St. Thomas Episcopal Church



The Fifth Sunday in Lent

Holy Eucharist

April 6, 2025
2201 Dexter St., Denver, CO
saintthomasdenver.org

Welcoming Statement

St Thomas Episcopal Church offers sanctuary and spiritual renewal to everyone regardless of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious background, social or economic circumstance, political affiliation or where you are on your spiritual journey. We welcome all who desire deep relationships and value our relationships with others over the differences that separate us.

Our Commitment

We believe all people are beloved of God and we strive to live and proclaim God's love through all our actions and words. As a community and as individuals, we **Lead With Love**, shine light in the darkness, create safe spaces and offer hope, courage, peace and strength for the journey. We are here for each other and for those in need of any kind. St. Thomas is a place of refuge for those who are wearied by the world and desire nourishment for the spirit and the soul. We welcome you to come as you are and to join us in the sacred task of loving a new world into being.

The Meaning of the Conch Shell

The resonant sound of the conch shell is considered a sacred call, symbolizing the start of a ritual and invoking divine presence. Our parishioner, Tana Knopf, gifted St, Thomas with a conch shell and introduced this practice as a call to worship. This is one of the ways that we incorporate a diversity of cultures and traditions into our liturgy and, of course, the children love it.

Learn More About St. Thomas

If you would like to learn more about St. Thomas, we invite you to visit our website (www.saintthomasdenver.org), subscribe to our weekly newsletter (link is on website), or schedule a conversation with our priest by emailing her at terri@saintthomasdenver.org.

Inclusive Language:

At St. Thomas, we support and encourage the use of inclusive language. Towards that end we often choose more contemporary prayers and hymns for our worship service. However, we recognize that many parishioners also appreciate and love our traditional prayers and hymns that employ more patriarchal language. When such prayers or hymns are included in our worship, we encourage you to substitute the word or pronoun that most resonates with you when you pray or sing.

Preaching and Presiding this Week: The Rev. Terri Hobart

Music Leaders
Kari Miles
Angela Pleasants
Geoff Wodell
Brandon Bennett

Godly Play and Nursery
Maria Perez

Seminarian: Cate Colburn-Smith

Contact Us:

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The Rev. Terri Hobart	terri@saintthomasdenver.org

Celebrating Lent as a Season of Return

"Come, let us return to the Lord," Hosea 14:2

Lent is traditionally a season of introspection and repentance, a quieter time where we are called to examine our conscience and to identify what in our lives draws us away from God. The conventional penitential approach to Lent can lead to thoughts of unworthiness, remorse and sinfulness. Given the current environment that is rife with uncertainty, fear, anxiety, and grief, we need worship services that are life-giving and offer hope and strength for the journey. Today we need God, Love, and Our Source of Life more than ever. As such, we are setting aside the traditional Lenten liturgy to avoid the risk of adding to the despair, hopelessness and trauma around us. Our invitation for this Lenten season is to return to the LORD with open hearts, to seek God's face, to root ourselves in our faith, to re-kindle our hope, to rediscover joy and awe, to embody love and to be renewed as we rest in God's embrace. Our prayer is that Lent will be a season of respite, renewal and restoration for weary souls.

This approach to Lent draws on the ancient meaning of the Hebrew (*teshuvah*) and Greek (*metanoia*) words that have been translated into the English word, repentance. *Teshuvah* literally means return, as if turning back to something we've strayed or looked away from. The Hebrew Scriptures understand *teshuvah* as turning back or a return to God. It represents coming home with the understanding that all existence is rooted in and seeks to return to God where we find our wholeness. *Teshuvah* represents a return that involves changing our ways and opening our hearts to God. This understanding is consistent with the Greek word, *metanoia* found in the New Testament. In the Greco-Roman world, "*metanoia*" was understood as a change of mind or perspective. However, in the Jewish and early Christian context, it took on a deeper spiritual significance. It refers to a transformative change of heart, that compels one from darkness to light, from death to life, in other words, to return to God.

We are encouraged to adopt Lenten practices to help us return to God. These practices do not need to be about sacrifice, penance, or remorse rather they can be life-giving practices that help us find our way back to God. You are encouraged to adopt practices that satisfy your deep soul yearnings for joy, peace, meaning and rest. Make time for stillness and self-care whatever that may be for you; Bask in joy and wonder each day if even for a moment. Connect with someone – it can be as simple as making eye contact; Go to the places where you feel the presence of the Holy and spend time there; Engage in small simple acts of love and kindness; Choose Life; Choose Hope; Choose Love.

