

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Called by Christ to be a sanctuary that welcomes and serves all.

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20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

October 11, 2026
10:00 am

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Mark Fisher

Director of Music: Sean Michael Jackman DMA, Ed.D

Director of Mission Advancement: Ashleigh Altemann

Office Manager

Marie Cook

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

BELL CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship

PRELUDE: Sheep May Safely Graze J. S. Bach

WELCOME/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

please stand as you are able

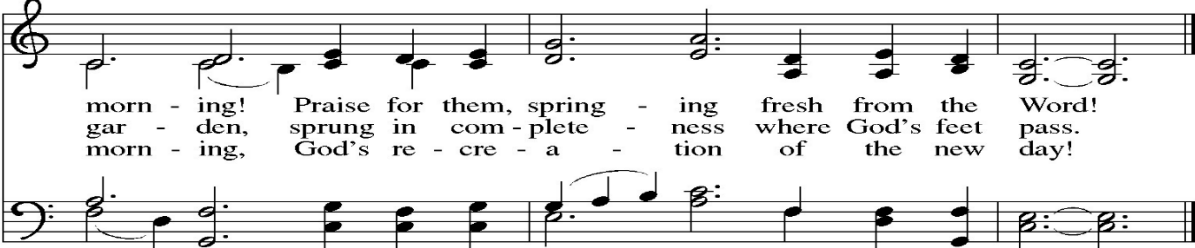
GATHERING HYMN: Morning has Broken ELW 556



1 Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing; black - bird has
2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sun - lit from heav - en, like the first
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing, born of the



spo - ken like the first bird. Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the
dew - fall on the first grass. Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet
one light E - den saw play! Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - 'ry



morn - ing! Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!
gar - den, sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.
morn - ing, God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965
Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune; arr. hymnal version
Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.
Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

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.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,

who pours love into our hearts

and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness

in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

**Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.**

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

Renew us to live as your holy people,

following the way of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ,

in whom there is no condemnation,

but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.

Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE:

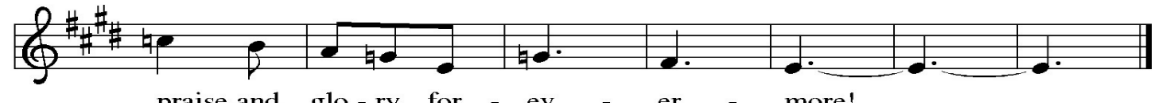
Refrain



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion



sings for joy to the God of life and love and free-dom;



praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!



1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain, whose blood has

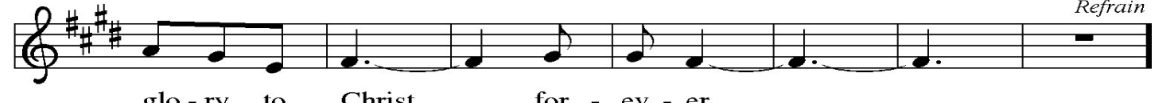


freed and u - nit-ed us to be one great peo-ple of God.

Refrain



2 Pow - er and rich-es, wis-dom and might, all hon - or and



glo - ry to Christ for - ev - er.

Refrain



3 For God has come to dwell with us, to make us peo-ple of



God; to make all things new.

Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.... Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

A: ¹ Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him and the gates shall not be closed:

² I will go before you and level the mountains; I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron;

³ I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name; I give you a title, though you do not know me.

⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me,

⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

⁷ I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe;

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

PSALM: Psalm 96:1-13

A: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

C: **Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

A: Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

C: **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

A: As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

C: **Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

A: Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

C: **Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

A: Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

psalm continues next page

C: Tell it out among the nations: “The LORD is king!

The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity.”

A: Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;

let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

**C: Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,
for you come to judge the earth.**

A: You will judge the ¹ world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

A: ¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

² We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³ remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹ For they report about us what kind of welcome we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

A: The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 22nd chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord**

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

P: ¹⁵ The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

SERMON: "The two Great Certainties of Life: Death and Taxes"

Pastor Mark Fisher

HYMN OF THE DAY: As We Gather at Your Table ELW 522

As We Gather at Your Table

1 As we gath-er at your ta-ble, as we lis-ten to your word,
2 Turn our wor-ship in-to wit-ness in the sac-ra-ment of life;
3 Gra-cious Spir-it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast

help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
where tri-um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.

Nour-ish us with sa-cred sto-ry till we claim it as our own;
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for-give as you for-gave;
There no more will en-vy blind us nor will pride our peace de-stroy,

teach us through this ho-ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic-t'ry known.
may we still be-hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
as we join with saints and an-gels to re-peat the sound-ing joy.

The musical score is written for a three-part setting (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor/Bass) in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

CONFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died,
and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

ST JOHN CHOIR ANTHEM: Shelter Me M. Joncas

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISE REPORTS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

A: Living and true God, you inspire us to share the message of the gospel. Give your spirit of love to seminarians and those beginning their lives in ordained ministry (local seminarians or newly called ministers may be named). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We give you thanks for the majesty of our oceans. Protect the abundant life within them and sustain all those who work to preserve them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We seek your wisdom in all things. Direct all who hold positions of authority around the world, that they act with compassion, seeking the good of all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We pray for all people who work in dangerous or degrading environments. Grant them safety and courage, and heal all those who are injured, sick, or suffering (especially). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We ask your blessing on those who do the quiet, unseen work of the church (congregational ministries may be named). Encourage them in their work of faith and labor of love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: We thank you for our ancestors who have been called home to you (especially). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

