**Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**
September 6, 2026 – 10:30 a.m.
*Lutheran Service Book,* Divine Service, Setting Four

ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Prayer before Worship

*As we come into your presence, O God, bless this time of worship. Unite our prayers and praises with your whole Church on earth and in heaven. By the power of your Holy Spirit, help us to worship you in spirit and in truth; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

✢ ✢ ✢

**Welcome**

**Pre-Service Music** "At the Name of Jesus" (Michael Burkhardt)

**Ringing of the Bells**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
**C** **Amen.** *Matthew 28:19b [18:20]*

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
**C** **who made heaven and earth.** *Psalm 124:8*

**P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
**C** **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**
*Psalm 130:3-4*

**P** Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner. *[Luke 18:13]*

*Please kneel or be seated for a time of silent prayer and confession, as able*

℗ Almighty God,

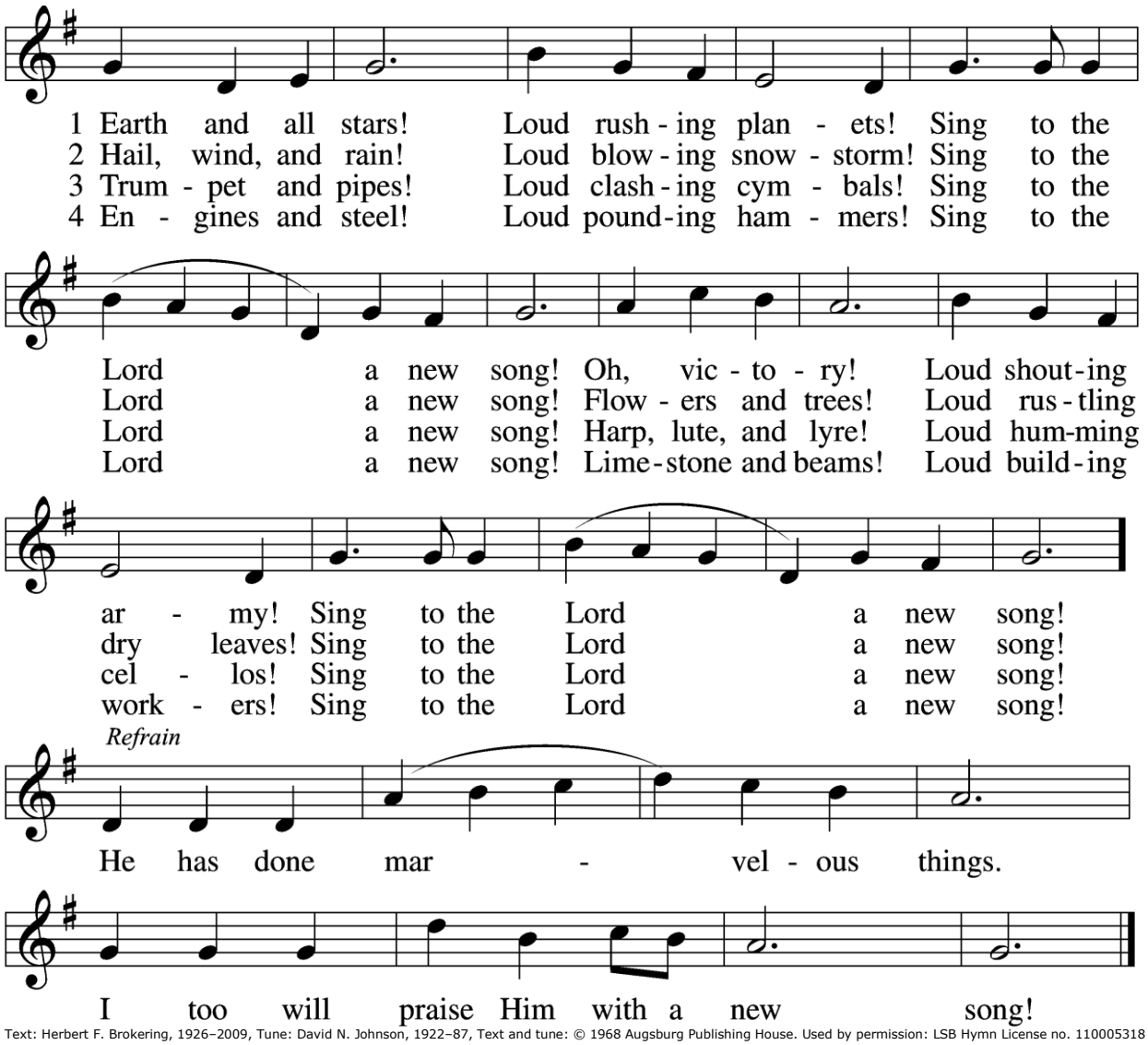
**℃ have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

℗ Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *[John 20:19-23]*

**℃ Amen.**

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

**Opening Hymn** "Earth and All Stars" (LSB 817)




Text: Herbert F. Brokering, 1926–2009, Tune: David N. Johnson, 1922–87, Text and tune: © 1968 Augsburg Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005318

