

...Stand
firm in the
Lord...

Philippians 4:1, NRSV

St. David's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Liturgy of Word and Sacrament

Sunday, March 17, 2019

8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

Second Sunday in Lent/Youth Sunday

WOV Holy Communion Setting Four: Light of Christ

Pastor: The Reverend Faron H. Johnson

Minister of Music: Michael Busija

Church: 479-4110; Fax: 479-2994

www.stdavidslutheran.org

Welcome to St. David's Lutheran Church!

We are blessed by your presence and honored that you have chosen to worship with us today. Please take a moment to sign the friendship sheet that is located in the booklet at the end of each pew, near the center aisle. These sheets will be collected after the service.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered to all who are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and who recognize the Sacrament as the true body and blood of our Lord. Baptized children are also welcome to receive the elements at the Lord's table at St. David's with the guidance and consent of their parents or guardians. Persons, who may not wish to receive the bread and wine of the communion, are still welcome to come to the table to receive a blessing. To do so please fold your hands and bow your head.

Prayer Requests may be made by placing the request in the small wooden box at the rear, near the doors through which you entered. The acolyte will collect the requests and they will be included during the prayers of the congregation.

For your comfort there is a restroom, equipped with a changing table and supplies and a water fountain located upstairs. Simply exit through the double doors back into the narthex. The restroom is straight ahead in the parlor, beside the grandfather clock, and the water fountain is to the right at the beginning of the hallway.

Devotional – The worship folder you are holding is also a weekly devotional booklet. The prayers and Scripture readings are appropriate for use at any time during the week. The liturgy itself is a Scripturally based order for daily prayer and devotion with Scriptural references noted where they apply. Even the hymns are appropriate tools for prayer and praise. Finally, there is a daily lectionary of Scripture readings for the rest of the week on the last printed page.

INTRODUCTION

Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek the face of the Lord again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

WELCOME

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

Kneel/Stand

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

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.

The minister stands and addresses the congregation.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together in 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.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

The assembly stands.

Lead On, O King Eternal!

1 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal! The day of march has come;
2 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
3 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal: we fol - low, not with fears,

hence-forth in fields of con - quest your tents will be our home.
and ho - li - ness shall whis - per the sweet a - men of peace;
for glad-ness breaks like morn - ing wher - e'er your face ap - pears.

Through days of prep - a - ra - tion your grace has made us strong;
for not with swords loud clash - ing, nor roll of stir-ring drums,
Your cross is lift - ed o'er us; we jour - ney in its light;

and now, O King e - ter - nal, we lift our bat - tle song.
but deeds of love and mer - cy the heav'n - ly king - dom comes.
the crown a - waits the con - quest; lead on, O God of might!

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

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

G Lord, have mer - cy.

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

Lord. **A** For the peace of the whole world, the well - be - ing of the

G Lord, have mer - cy.

Church of God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord. **A** For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their

G Lord, have mer - cy.



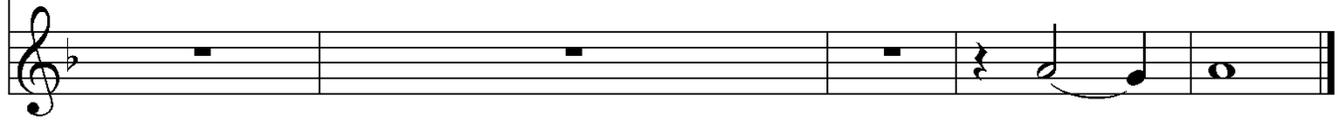
wor - ship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



☪ Lord, have mer - cy.



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



☪ A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Eternal God, it is your glory always to have mercy. Bring back all who have erred and strayed from your ways; lead them again to embrace in faith the truth of your Word and to hold it fast; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD WITH THE CHILDREN

FIRST READING: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

A reading from Genesis the 15th chapter.

