

Saint Martin Lutheran Church



*Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 15, 2026, 10:30 am*

The Day: The sermon text today is Romans 5:8, maybe a well-known Bible verse for many of us, and answers several “What?” questions. It declares God's unconditional love for us, as revealed through Christ's sacrifice for us while we were still sinners. We are reminded that God's grace is freely given, not earned, and it overcomes the forces against our faith.

PRELUDE

Please silence electronic devices during this quiet time of preparing our hearts for worship.

Stand

BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P 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 perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

P 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.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are in bondage 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.

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

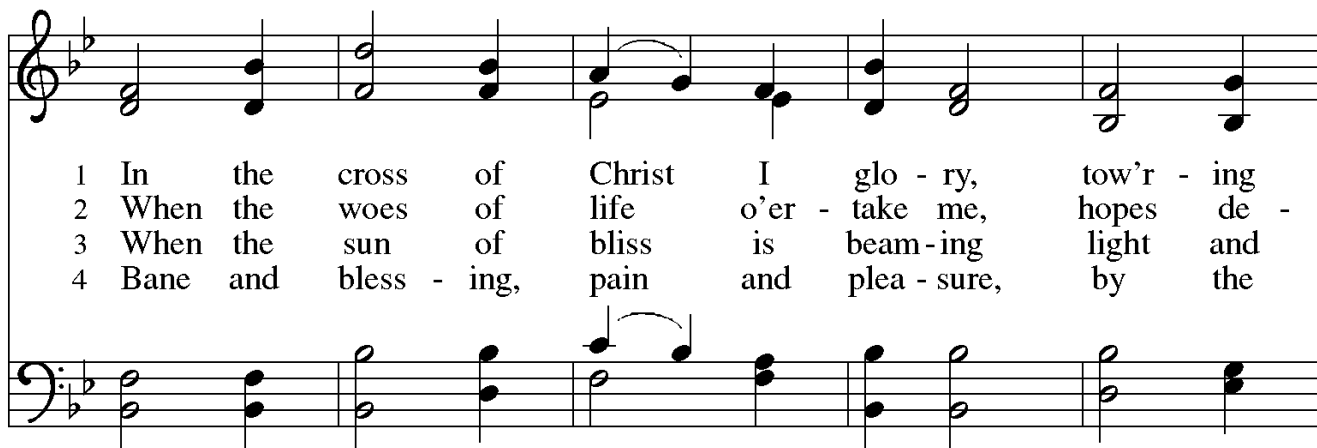
C Amen.

The Procession begins.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #324

IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY



1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and
4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the

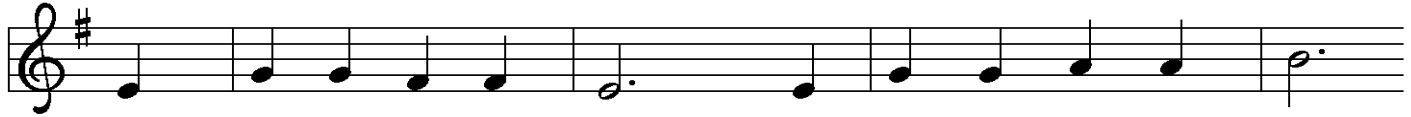
o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
 ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
 love up - on my way, from the cross the
 cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that

sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
 cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
 ra - diance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.
 knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C** And also with you.

KYRIE



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Kollmeyer

FIRST LESSON

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the Lord, designating David as the Lord's chosen successor to Saul.

L A reading from the book of 1st Samuel, the 16th chapter, beginning at the 1st verse.

¹ The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” ² And Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’” ³ And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you.” ⁴ Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, “Do you come peaceably?” ⁵ And he said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.” ⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ¹⁰ And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.” ¹¹ Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.” ¹² And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the Lord said, “Arise, anoint him, for this is he.” ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.



¹ The Lord | is my shepherd;
I shall not | be in want.

² **The Lord makes me lie down | in green pastures
and leads me be- | side still waters.**

³ You restore my | soul, O Lord,
and guide me along right pathways | for your name's sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall |
fear no evil;**

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they | comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence | of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is | running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days | of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the | Lord forever.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the | Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forev- | er. Amen.

SECOND LESSON

Romans 5:1-11

Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus' death God helps utterly helpless sinners. Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation.

L A reading from Romans, the 5th chapter, beginning at the 1st verse.