Each week of Lent during our 10:00 am service, we will celebrate one of the graces that we receive when we return to God with open hearts.

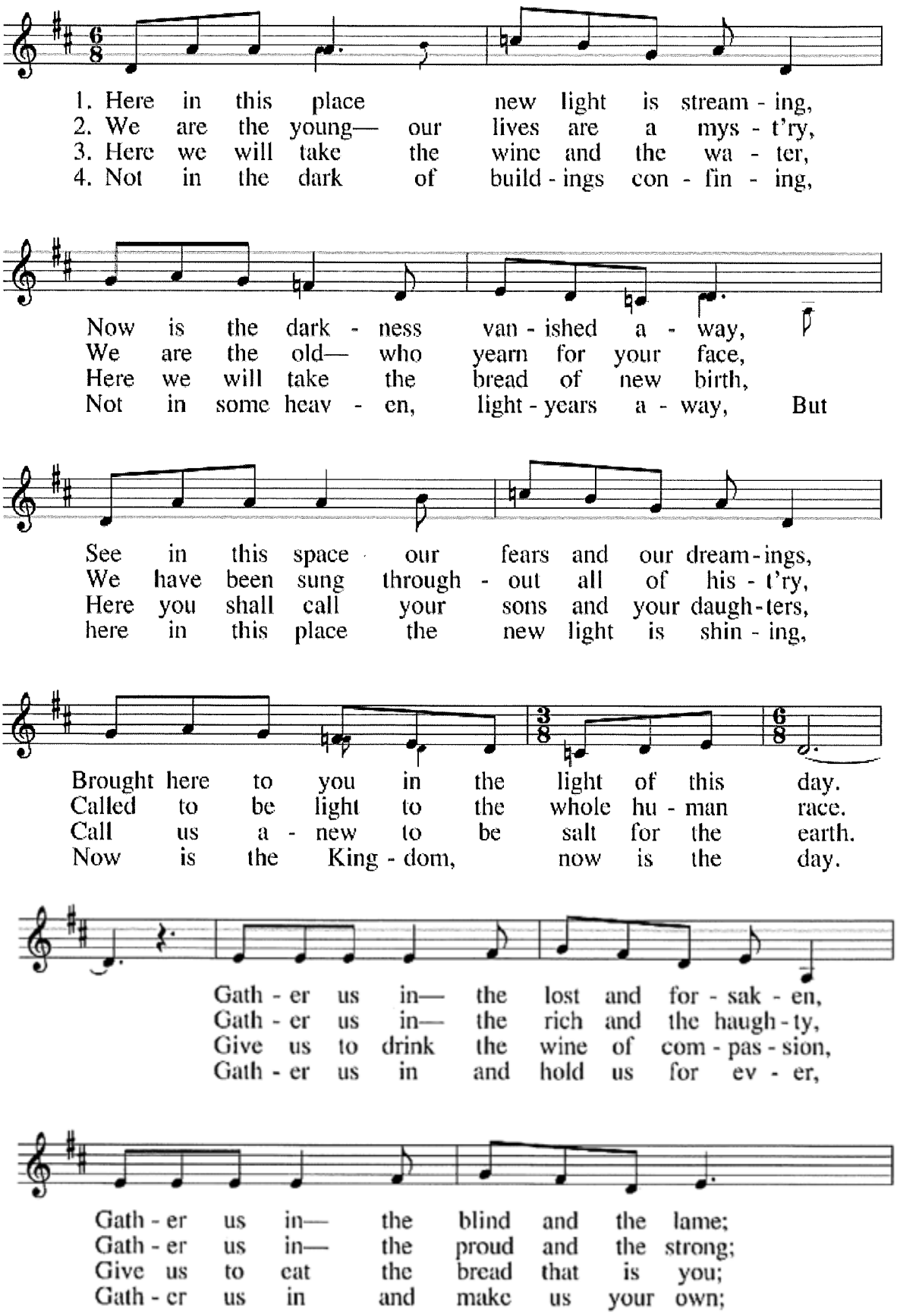
- March 9th – Returning to God, Coming Home
- March 16th – Returning to Joy
- March 23rd – Returning to Hope
- March 30th – Returning to Rest
- April 6th – Returning to Love

In addition, our liturgy will incorporate music chosen to provide strength for the journey. For those who wish to observe a more traditional Lent, we encourage you to attend the 8:00 am prayer book service.