{God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a son, that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and that the land of Canaan will be their inheritance. Abram's trust in God is sealed with a covenant-making ceremony, a sign of God's promise.}

¹After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ²But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." ⁸But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" ⁹He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." ¹⁰He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹²As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

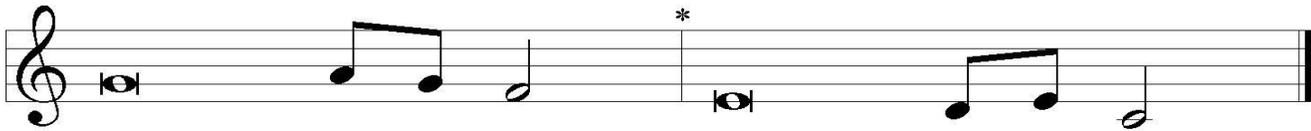
¹⁷When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 27 (sung responsively)

Psalm Tone 1



¹The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then | shall I fear?

The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I | be afraid?

²**When evildoers came upon me to eat | up my flesh,**

it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stum- | bled and fell.

³Though an army should en- | camp against me,
yet my heart shall not | be afraid;

⁴**and though war should rise | up against me,**
yet will I put my | trust in him. R

⁵One thing have I asked of the LORD; one | thing I seek;

that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days | of my life;

⁶**to behold the fair beauty | of the LORD**
and to seek him | in his temple.

⁷For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe | in his shelter;

he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling and set me high up- | on a
rock.

⁸**Even now he lifts | up my head**
above my enemies | round about me. R

⁹Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation with sounds | of great
gladness;

I will sing and make music | to the LORD.

¹⁰**Hearken to my voice, O LORD, | when I call;**
have mercy on me and | answer me.

¹¹You speak in my heart and say, | "Seek my face."
Your face, LORD, | will I seek.

¹²**Hide not your | face from me,**
nor turn away your servant | in displeasure. R

¹³You have been my helper; cast me | not away;
do not forsake me, O God of | my salvation.

¹⁴**Though my father and my moth- | er forsake me,**
the LORD | will sustain me.

¹⁵Show me your | way, O LORD;
lead me on a level path, because | of my enemies.

¹⁶**Deliver me not into the hand of my | adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen up against me, and also those | who
speak malice.**

¹⁷What if I had not believed that I should see the goodness | of the LORD
in the land | of the living!

¹⁸**Oh, tarry and await the LORD's pleasure; be strong, and he shall com- |
fort your heart;
wait patiently | for the LORD. R**

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:17--4:1

A reading from Philippians the 3rd & 4th chapters.

{Although Paul's devotion to Christ has caused him to be persecuted, he does not regret the course he has taken. Writing from prison, he expresses confidence in a glorious future and encourages other Christians to follow in his footsteps.}

¹⁷Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

^{4:1}Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

The word of the Lord.

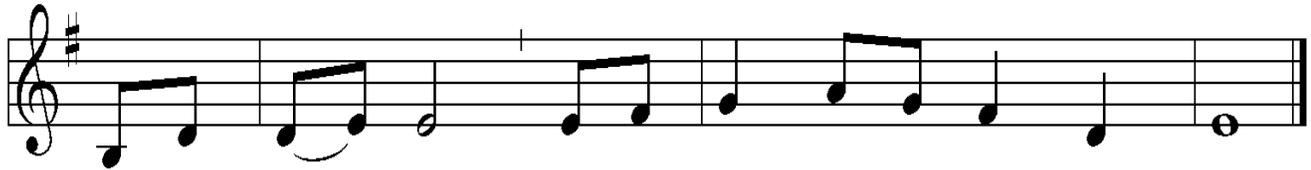
Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



☩ Re - turn to the Lord, your God, who is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



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

GOSPEL: Luke 13:31-35

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 13th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

{Neither Herod's plotting nor Jerusalem's resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.}

³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus,] "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³²He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.'

