.

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

^{4a} So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM *The cantor and the assembly alternate in singing the verses.* Psalm 121



- 1 I lift up my eyes | to the hills;
from where is my | help to come?
- 2 **My help comes | from the Lord,**
the maker of heav- | en and earth.
- 3 The Lord will not let your | foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you | fall asleep.
- 4 **Behold, the keep- | er of Israel**
will neither slum- | ber nor sleep;
- 5 the Lord watches | over you;
the Lord is your shade at | your right hand;
- 6 **the sun will not strike | you by day,**
nor the | moon by night.
- 7 The Lord will preserve you | from all evil
and will | keep your life.
- 8 **The Lord will watch over your going out and your | coming in,**
from this time forth for- | evermore.

SECOND READING

Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17

A reading from Romans.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

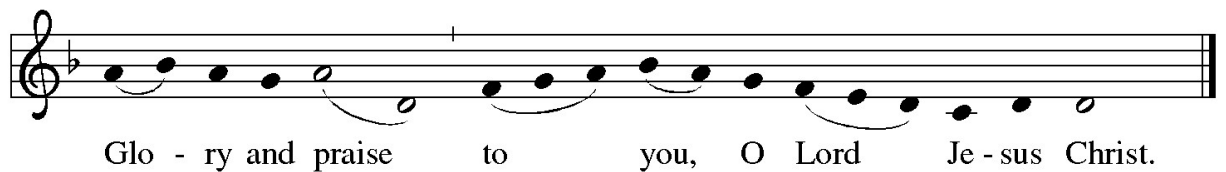
¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

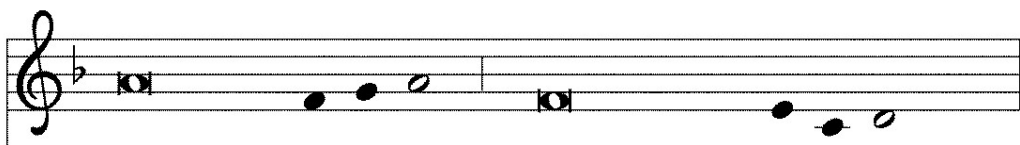
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

LENTEN GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (*standing*)

The assembly sings the refrain. The cantor sings the verse for the day. The assembly repeats the refrain.



*The Son of Man must be ¹lifted up, * that whoever believes in him may have e- ¹ternal life. (John 3:14-15)*



GOSPEL

John 3: 1-17

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON (*sitting*) *A brief silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

HYMN OF THE DAY (*standing*) (PURPLE HYMNAL 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
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APOSTLES CREED†

† † **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. You may participate as you are able.

**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 (*standing*)

In our prayers

Michael Fitzgerald, Christine Szymanski, Tim and Henry Galaviz, Donna Schomberg, Julie Hudson, Bev Jensen, Jean Szymanski, Joyce Schiffert, Dave Wick, Karen Threlkeld, Ron Bosack, Erin Kosirowski, Jeanne Koeller, Don Zelenko, Joan and Susie Gartner, Georgia Leese, Pat Reynolds, Joe Aguilera, Mark Chesney, Tyler Cooper Kersten, Monica Culpepper, Carol Andrews, Edie Glavey, Helen (friend of Kathy G).

Following each petition:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The prayers conclude:

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

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*) (PURPLE HYMNAL 1084)

God be the Love to Search and Keep Me (O Christ Surround Me)

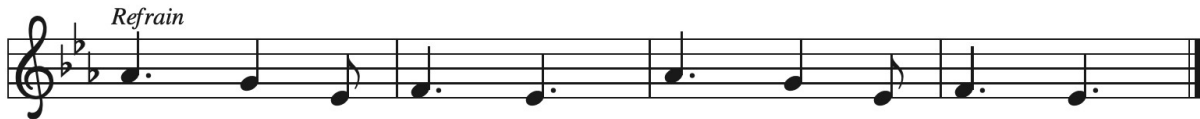
This week we sing only verse two.



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
 2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho-ly, great cloud of wit-ness-
 3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash-ing of light-ning,
 4 Walk-ing be-hind to hem my jour-ney, go-ing a-head to
 5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up-hold me:
 es en-fold; proph-ets, a-pos-tles, an-gels wit-ness:
 strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan-et:
 light my way, and from be-neath, a-bove, and all ways:
 hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur-round me; O Christ, sur-round me.