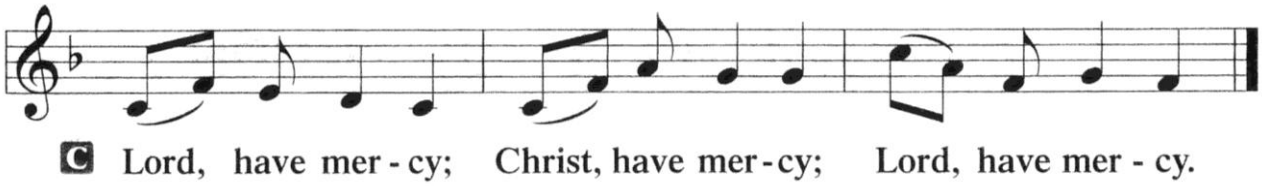
## Greeting

**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.**

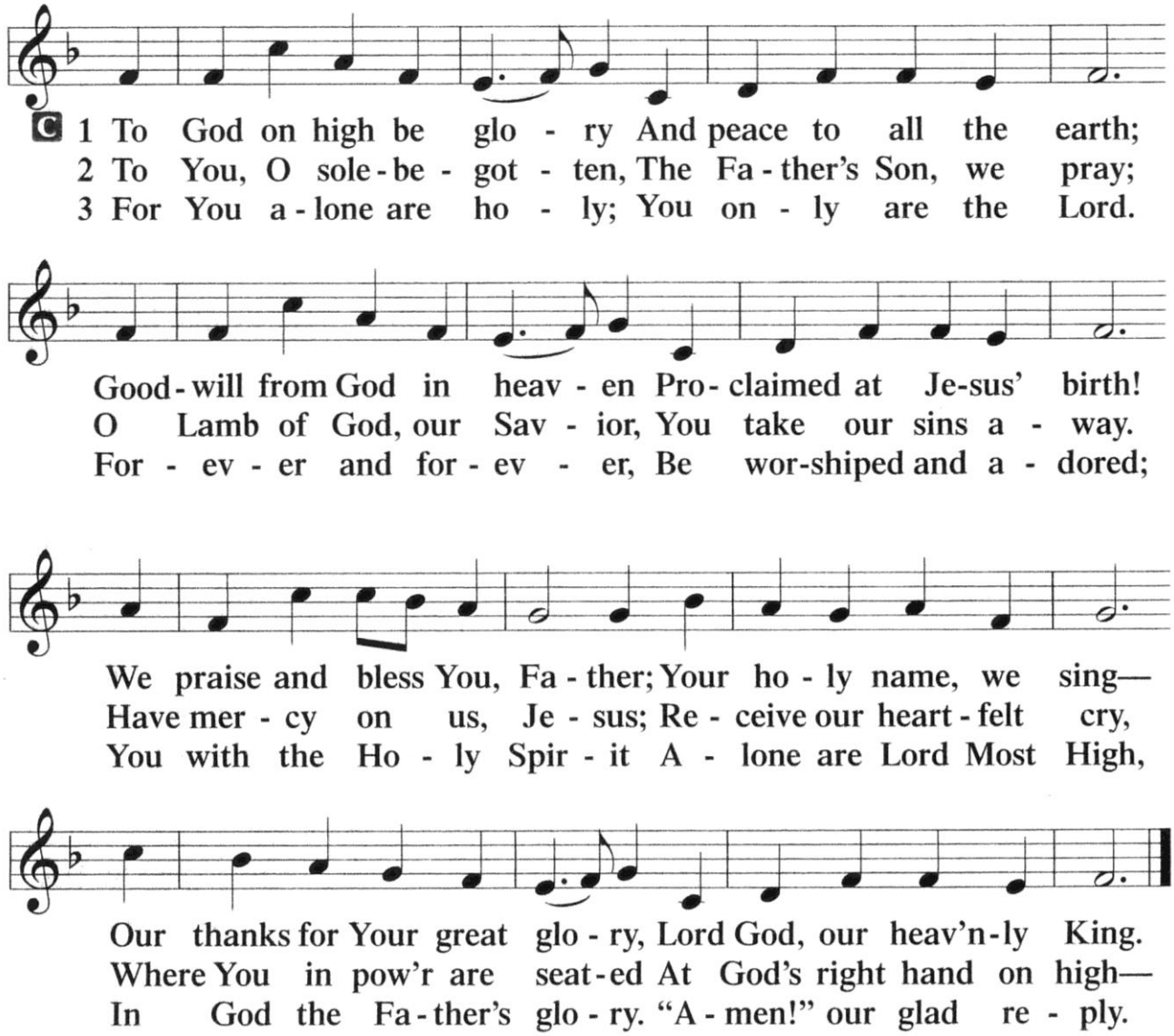
## Kyrie

Mark 10:47




## Gloria in Excelsis

Luke 2:14, John 1:29



**Salutation and Collect of the Day**

Ⓟ The Lord be with you.

**Ⓒ And also with you.**

Ⓟ Let us pray:

O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Ⓒ Amen.**

**Children's Message**

**Old Testament Reading** Ezekiel 33:7-9

7 "So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel.
Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning
from me. 8 If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and
you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked
person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand.
9 But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn
from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have
delivered your soul."

Ⓛ This is the Word of the Lord.