³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

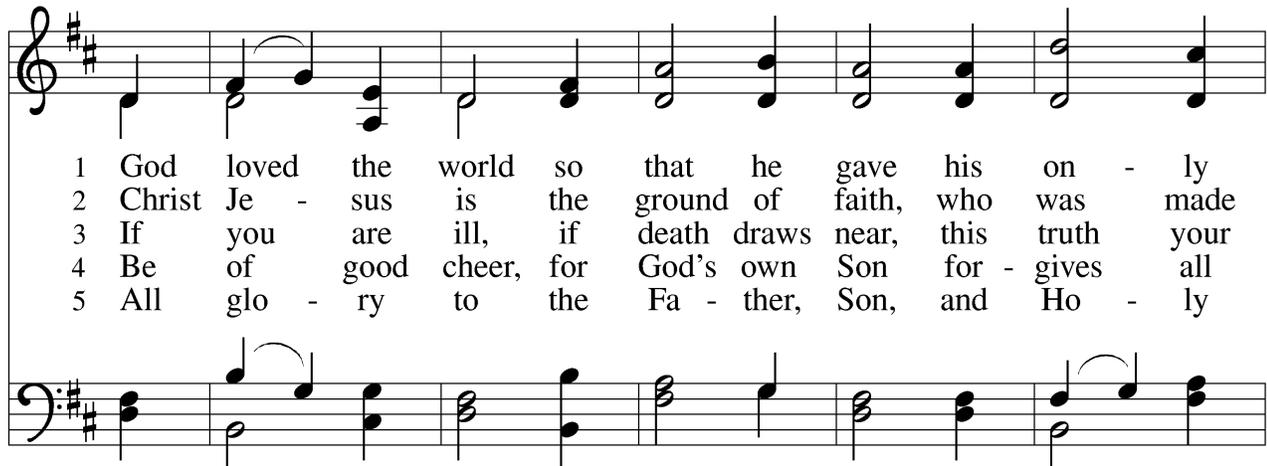
The assembly is seated.

SERMON

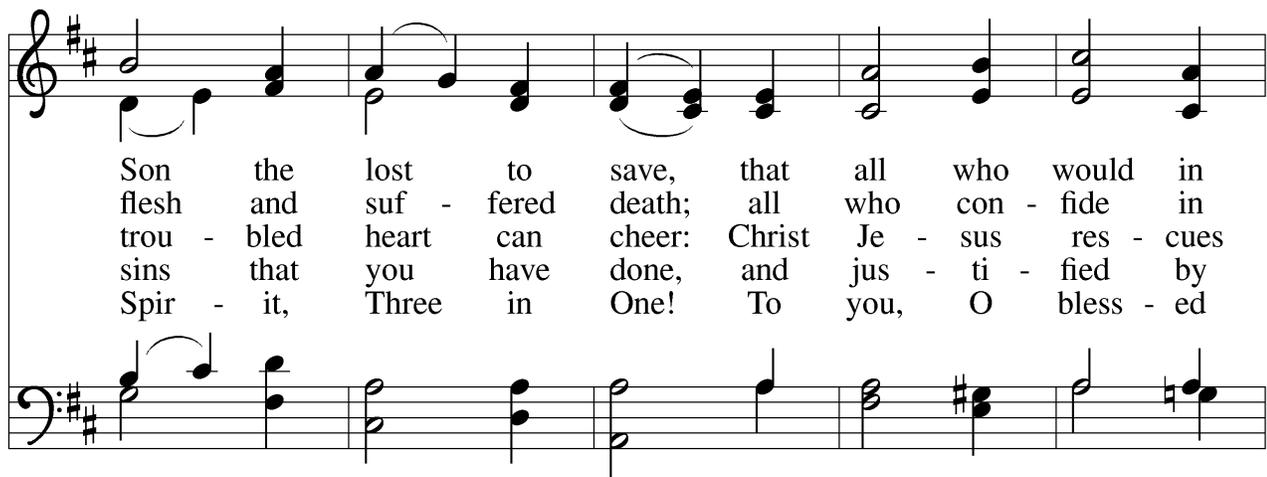
The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY

God Loved the World



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made
3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives all
5 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly



Son the lost to save, that all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in
trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues
sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by
Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.
Trin - i - ty, be praise now and e - ter - nal - ly!