"O God of peace, who has taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and in trust shall be our strength: by the power of your Spirit draw us into your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Processional *Gather Us In* Marty Haugen

Please stand in body or spirit.





Text: Marty Haugen (b. 1950. Music: GATHER US IN Irregular: Marty Haugen (b. 1950). © 1982 GIA Publications. All rights reserved.. Used by permission under Onelicense.net . Church Pension Fund, New York, NY.

Opening Acclamation

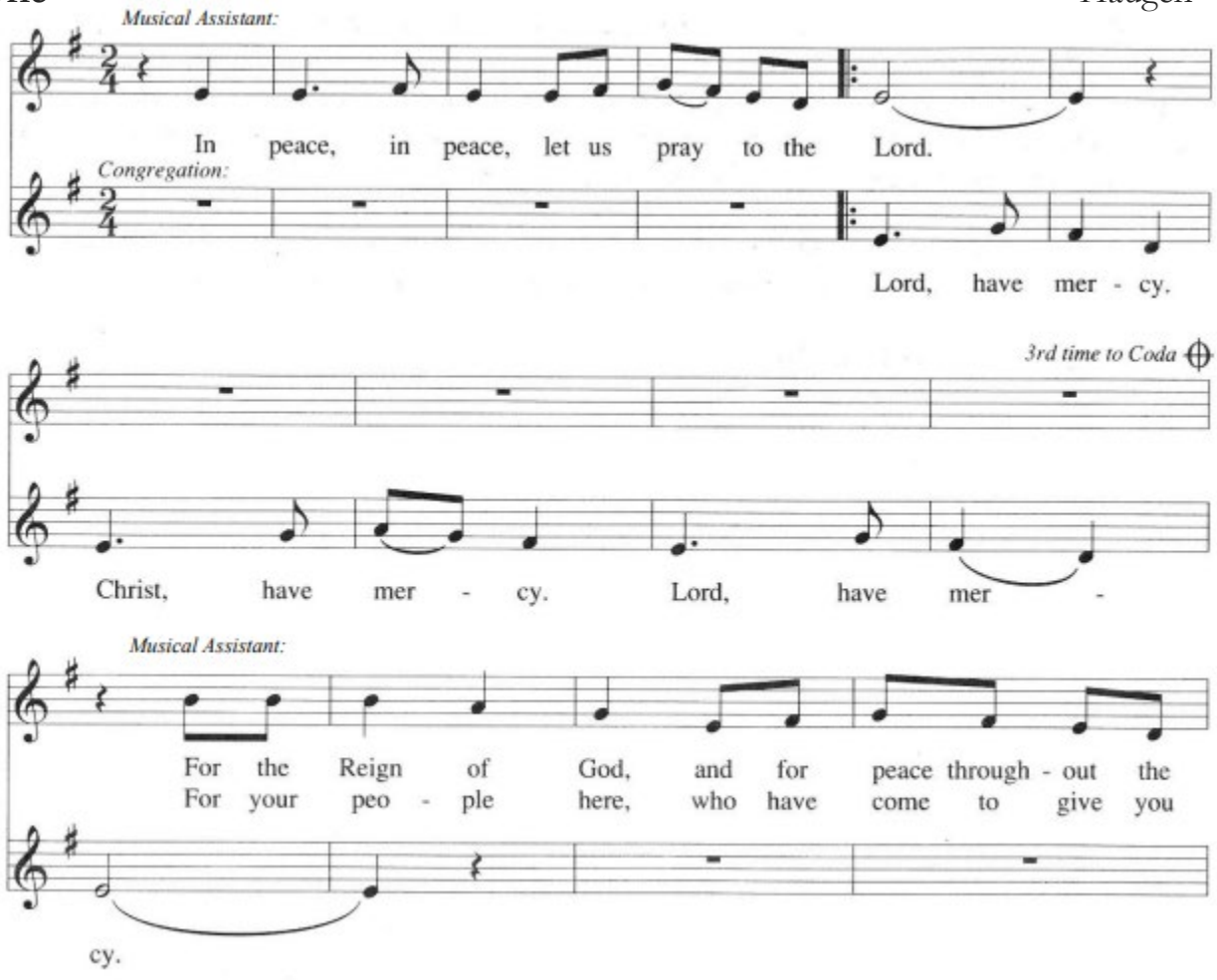
Presider Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. *1 John 4:7,8*

Blessed are you, our beloved God.