**Ⓒ Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm** *(read responsively)* Psalm 32:1-7

Ⓛ Blessèd is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

**Ⓒ Blessèd is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

Ⓛ For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

**Ⓒ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.**

L I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

**C Therefore let everyone who is godly**
**offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;**
**surely in the rush of great waters,**
**they shall not reach him.**

L You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

**Epistle** Romans 13:1-10

*Please join in reading aloud the **highlighted portion** of Scripture and consider committing this passage to memory in the week ahead.*

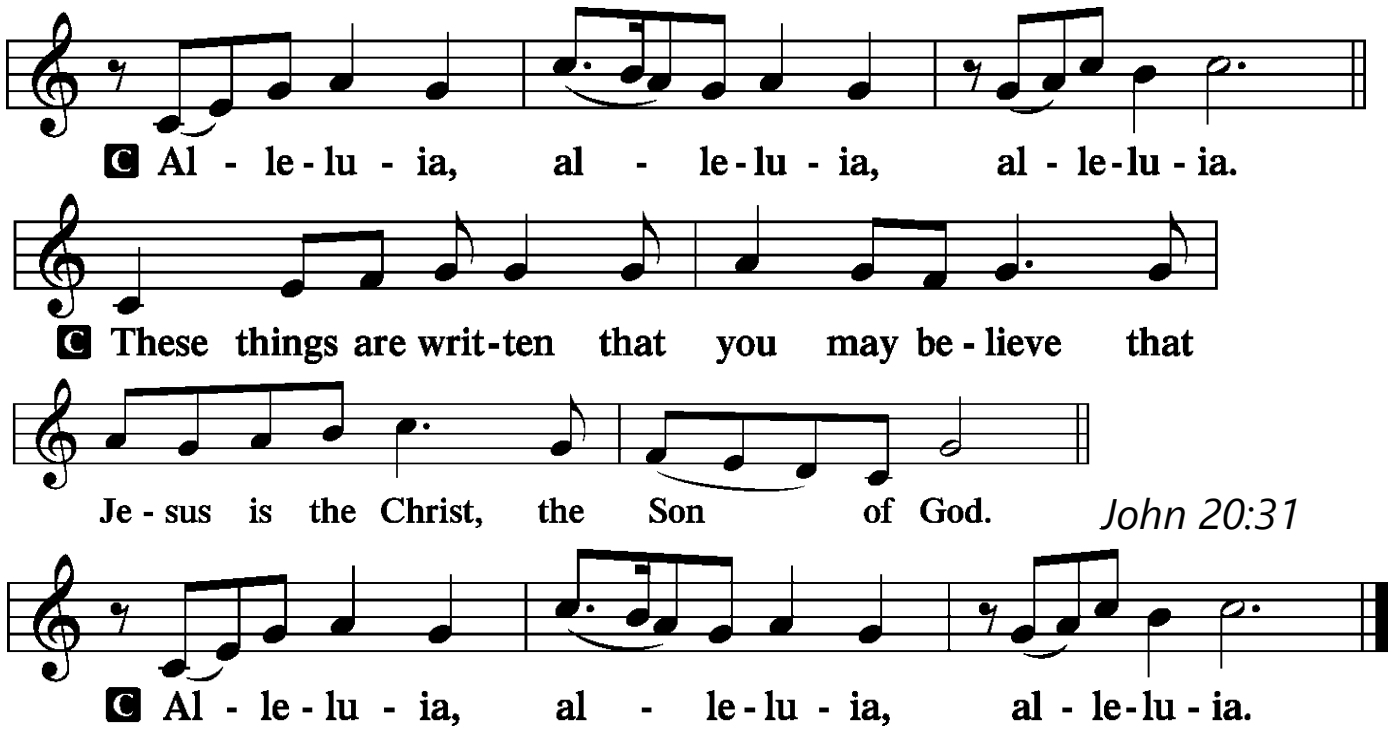
[1]Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. [2]Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. [3]For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, [4]for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.
[5]Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. [6]For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. [7]Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.
[8]Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. [9]The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,"

and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." **10Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**

L This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

**Alleluia and Verse**




**Holy Gospel** Matthew 18:1-20

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

**C Glory to You, O Lord.**

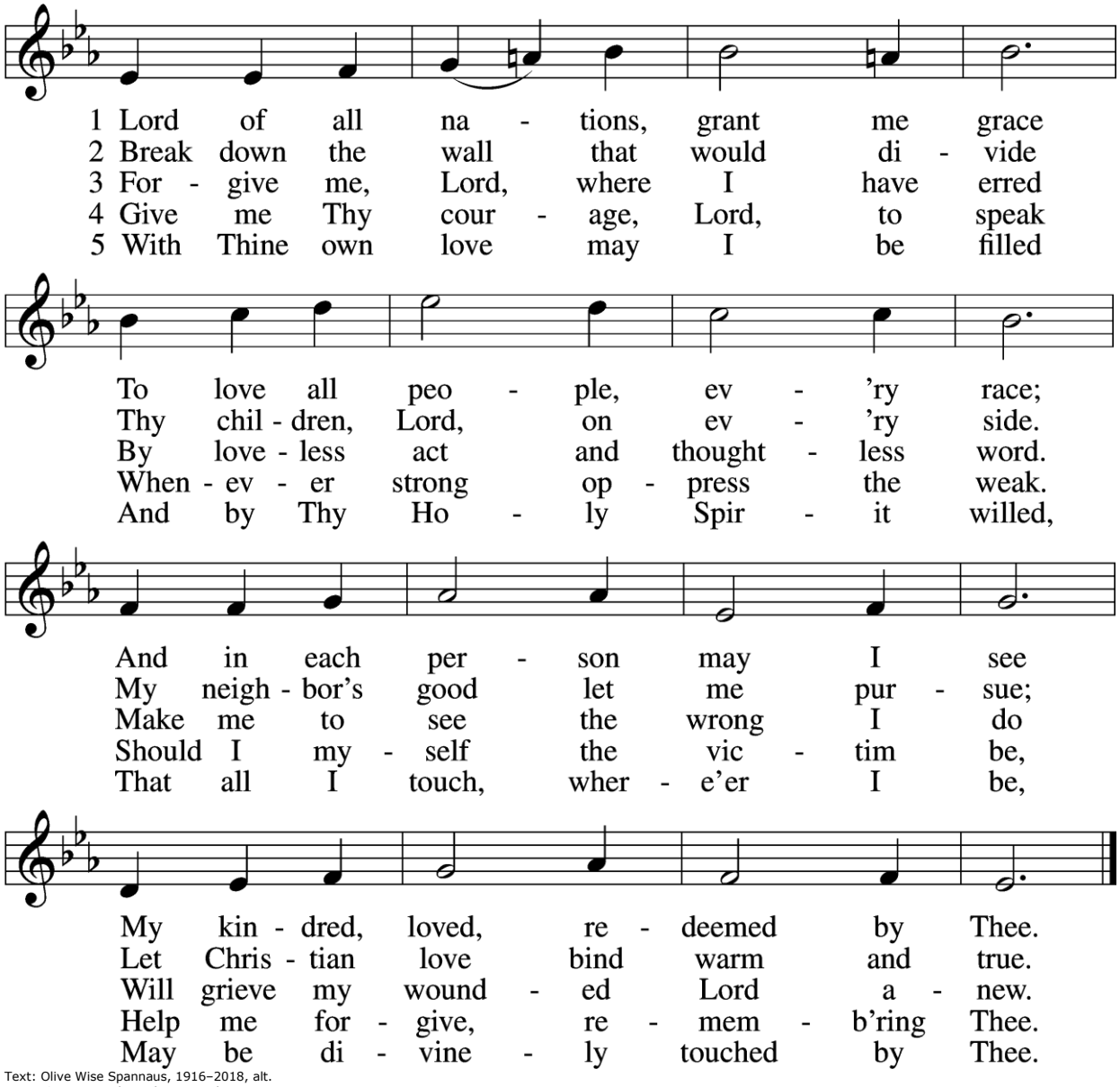
1At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them 3and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, 6but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