Together we confess our faith:

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Seeking the grace, mercy, and love of almighty God, we offer our prayers for the church, for people in need, and for all of creation.

A brief silence.

Compassionate God, call your people to stand firm as citizens of heaven. As we are humbled by your wondrous love, nurture such mercy in our hearts and ministries. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Display your faithfulness to creation in the changing of the seasons. Orchestrate the great song of praise that comes from rivers, birds, mountains, livestock, and wind. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Drown out the terror in the world with acts of lovingkindness and generosity. Release political leaders from pride and fear to act justly and to serve citizens. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Rush to answer those who cry out to you in time of trial (*especially*). Give shelter to your vulnerable children, and cover them in the comfort of your mothering wings. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant solace to people who long to be parents, but have faced difficulty in bearing or adopting children. Build life-giving parent and child relationships for the sake of all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Build up your holy community of saints through the work of bishops and missionaries (*like Patrick, whom we commemorate today*). Spread your word through your people for the sake of the world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Reveal your will as you receive our prayers, and conform our ways to your ways; through the saving work of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

The minister and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you.

Peace be with you.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

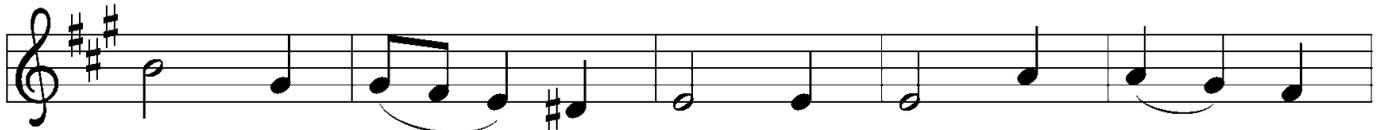
OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY HYMN

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life



1 Where cross the crowd-ed ways of life, where sound the
2 In haunts of wretch-ed - ness and need, on shad - owed
3 From ten - der child-hood's help - less - ness, from hu - man
4 The cup of wa - ter giv'n for you still holds the



cries of race and clan, a - bove the noise of
thresh-olds dark with fears, from paths where hide the
grief and bur - dened toil, from fam - ished souls, from
fresh - ness of your grace; yet long these mul - ti -



self - ish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man.
lures of greed, we catch the vi - sion of your tears.
sor - row's stress, your heart has nev - er known re - coil.
tudes to view the strong com - pas - sion in your face.

5 O Master, from the mountainside
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
among these restless throngs abide;
oh, tread the city's streets again;

6 Till all the world shall learn your love,
and follow where your feet have trod;
till glorious from your heav'n above
shall come the city of our God.