People **In you is glory and love forever.**

Kyrie

Haugen





The Collect of the Day

Presider May God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness and water the desert. Help us to recognize your hand working miracles beyond our imagining. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, so that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love for all, and its presence in Jesus Christ. **Amen**. *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002), alt.*

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Please sit as you are able.

A Reading from Isaiah Isaiah 43:16-21

Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.
I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

The Response

After the Reading:

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 126

When God restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

Then they said among the nations, *
"God has done great things for them."

**God has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.**

Restore our fortunes, O God, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

**Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.**

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

A Reading from Revelation Revelation 2:2-4

I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

The Response

After the Reading:

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn *Return to the Land of Your Soul*

Please stand.

Return again, return again
return to the Land of your Soul
Return again, return again,
return to the Land of your Soul.

Return to what you are.
Return to who you are,
return to where you are born and reborn again

Return to what you are,
Return to who you are,
return to where you are born and reborn again
Return to the Land of your Soul.

The Gospel John 12:1-8

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?"

(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

After the Gospel:

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Dismissal Of Children for Godly Play Story

Sung after final gradual verse as children leave the church.

Go now in peace
Go now in peace
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere you may go.

Homily

Please sit.

Affirmation of Faith

Please stand in body or spirit.

We believe in the God of Life,
who creates and loves people,
who acts in history
and who promises never to leave us alone.

We believe in Jesus of Nazareth,
who is our brother,
who wants not to be idolized but to be followed.

We believe that we dwell in the presence of the Holy Spirit;
without her we are nothing;
filled with her we are able to become creative,
lively, and free.

We believe in the Church of Jesus Christ,
a community where we find companions and
courage for the struggles of life,
where we grow in our understanding of the faith,
through worship, prayer, nurture, and service.

We believe that God has a use for us in this time and
place, that though we walk through the valley of
the shadow of death, we are called to be
instruments of God's peace.

We believe in living, hoping, laughing, and enjoying
the good of the earth;
We believe that people can change, and God keeps
pulling us to life and to a new world of joy
and peace. ~ *Women's Uncommon Prayers*

The Prayers of The People

Please stand or kneel in body or spirit.

Leader Let us pray for the revealing of the reign of God in the world, now and always.

Creator of earth, sea, and sky, kindle the fire of your Spirit within us that we may be bold to heal the earth, and pour your blessing upon all who work for the good of the planet.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Breath of life, receive our thanks for the beauty of our local habitat and all who dwell in it, and grant us the wisdom and will to conserve it.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Source of life, heal and redeem the wounds of your creation, and visit the places and people who suffer from our indifference, neglect, and greed.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Author of the book of nature, receive our gratitude for places of restoration and healing, and continue to bless those places that feed our lives and spirits.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Wise Creator, whose works are full of mystery, give us wonder and appreciation for your creatures with whom we find ourselves in conflict.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Divine Physician, heal our communities, especially those where neglect, greed, or violence inflicts suffering upon people and other creatures.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Comforter of all the earth, sustain the people of this congregation who desire or need your presence and help especially …
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

Rock and refuge of all your creatures, receive into everlasting mercy all those who have died.
God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

The Collect

Eternal God, the light of all who know you, come and fill our hearts with your love. Help us stand for what is right when many sit in indifference. Increase our faith and charity, until your kingdom comes and heaven and earth rejoice in everlasting glory; through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Confession

Please kneel as you are able.

All Most merciful God,
we confess that 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.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Absolution

The Peace

Presider May the peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

We greet one another in the name of Christ. Please remain at your seat and greet the people adjacent to you.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Presider Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to the Lord.

Each week we gather to proclaim God's love for all and to offer strength and courage for the journey.We are convinced that the hope, love and good news that we offer are exactly what people need to navigate these challenging times in which we live. If you share our conviction and values, we invite you to generously support St. Thomas and help us to continue to make a difference in our community and the lives of people that we serve.