[7]"Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that
temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!
[8]And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it
away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two
hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. [9]And if your eye
causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to
enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of
fire.
[10]"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that
in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.
[11]For the Son of Man came to save the lost. [12]What do you think? If a
man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not
leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that
went astray? [13]And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it
more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. [14]So it is not the
will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should
perish.
[15]"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you
and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. [16]But if
he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every
charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. [17]If
he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to
listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax
collector. [18]Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound
in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
[19]Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they
ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. [20]For where two or
three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

**C Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Sermon** "Readings from Romans: The Law of Love"

**Hymn of the Day** "Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace" (LSB 844)




Text: Olive Wise Spannaus, 1916–2018, alt.
Tune: Georg Joseph, 17th cent., adapt.
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Tune: Public domain

**Profession of Faith** The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father 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.**

**Prayer of the Church** *[1 Timothy 2:1-4]*

**P** Seeking the renewal of the Holy Spirit in our communities and in our world, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

*Special prayer requests are announced followed by a brief silence for private prayer.*

*During the season after Pentecost each petition ends with the phrase: "Lord, in your mercy."*

*Please respond by saying* ***"Hear our prayer."***

*The prayers end with the words:*

**P** Into your hands, holy God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abundant mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C Amen.**

*Following the prayers, the people may stand and greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying,*

*"Peace be with you," as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*

*(Matt. 5:22–24; Eph. 4:1–3).*

**Announcements**

**Offertory Prayer**

**L** Merciful God,

**C** **we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, 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.**

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**SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT**

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**Preface**

**P** The Lord be with you. *2 Timothy 4:22*

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

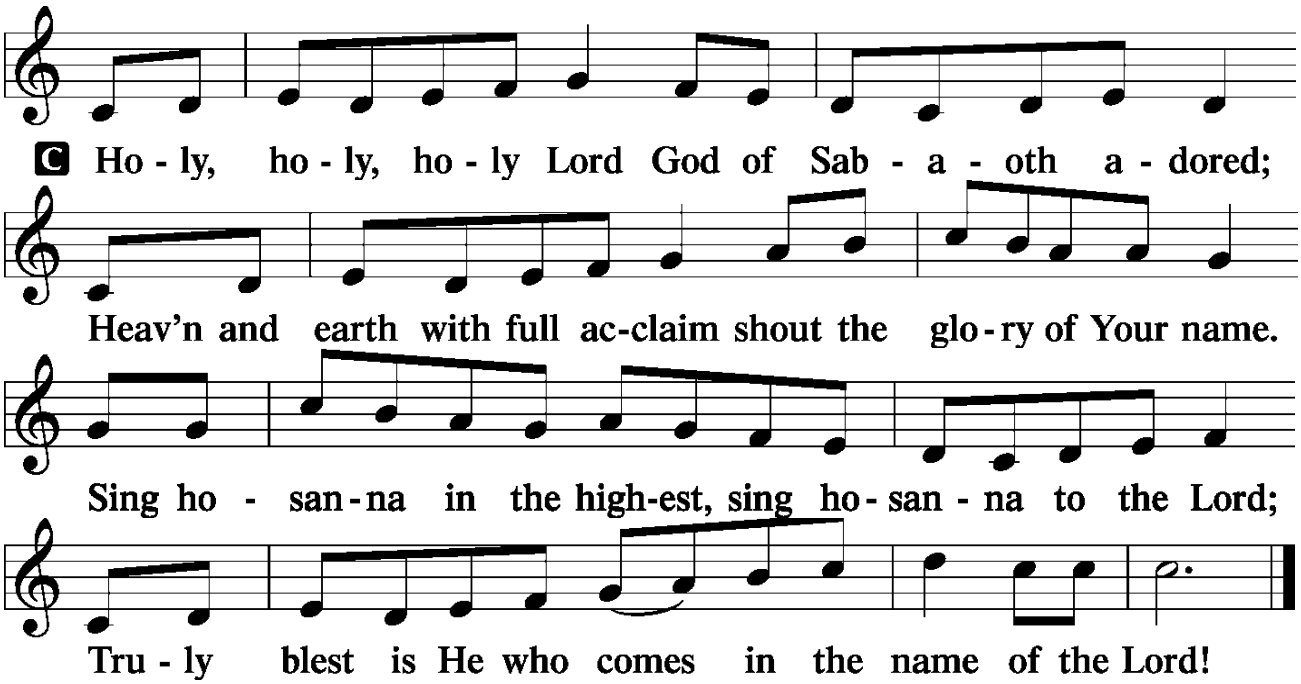
**C** **We lift them to the Lord.** *[Colossians 3:1]*