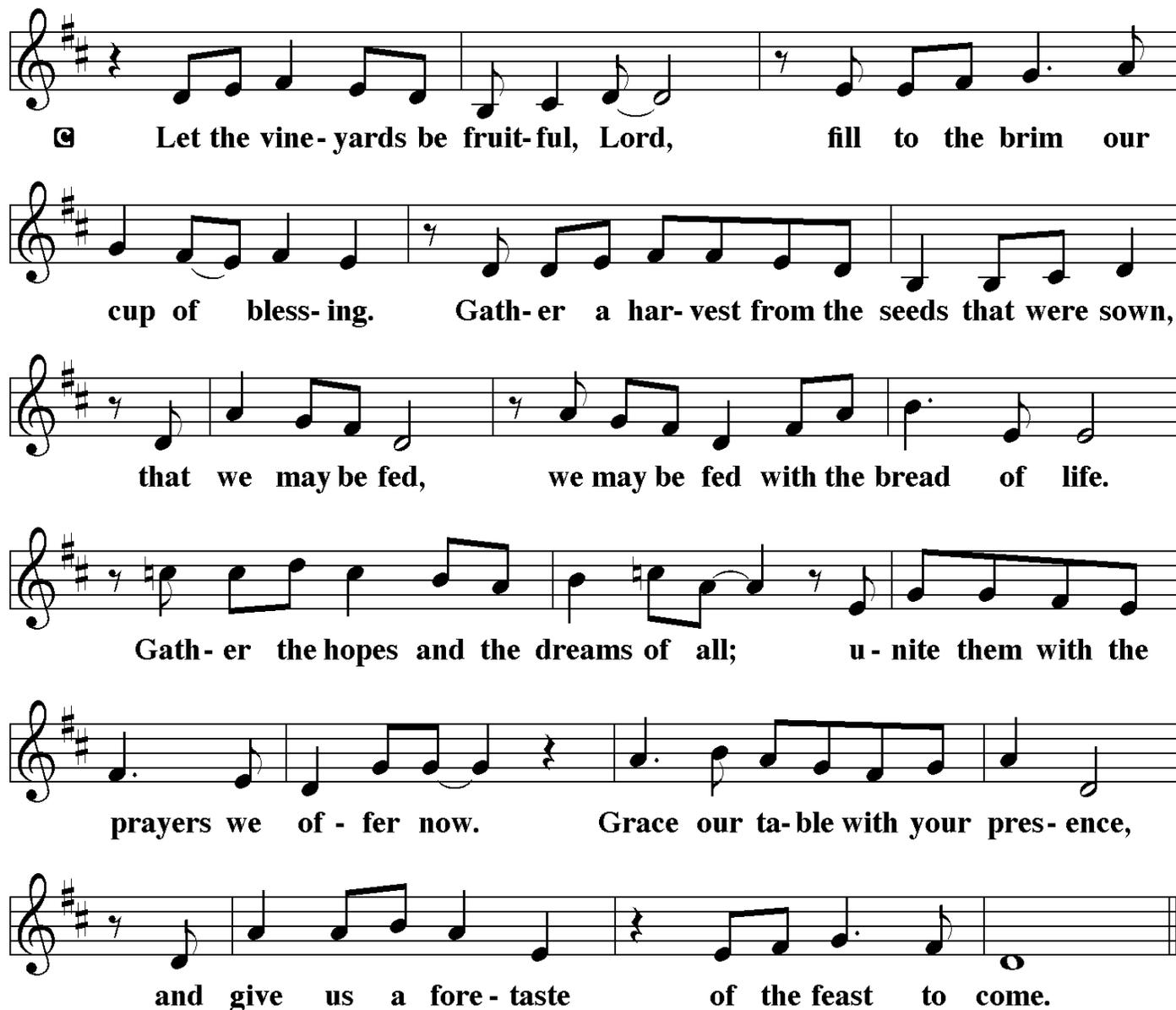
Text: Frank M. North, 1850–1935, alt.

Music: WALTON, W. Gardiner, Sacred Melodies, 1815

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The assembly stands.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE



The musical score is written on six staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and rhythmic, with lyrics printed below each staff. The lyrics are: "Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, fill to the brim our cup of bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed, we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and the dreams of all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer now. Grace our ta-ble with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come." The score ends with a double bar line.

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, fill to the brim our
cup of bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed, we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath-er the hopes and the dreams of all; u-nite them with the
prayers we of-fer now. Grace our ta-ble with your pres-ence,
and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you,

O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

The musical score is written on five staves of a single treble clef. The first staff begins with a common time signature (C) and contains the lyrics 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,'. The second staff continues with 'Lord God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are'. The third staff contains 'full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.' The fourth staff contains 'Bless - ed, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the'. The fifth staff concludes with 'Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.' The music features various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and a triplet of eighth notes in the second staff.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
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, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all holiness;
you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence.

We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us.

We thank you for the new world to come
and for the love that will rule all in all.

We praise you for the grace shown to Israel, your chosen,
the people of your promise:
the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land,
the memory of the ancestors, the homecoming from exile,
and the prophets' words that will not be in vain.

In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son,
who fulfilled and will fulfill all your promises.