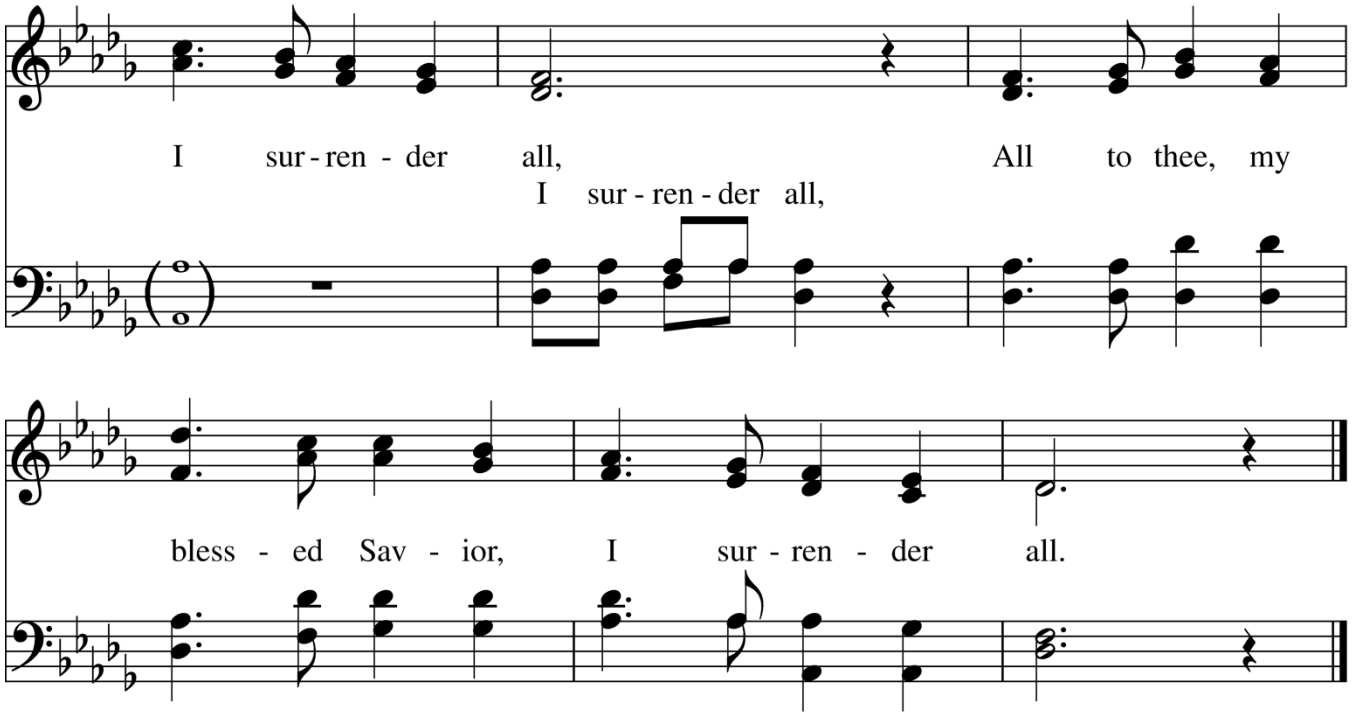
If you give electronically, please place a giving card from the pew in the offering plate in lieu of your gift. Scan to donate:

venmo
@StThomasDenver

Credit Card

Offertory Anthem *I Surrender All* LEVAS #133





Words: Judson W. Van de Vanter (1855-1939). Music: Winfield S. Weeden (1847-1908).

Presentation Hymn *Let My Prayer Rise Up* Marty Haugen

Please stand as you are able.



The Great Thanksgiving

Presider May God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up to God.**

Presider Let us give thanks to God.

People **It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

Presider It is right indeed to give you thanks most loving God, through Jesus Christ, the first born from the dead, the pioneer of our salvation, who is with us always, one of us, yet from your very heart. O Holy One, you make all things new. Righteous and strong to save, you came among us in Jesus, our crucified and living Lord, in his suffering and cross you reveal your glory. You pour out your Spirit on all. You empower us to know your truth and to proclaim your gospel in this sorrowing world that longs to hear good news. Your love fires our hearts; and in your Spirit we hunger and thirst for justice in the world.

Therefore with saints and martyrs, apostles and prophets, with all who have gone before us, joyfully we praise you as we sing:


Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and
might, Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of power and might, hea - ven and earth are
full, full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Presider continues

All glory to you, Giver of life sufficient and full for all creation. Accept our praises, living God, for Jesus Christ, your beloved child, who in the night before he was crucified, took bread, and when he had given thanks, broke it, gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat. "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup and when he had given thanks he gave it to them and said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so in this great sacrament we celebrate and proclaim the mystery of our faith.