¹Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

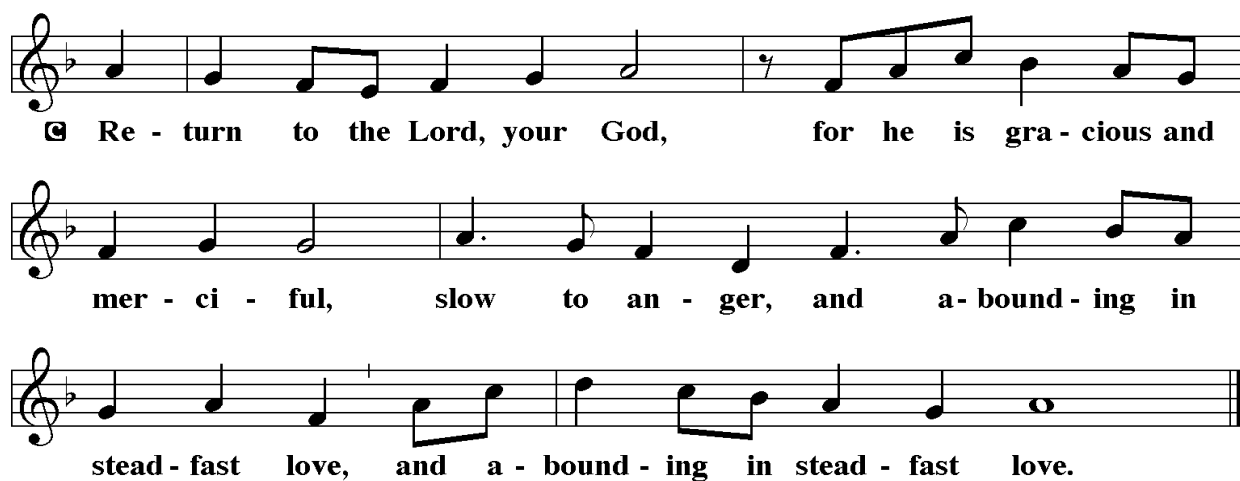
⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

LENTEN VERSE



C 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 9:1-41

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

P The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John, the 9th chapter, beginning at the 1st verse.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰ So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² (His

parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”)

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷ He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸ And they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰ The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Kollmeyer

“WHAT? While we were still What? He did What? And we’re still up against What? But the Outcome is What?”

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW #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.

APOSTLES' CREED

**☐ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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.**

INTERCESSIONS OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

***P/A** Lord in Your Mercy, **C** hear our prayer.*

A God, our shepherd, we pray that you would guide the church. Lead the whole Christian Church, especially this congregation of Saint Martin and the North American Lutheran Church, in right pathways for your name's sake. Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

A Great Physician, enlighten our eyes by your blessed Gospel, and hide us in the shelter of your wings. Provide a home in your Church for those cast out by this world, and unite them with us in the confession of your name. Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

A Lord of glory, you have gathered your Church and sanctified us in your truth. Guide and direct all bishops, pastors, deacons, and church workers that they may be faithful in their vocations. Preserve all vacant congregations, send laborers into your harvest and sustain those whom you have sent. Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

A God our sovereign, we plead for your peace on earth. Bring an end to war and violence in Ukraine, Iran, the Middle East, Africa, and wherever conflict exists. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

A Almighty Father, uphold in mercy all authorities, especially our president Donald, our governor Brian, parents, and the civil servants of our nation. Strengthen our homes and keep our families firm in the Christian faith. Preserve us from wickedness, and uphold order and justice for a peaceful life. Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

A Lord God, you have promised that what we suffer is never the final word. Through your cross, you show us that suffering displays your glory. Sustain the afflicted in body or soul, especially those named in our bulletin and those we name before you now, *(after silence count to 10)* that they would take heart, trust you for healing, and find you even in the midst of their trials. Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

A Father of tender mercies, we thank you for all who have died in the faith and completed their baptismal journey. Grant us faith to follow in that same baptismal path until we too dwell in your heavenly home forever. Lord, in your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

We greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. R Peace be with you.