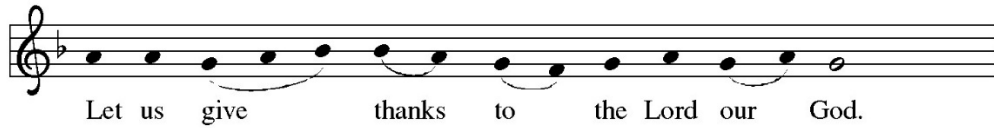
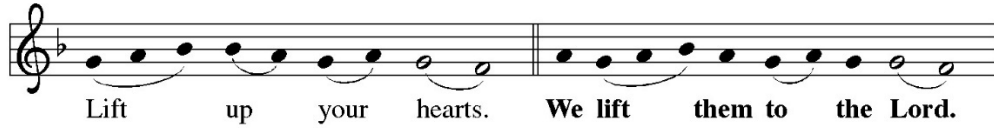
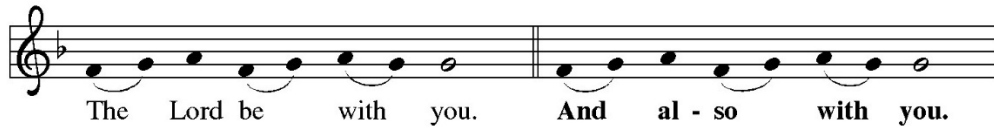
Text: Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, b. 1967
 Music: GREEN TYLER, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan
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OFFERING PRAYER (*assisting minister*)

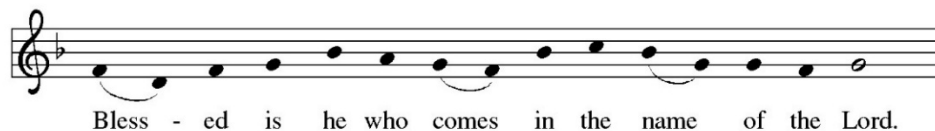
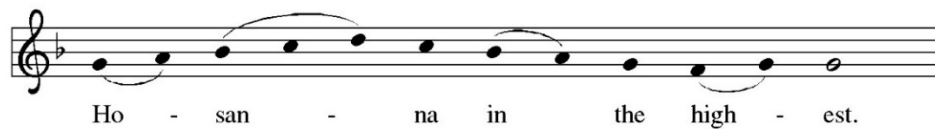
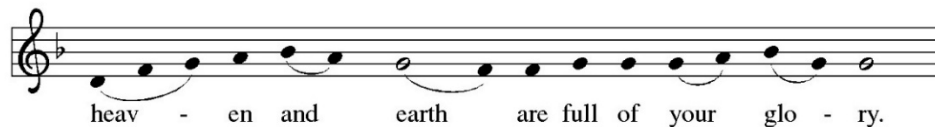
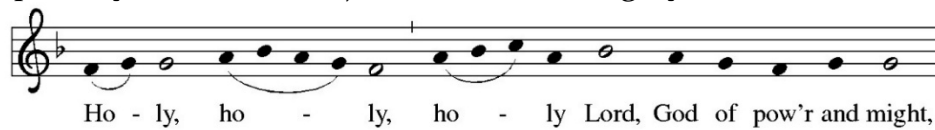
Let us pray,

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

GREAT THANKSGIVING (*standing*)



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:



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.

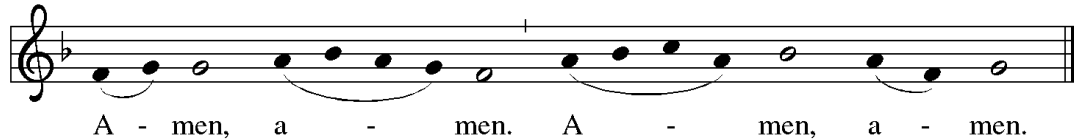
Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,
we await the day when Jesus shall return
to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.
Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

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.

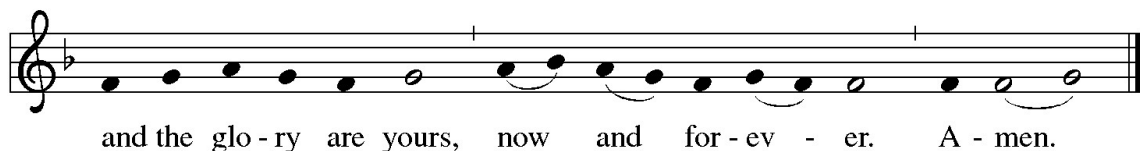
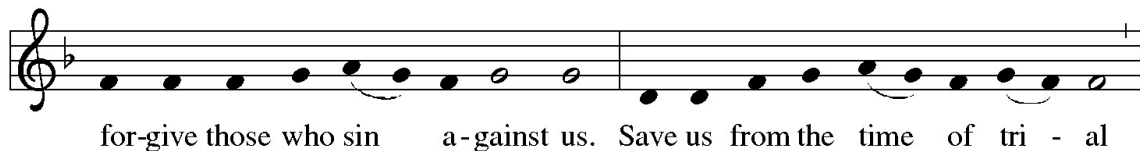
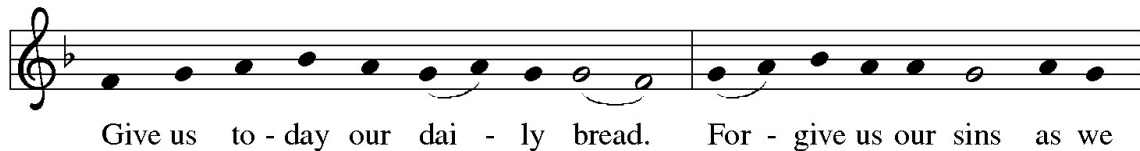
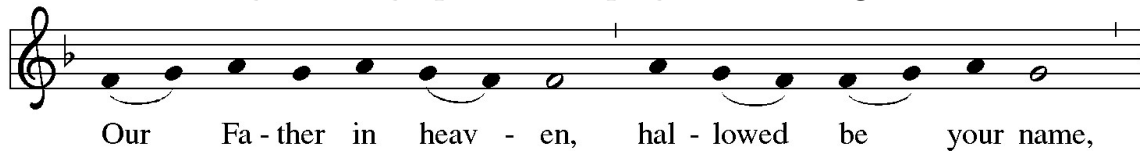
Amen.