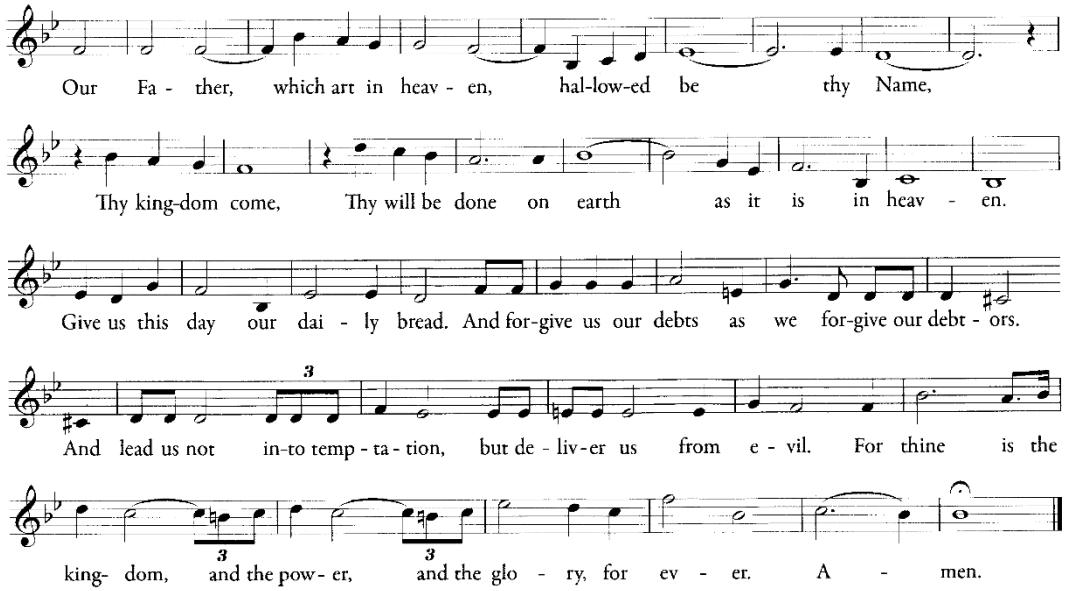
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come in glory.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O God, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; Empower our celebration with your Holy Spirit, feed us with your life, fire us with your love, confront us with your justice, and make us one in the body of Christ with all who share your gifts of love.

Through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Creator God. **Amen.**

Presider And now as our Savior Christ has taught us we, are bold to pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER — Albert Hay Malotte