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.** *[Psalm 136]*

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

**Sanctus** *Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9*




**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

**Lord's Prayer** *Matthew 6:9-13*

**C 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.**

**The Words of Our Lord** *Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

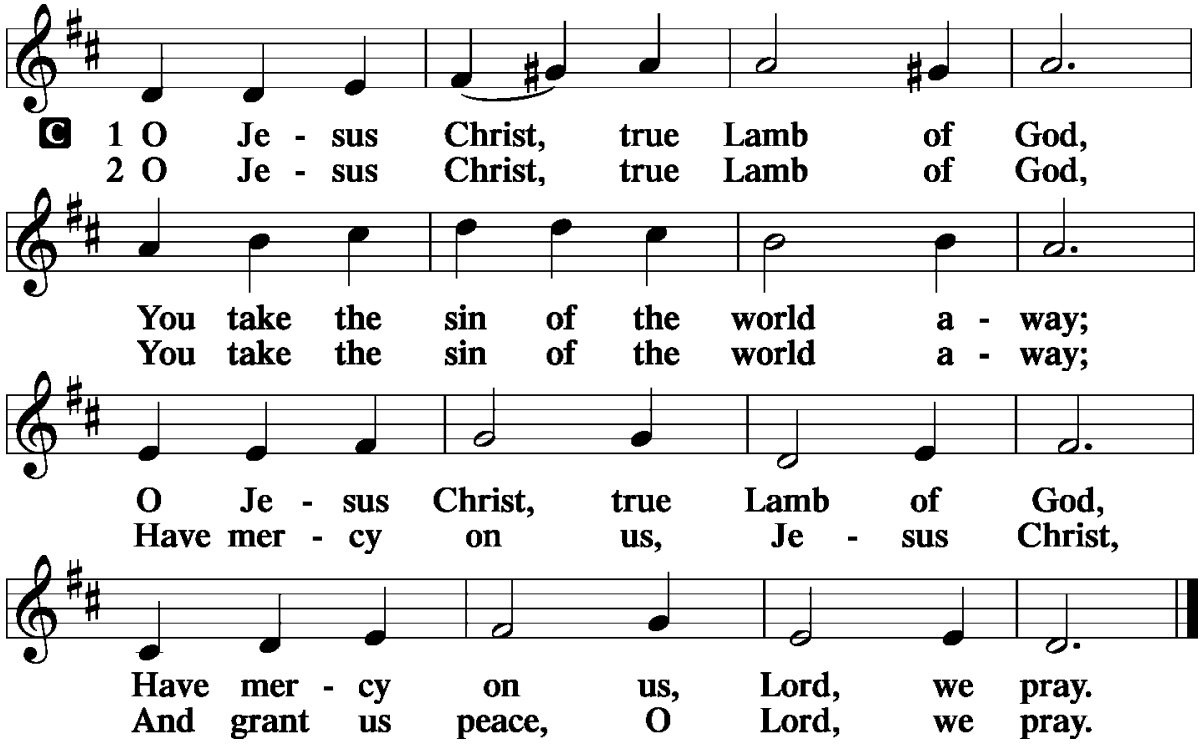
P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✢ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

P In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✢ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**Pax Domini** *John 20:19*

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
**C Amen.**

**Agnus Dei** *John 1:29*




*Please be seated*

## Distribution

*Lutheran Christians believe and teach that in the Sacrament of the Altar, Christ's body and blood are given to those who receive the bread and wine. With the bread and wine, the gifts of His body and blood are given to Christ's people for forgiveness of sins, strength for our journey of faith, and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. All who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, and who trust His words that these gifts are given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins, are invited to receive the Eucharist.*