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.

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 risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup
we remember the incarnation of your Son:
his human birth and the covenant he made with us.

We remember the sacrifice of his life:
his eating with outcasts and sinners,
and his acceptance of death.

But chiefly we remember his rising from the tomb,
his ascension to the seat of power,
and his sending of the holy and life-giving Spirit.

We cry out for the resurrection of our lives,
when Christ will come again in beauty and power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
that we and all who share in this bread and cup
may be united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
may enter the fullness of the kingdom of heaven,
and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants
of every time and every place, and unite them
with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen, amen, amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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;

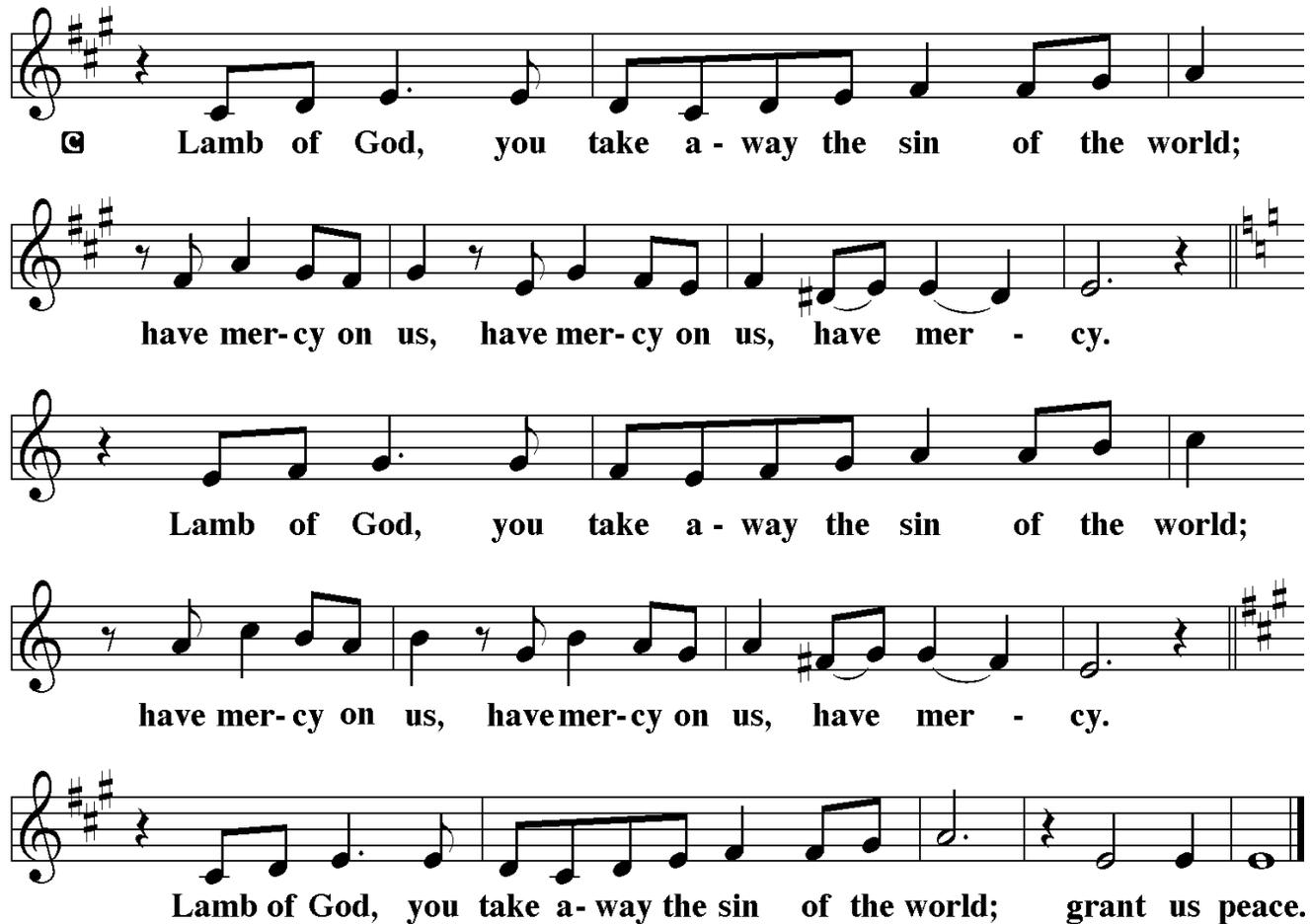
and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, have mer - cy.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, have mer - cy.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.