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

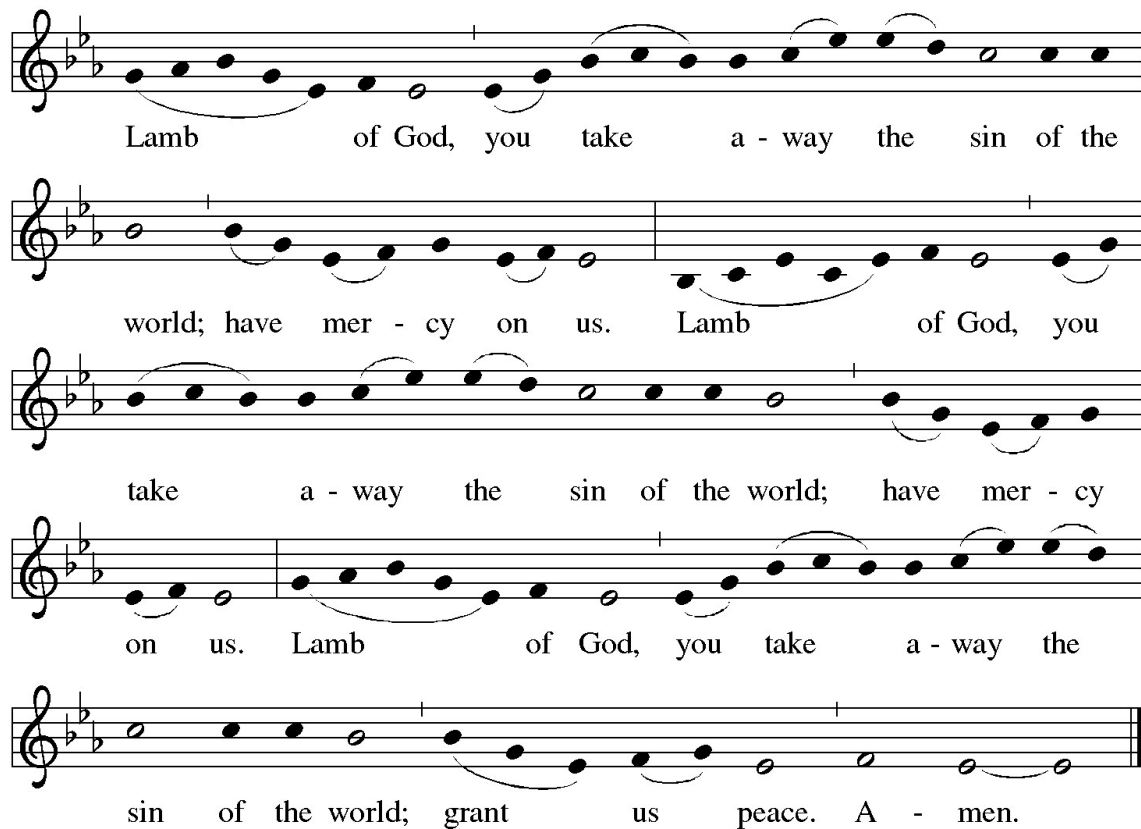
All who are hungry, come!
The feast of grace is spread.

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 prefilled 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 (ELW 164)

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.

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.**

BLESSING

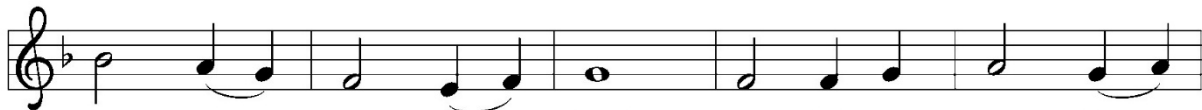
The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG (RED HYMNAL 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

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: Rev. Ole Schenk; *Director of Music:* Dr. Cacie Miller; *Cantor:* John Koster; *Reader:* Colin Willhoft; *Assisting Minister:* Rick Dianovsky; *Audio Technician:* Chris Galaviz;
Zoom Technician: Zan Lofgren; *Usher:* Marie Kruse; *Altar Guild:* Joyce Iammartino;
Sunshine Club: Lynda Prischman; *Bread Baker:* Linda Liefer

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.

Mailing address: 409 Greenfield Street, Oak Park, Illinois 60302-1143.

Website: www.unitedlutheranchurch.org

Contact Pastor Ole Schenk (he/him): pastor@unitedlutheranchurch.org, or 312-863-9747 (cell)



United Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.