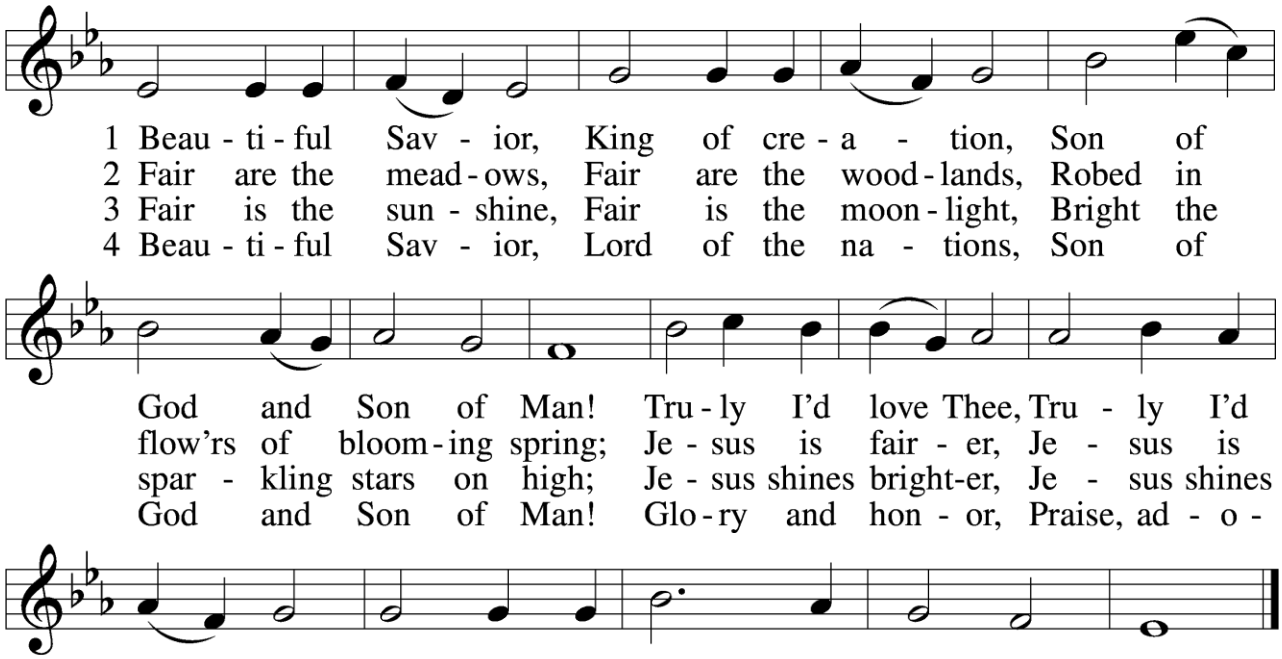
*Please follow the direction of the ushers to come to the Lord's Table. The bread will be distributed first.* ***Gluten-free wafers*** *are available for those who may need these. Please indicate this to the pastor at the distribution. The wine is then received by individual glasses only. Non-alcoholic grape juice is available for those who for medical or recovery purposes must abstain from alcohol.*

*Children who do not receive the Sacrament are invited to come forward and receive a blessing. Please cross arms over chest so the pastor and lay*

*assistant are able to distinguish children who do commune from those who do not yet receive the Sacrament.*

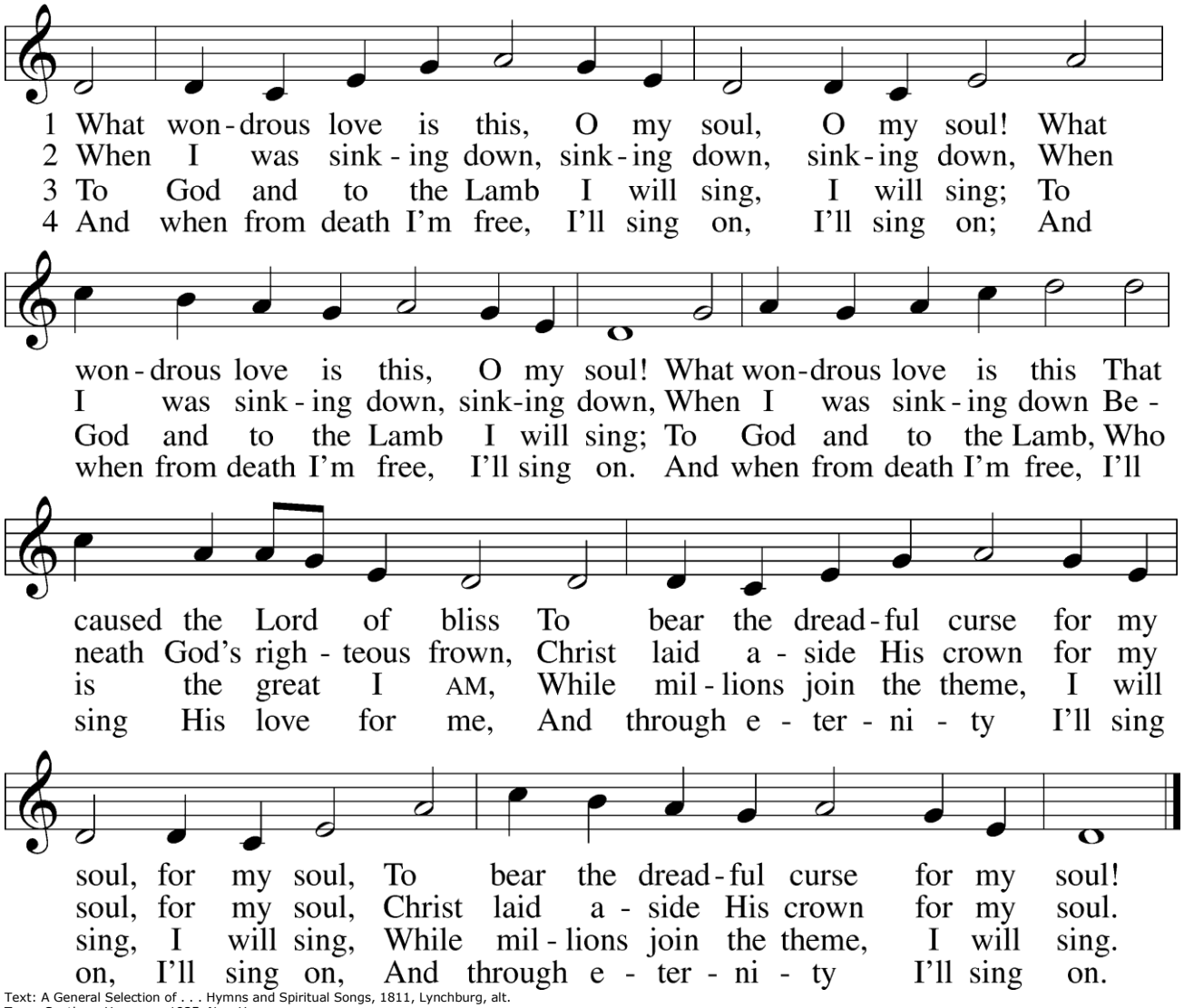
## Music at Distribution

"Beautiful Savior" (LSB 537)