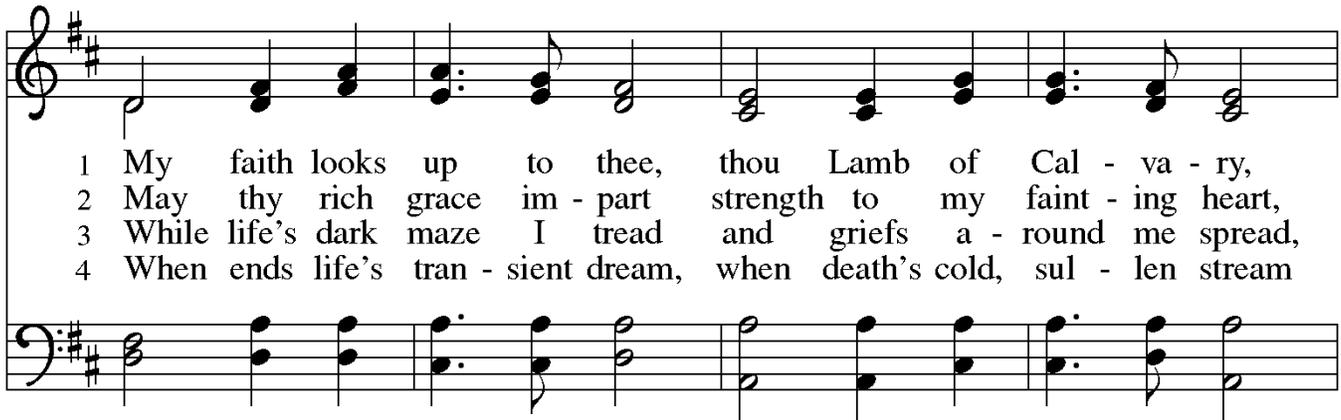
The assembly is seated.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION is offered to all who are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and who recognize the Sacrament as the true body and blood of our Lord. Baptized children are also welcome to the Lord's table at St. David's with the guidance and consent of their parents or guardians.

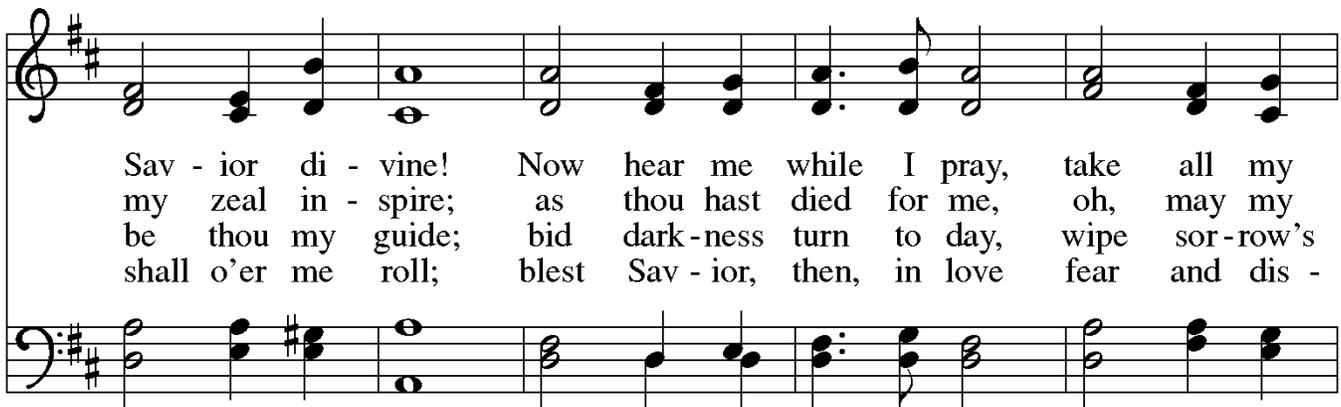
This morning we Commune by **intinction**. The congregation will proceed down the center aisle and receive the host from the pastor. Then, those seated on the right will go right and those seated on the left will go left, receive the chalice from one of the Communion assistants by dipping the host into the chalice. Then everyone returns by the side aisles.