P: Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

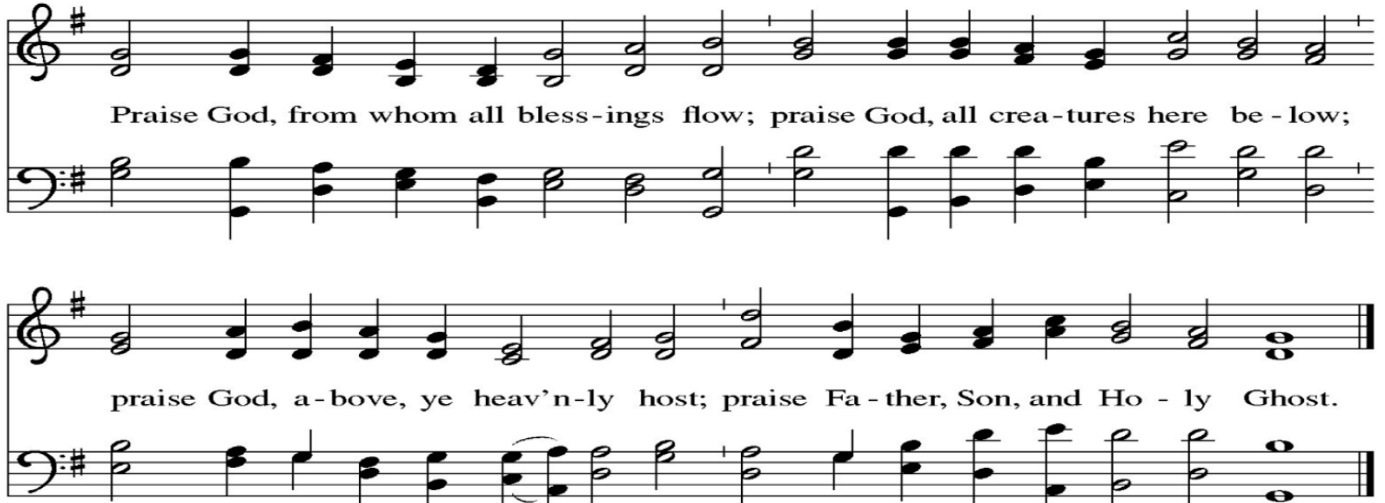
MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Christ.

OFFERING MUSIC: Panis Angelicus C. Franck

Doxology ELW 885

(please stand as offering is brought forward)



Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise God, all crea-tures here be - low;

praise God, a-bove, ye heav'n-ly host; praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

OFFERING PRAYER:

A: God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.

All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have.

Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. **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 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive
us our trespasses, as we forgive those who
trespass against us; and lead us not into
temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever.**

Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

**Pastor/Presider extends invitation to online participants to partake of communion The
body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you. Amen**

LAMB OF GOD

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
you break the chains of ha - tred and
you are the way of jus - tice and
you are the bread of life for us

Congregation:

world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
fear:
peace:
all:

Final Stanza
Congregation or Assistant:

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,
grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION MUSIC: First Arabesque, L. 66 C. Debussy

Please stand as you are able

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

C: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

RINGING OF THE BELL

BLESSING

P: May God bless you with discomfort, at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears, to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in the world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor. **Amen**

SENDING HYMN: Arise My Soul, Arise! ELW 827

DISMISSAL

A: We are called by Christ

C: to be a Sanctuary that Welcomes and Serves All.

A: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: L'isle joyeuse, L. 106 C. Debussy

Arise, My Soul, Arise!

Nyt ylös, sieluni



Nyt y - lös, sie - lu - ni, nous' y - lös mul - last' täs - tä!
 1 A - rise, my soul, a - rise! Stretch forth to things e - ter - nal
 2 Now hear the harps of heav'n! Oh, hear the song vic - to - rious,

Käy jal - kain juu - reen Ju - ma - lan ja Ka - rit - san.
 and has - ten to the feet of your re - deem - er God,
 the nev - er - end - ing an - them sound - ing through the sky!

Ja vaikk' ei sil - mä - ni va - lo - a Her - ran kes - tä,
 who, hid from mor - tal eyes, yet dwells in light su - per - nal;
 To mor - tals is not giv'n to join in strains so glo - rious;

niin kui - ten - kin sä rie - mui - ten käy lau - la - maan.
 so wor - ship God in hum - ble - ness, your sov - 'reign Lord.
 yet here on earth we too can sing our prais - es high!

I - äi - seen i - loon ja juh - laan ja - loon
 The ban - quet of love a - waits you a - bove;
 Christ bought with his blood the ran - somed of God;

oot Ka - rit - san sä suu - riin häi - hin kut - sut - tu.
 yet here you have a fore - taste of the feast to come!
 to him be ev - er - last - ing pow'r and vic - to - ry.

Tai - va - han kun - ni - a on Her - ran ar - mos - ta
 Re - joice, my soul, re - joice, to heav'n lift up your voice:
 And let the great a - men re - sound through heav'n a - gain.

sun o - sa - si, sun pe - rin - tös ja ta - va - ras.
 * Siis rie - mui - se ja a - jat - te - le au - tuut - tas.
 1, 2 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

*The Finnish stanza repeats the last line of music.

Text: Johan Kahl, 1721–1746; Finnish tr. Halullisten Sjelujen Hengelliset Laulut, 1790; English tr. Ernest E. Ryden, 1886–1981, alt.
 Music: NYT YLÖS, SIELUNI, Finnish folk tune
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Now the Feast and Celebration Text: Marty Haugen b. 1950

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Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!

Text: Edward H. Plumptre, 1821–1891, alt.
Music: MARION, Arthur H. Messiter, 1834–1916