Text: Münsterisch Gesangbuch, 1677, Münster; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823–1904
Tune: Silesian, 19th cent.
Text and tune: Public domain

"What Wondrous Love Is This" (LSB 543)

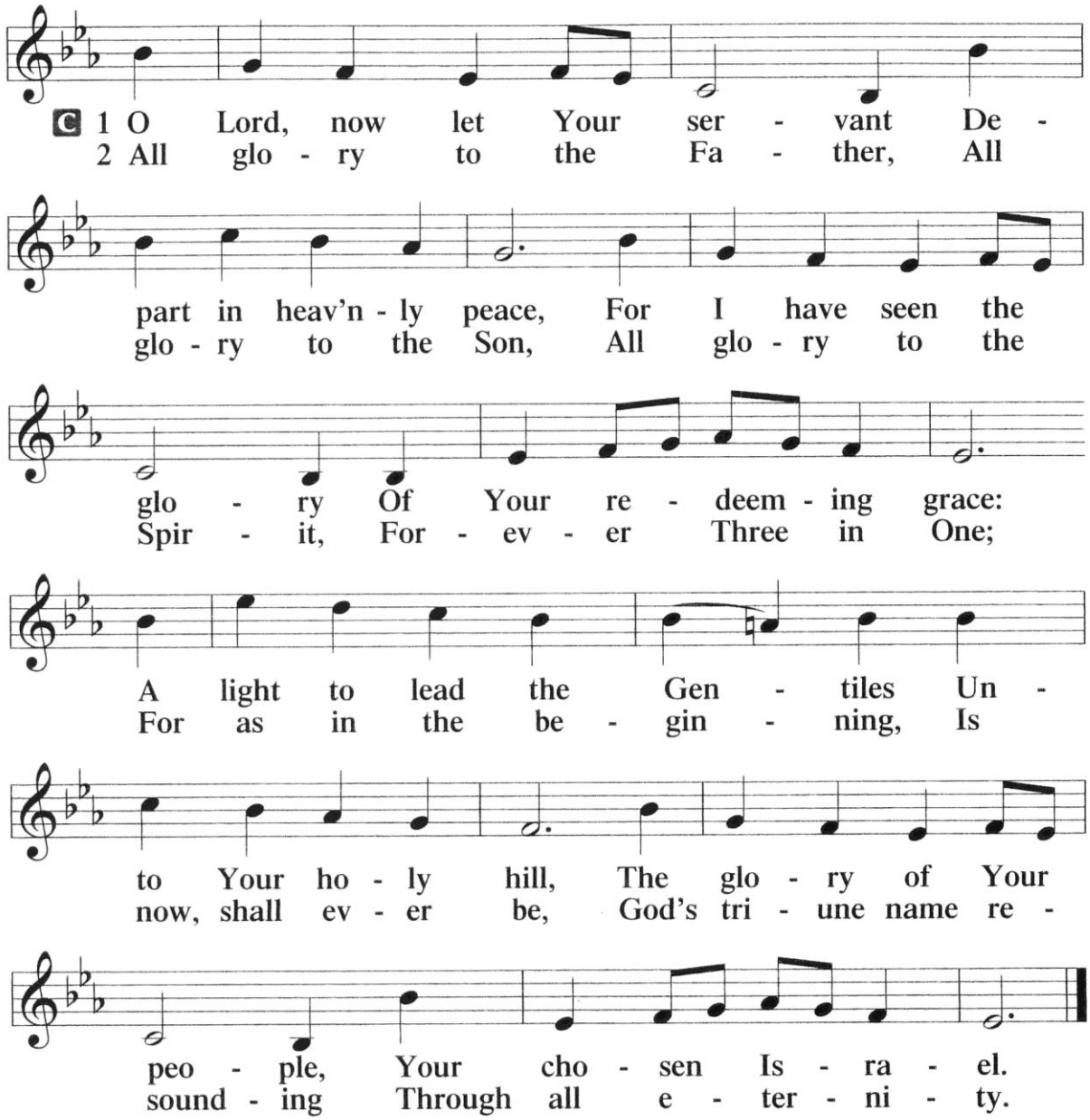



Text: A General Selection of . . . Hymns and Spiritual Songs, 1811, Lynchburg, alt.
Tune: Southern Harmony, 1835, New Haven
Text and tune: Public domain