COMMUNION HYMN

My Faith Looks Up to Thee



1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
be thou my guide; bid dark - ness turn to day, wipe sor - row's
shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -



guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
love to thee pure, warm, and change-less be, a liv - ing fire!
tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
trust re - move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

Text: Ray Palmer, 1808–1887
Music: OLIVET, Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

The assembly stands.

After all have returned to their places, the minister may say these or similar words.

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

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Silence for reflection.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

QUIET MEDITATION

SENDING HYMN

Faith of Our Fathers



1 Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still in spite of dun - geon,
2 The mar - tyrs, chained in pris - ons dark, were still in heart and
3 Faith of our fa - thers! We will love both friend and foe in



fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
con - science free; and blest would be their chil - dren's fate
all our strife; pro - claim thee too, as love knows how,

Refrain



when-e'er we hear that glo - rious word.
if they, like them, should die for thee. Faith of our fa - thers,
by sav - ing word and faith - ful life.



ho - ly faith, we will be true to thee till death.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.

Music: ST. CATHERINE, Henri F. Hemy, 1818–1888; James G. Walton, 1821–1905, refrain

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

GOSPEL MESSAGE

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Here and Now

There may be a credible argument to be made for living life fully in the “now.” It might go like this: “Yesterday is no more, tomorrow may never come, so be present in the present because it’s all you’ve got.”

Some Pharisees, members of the group of religious interpreters of God’s law who so often appear as Jesus’ adversaries, showed up at a critical hour with an urgent and, by all indications, well-intentioned warning for him: he was in the crosshairs of killers. Herod, the embodiment of “law and order” for the Roman Empire (more accurately, the incarnation of an empire’s brutal force—an offense of power not left behind in the first century), wanted Jesus dead.

Jesus, not ignoring the Pharisees or their warnings, nonetheless rejected them with the sort of loving intensity a mothering hen might have for her brood of chicks. With an eternal “right here, right now” challenge to the power and the authority of both Herod and empire, Jesus refused to flee from tomorrow’s trials; he refused to withdraw from what might come. He stayed in the now. When everything seems to be going wrong, the one who is Alpha and Omega holds by faith a course toward hope. Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, stands firm when certainty breaks apart in storms of chaos, when doom leases the moment, and when the long, sharp claws of tragedy and sorrow cut close. Jesus’ way among demons and despair is to heal—yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Jesus’ way of hope transcends the pinnacles upon which vacant optimisms teeter—yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Neither counsels of caution nor threats from empire, not the demise of prophets nor rejection from his own can stall the blessed hope that comes in the name of the Lord.

Daily Readings for the Week March 17-23

Sunday:	Second Sunday in Lent Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 Psalm 27 Philippians 3:17—4:1 Luke 13:31-35
Monday:	Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42 Exodus 33:1-6 Romans 4:1-12
Tuesday:	Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42 Numbers 14:10b-24 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Wednesday:	Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42 2 Chronicles 20:1-22 Luke 13:22-31
Thursday:	Psalm 63:1-8 Daniel 3:19-30 Revelation 2:8-11
Friday:	Psalm 63:1-8 Daniel 12:1-4 Revelation 3:1-6
Saturday:	Psalm 63:1-8 Isaiah 5:1-7 Luke 6:43-45

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