The Breaking of The Bread

Fraction Hymn *Be Known to Us* WLP #875

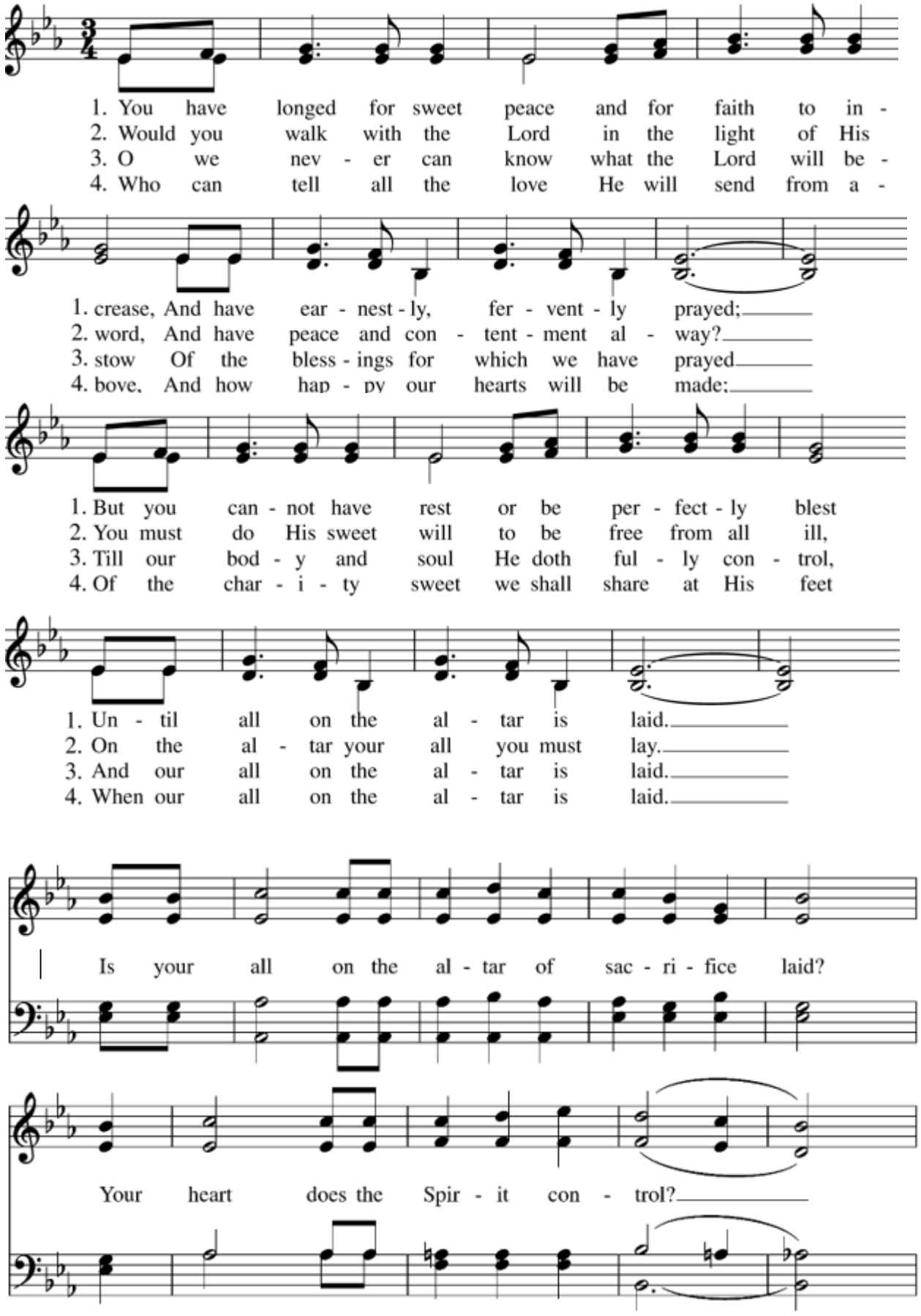


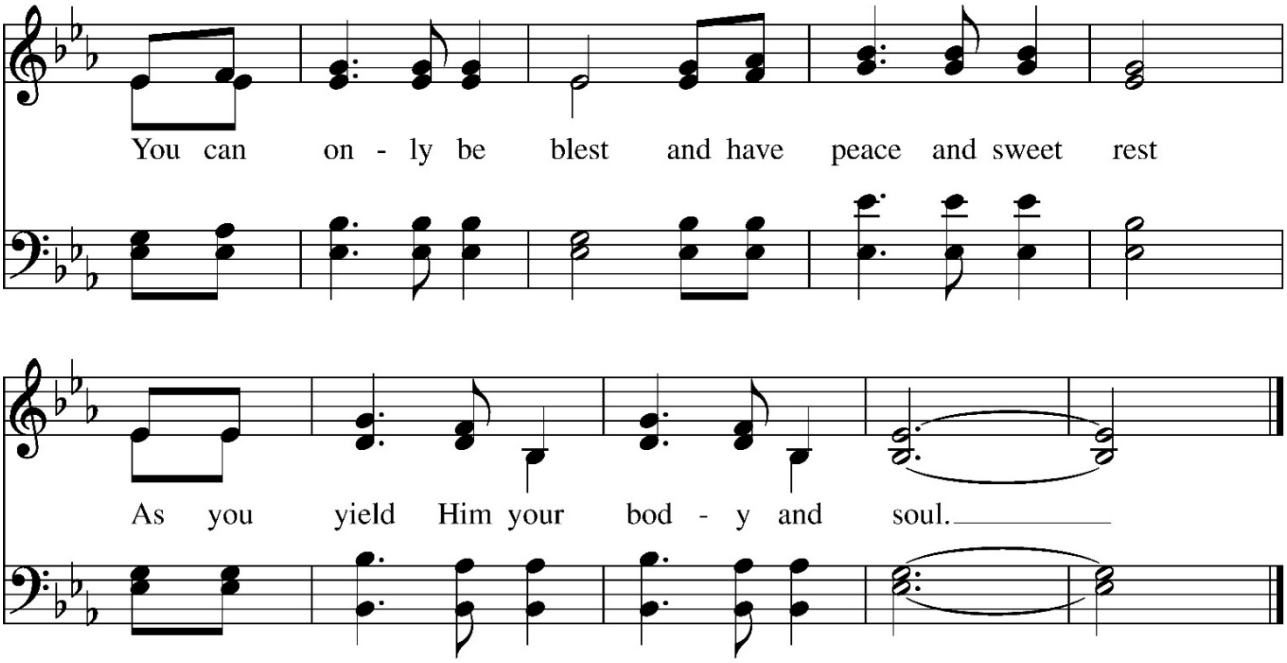
The Invitation to The Table

The Communion of the People

All who love God and seek Christ are welcome at the Lord's Table. To receive the bread, please place one hand over the other. If you choose not to receive communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing, indicating your desire by crossing your arms over your chest. Gluten free communion wafers and chalice are available. Simply, indicate your desire to the clergy. If you need to have communion brought to you, please alert an usher and the clergy will come to you. ***Please note: For reason of sanitation, we do not allow intinction.***

Communion Hymn *Is Your All on the Altar* LEVAS #135





Words: Elisha A. Hoffman (1839-1929). Music: Elisha A. Hoffman.

Post-Communion Prayer

Please stand or kneel.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Blessings

Welcoming Visitors

Announcements

Read Our Weekly Newsletter:

Final Blessing

Please stand in body or spirit.

Recessional Hymn *You Shall Cross the Barren Desert* WLP #811





Words and Music: Bob Dufford, SJ. Copyright © 1975, 1978 Robert J. Dufford, SJ and New Dawn Music, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

The Dismissal

Presider Let us go forth in the name of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

COMMUNICATION COVENANT

1. If we have a concern or issue that involves someone, we will discuss it with that person privately.

2. If someone has a concern or issue with another person and comes to us, we will send them to that person.

3. If someone is reluctant to speak to the person with whom they have a concern, we will offer to accompany him or her to see that person.

4. We will not interpret what others say or mean. (We will ask them if we are unclear of their intentions.)

5. If something is confidential, we will not share it with anyone. Exception: If you are aware that a) someone is going to physically harm someone else; b) someone is going to harm herself/himself; c) a child has been physically or sexually abused, please consult with the clergy.

6. We will not read or react to unsigned letters or notes.

7. We will not act on anonymous complaints brought by others.

8. We will not manipulate; We will not be manipulated. We will not let others try to manipulate others through us.

9. When in doubt, we will just say what is on our minds. The only dumb questions are the ones that are not asked.