## Dismissal

## Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2: 29-32



## Post-Communion Collect

**L** Let us pray:

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

## Benedicamus and Benediction

**L** Let us bless the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.** *[Psalm 103:1]*

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

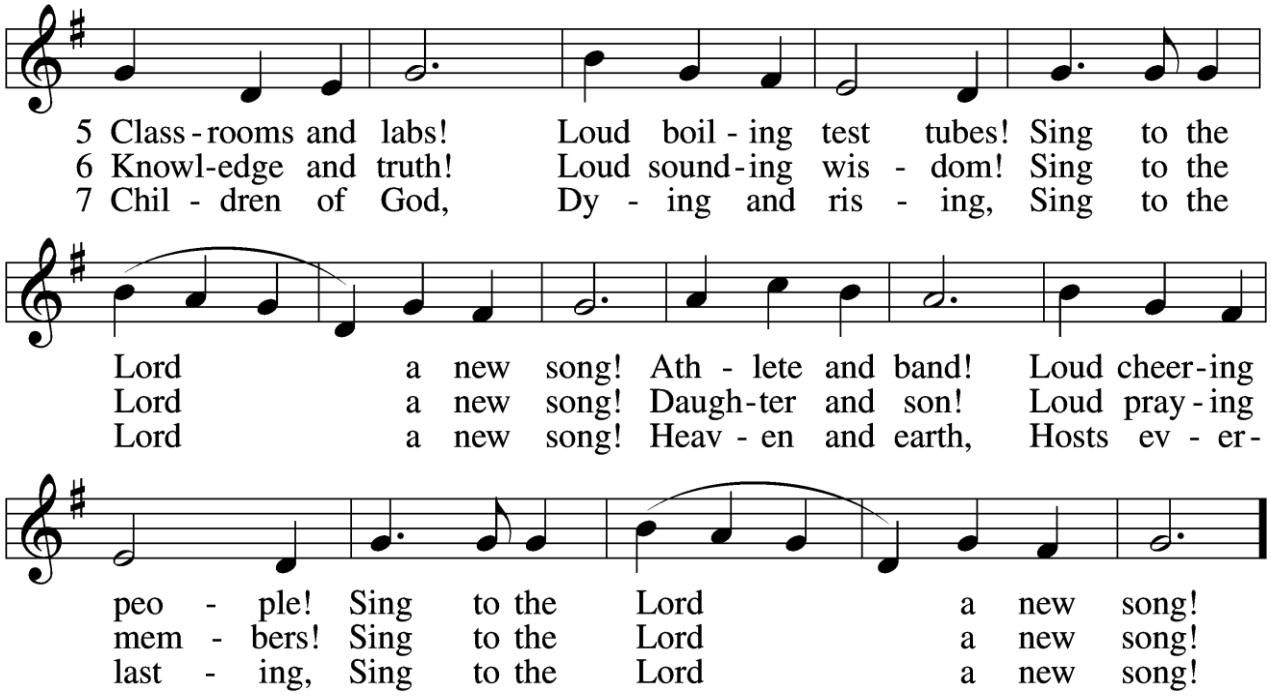
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

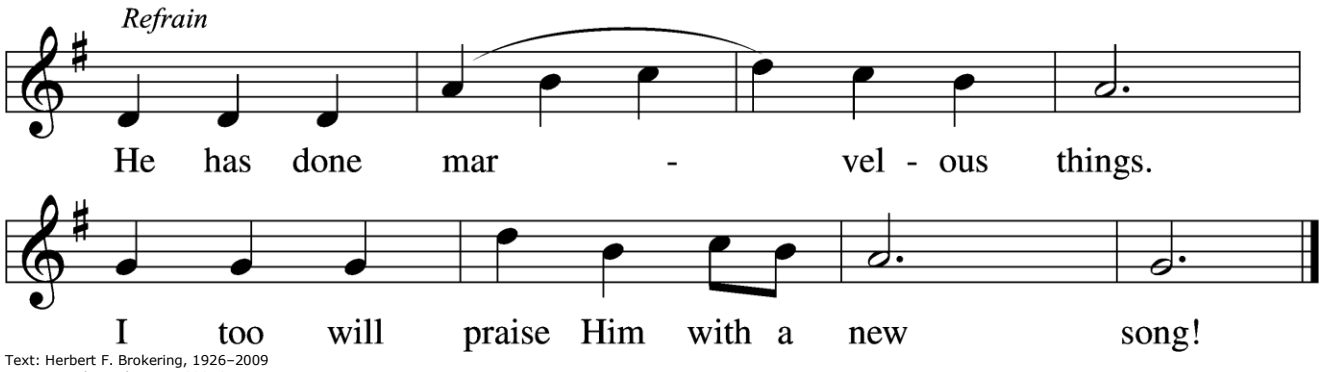
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✢ give you peace. *Numbers 6:24-26*

**C Amen.**

## Sending Hymn

"Earth and All Stars" (LSB 817)






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Tune: David N. Johnson, 1922–87
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**Postlude** "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" (Michael Burkhardt)

✢ ✢ ✢

## Our Ministry Of Worship

| | |
|---|---|
| Officiant/Preacher | Pastor Meehan |
| Welcome/Children's Message | Jennifer Hills, Director of Discipleship |
| Lay Assistant | Michael Nordvall |
| Communion Lay Assistant | Tish Nordvall |
| Guest Organist/Pianist | Elizabeth Miller |
| Acolyte | Matthew Rempe |
| Crucifer | Samuel Rempe |
| Ushers | Joseph Godwin |
| | Barbara Pate |
| Altar Care | Jean Gilbertson |
| AV Operator | Denise Canter |
| | Mark Gilbertson |
| Welcome Host | Jan Swicord |
| Nursery | Lisa Goodell |

✢ ✢ ✢



This weekend's **altar flowers** are given by donations to the flower fund.

SCAN HERE TO

CONNECT WITH SJLC

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Give online

Read/Sign up for newsletters

Register or attend events/classes

Request for prayers

Connect on social media

...AND MORE!

**Acknowledgments**

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**St. John's Lutheran Church**
**5952 Franconia Road**
**Alexandria, VA 22310**

*A member congregation of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod*

## Church and ECEC Staff

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| Office Administrator | Michelle May | office@sjlc.com |
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