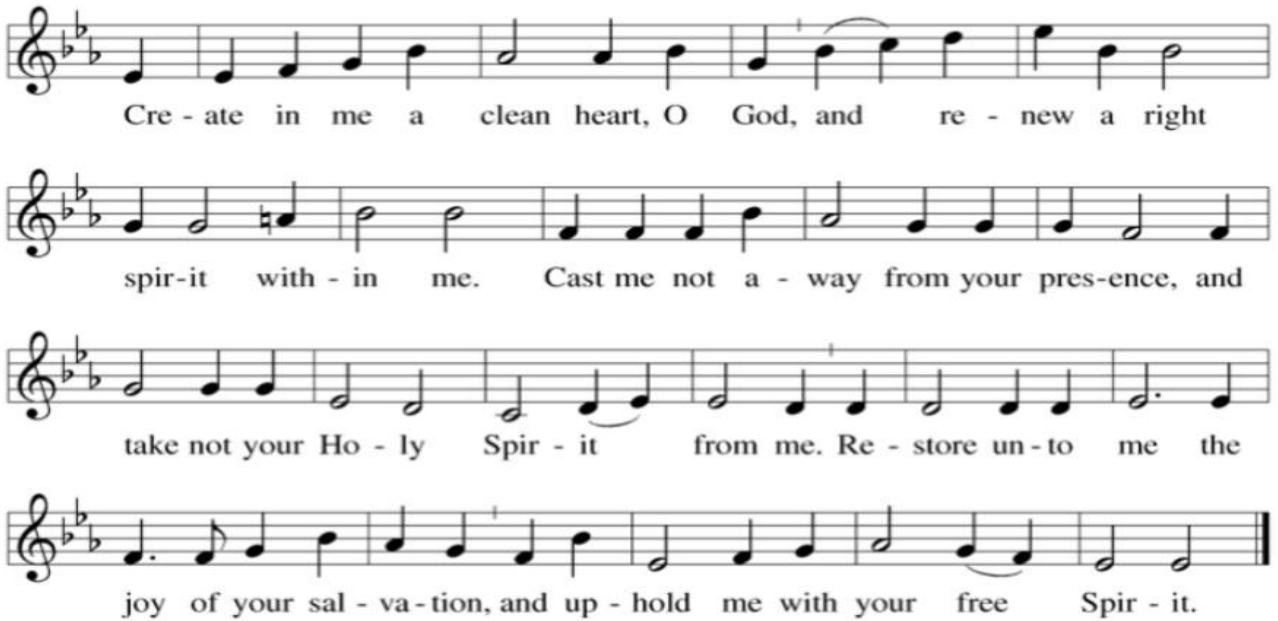
Sit

OFFERING

The ushers collect our gifts of tithes and offerings, the ministers make ready the bread and wine.

Stand as gifts are presented.

OFFERTORY



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres-ence, and
take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the
joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

- A** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.
- A** Let us pray. Merciful Father,
- C** we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

PREFACE

A The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.

A Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.

A Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,

al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the

pas - chal feast, that re - newed in the gift of bap - tism,
 we may come to the full - ness of your grace.
 And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,
 with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,
 we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

SANCTUS

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER *(Sung)*



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - low - ed be your
name, your king - dom come, your will be done on
earth as in heav - en. Give us to - day our
dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as
we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.
Save us from the time of trial and de -
liv - er us from e - vil, for the king - dom, the pow'r and the
glo - ry are yours, now and for ev - er.

Sit

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

AGNUS DEI

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 HYMNS

I WANT JESUS TO WALK WITH ME

ELW #325

1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me; walk with
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;

I want Je - sus to walk with me;
me; in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me; walk with
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;

me; all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
when my heart is al - most break - ing,
when my head is bowed in sor - row,

Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me. walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.



1 Signs and won - ders lead the danc - ing from the heart God frees from fear:
 2 Hope and free - dom join the cir - cle: Mar - y to the gar - den came,
 3 Cast a - side all fear and hid - ing; hand in hand we dance the round.



wings of an - gels greet the mai - den, and God finds a dwell - ing here;
 saw the ra - diance of the mar - vel, heard the Ris - en call her name;
 God is with us, Christ, a - bid - ing, and the Spir - it's gifts a - bound.



bold - ly may we lift our hands, bow the head, and voice A - men;
 bold - ly may we heed Christ's call, step be - yond the gar - den wall:
 Called by God to ho - li - ness, let us bold - ly serve and bless;



thus does glo - ry shine at mid - night: o - pen hearts in - vite the star - light.
 beau - ti - ful the feet pro - ceed - ing with good news of death's de - feat - ing.
 and to hearts that sigh and hun - ger may our lives dance signs and won - ders.

Stand

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P Now may the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen ✝ you and keep you in God's grace.

C Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

A 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.

C Amen.

BENEDICTION

P Life is short, and we do not have much time
To gladden the hearts of those who journey with us.
So be swift to love, and make haste to be kind;
Living in the name of the Father,
and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN

ELW #618

GUIDE ME EVER, GREAT REDEEMER

1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me
wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me
fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me

with your pow'r-ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es

feed me now and ev - er-more, ev - er-more, feed me now and ev - er - more.
 shield me with your might-y arm, might-y arm, shield me with your might-y arm.
 I will raise for - ev - er-more, ev - er-more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

DISMISSAL

A Love The Lord!

C Live The Mission!

Together!

POSTLUDE