10. When in disagreement, we will say it. We cannot resolve issues that are left unspoken. We cannot work together without mutual understanding and trust.

11. Our relationships with each other are the most important asset in our community. So, if we have a concern, we will pray and then, if led, speak up.

ST. THOMAS
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

LEAD WITH LOVE

OUR WHY: To Lead With Love

We lead with love by:

- Being an inclusive, welcoming space for all.
- Seeking the holy in ourselves, each other, and the world
- Making a difference in our community

CORE VALUES

- ATTEND TO OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES
  Through prayer, spiritual practices and formation, we weave our relationship with the Holy into the fabric of our daily lives. Prayer and discernment guide ministries and worship. (Foundational)
- CHOOSE LOVE
  We act from love not fear; build bridges not walls. (Foundational)
- CREATE AND SUSTAIN COMMUNITY
  We gather and care for each other. We cultivate deep relationships. We will prioritize our relationships with each other over the differences that separate us. (Foundational)
- WELCOME ALL
  All means all and all are welcome. We promote an inclusive culture by 1) fostering the skills to shift our cultural perspectives and appropriately adapt our behavior to bridge cultural differences; 2) cultivating the self-awareness and empathy needed to value difference in working toward equity. (Missional)
- HONOR DIVERSITY
  All are welcome. Our leadership, worship, music and ministry initiatives will reflect our diversity. (Missional)
- PROMOTE THE DIGNITY OF ALL
  Through formation, lobbying and other initiatives we prayerfully engage in social justice activities that promote and protect the dignity of all people. (Missional)
- CARE FOR CREATION
  We value our interdependence with creation and recognize our role as stewards. We incorporate practices that protect, sustain, and nourish our fragile earth and her inhabitants.
- ENGAGE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
  We open our hearts and doors to our individual and church neighbors, strive to understand their needs and support them.
  (Missional)
- NURTURE THE NEXT GENERATION
  We offer, support and staff worship and formation opportunities for families and children. (Missional)
- CULTIVATE BEAUTY
  We tend to the beauty of our space, worship and music that evokes a sacred sense of awe, stillness and joy. (Missional)

THANK YOU!

None of this would be possible without your financial support.
www.saintthomasdenver.org

Believe OUTLOUD