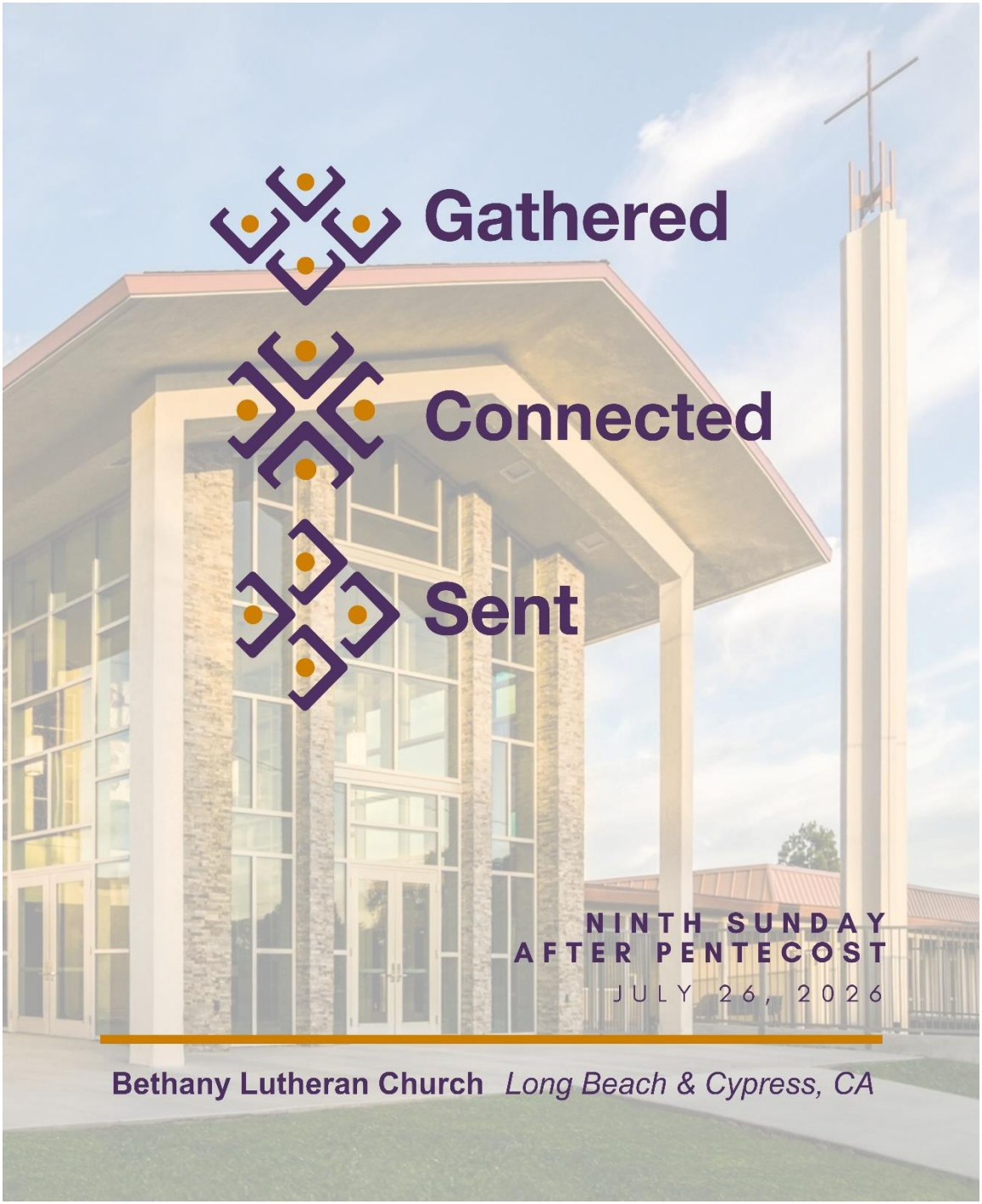

Gathered
Connected
Sent
NINTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST
JULY 26, 2026
Bethany Lutheran Church Long Beach & Cypress, CA

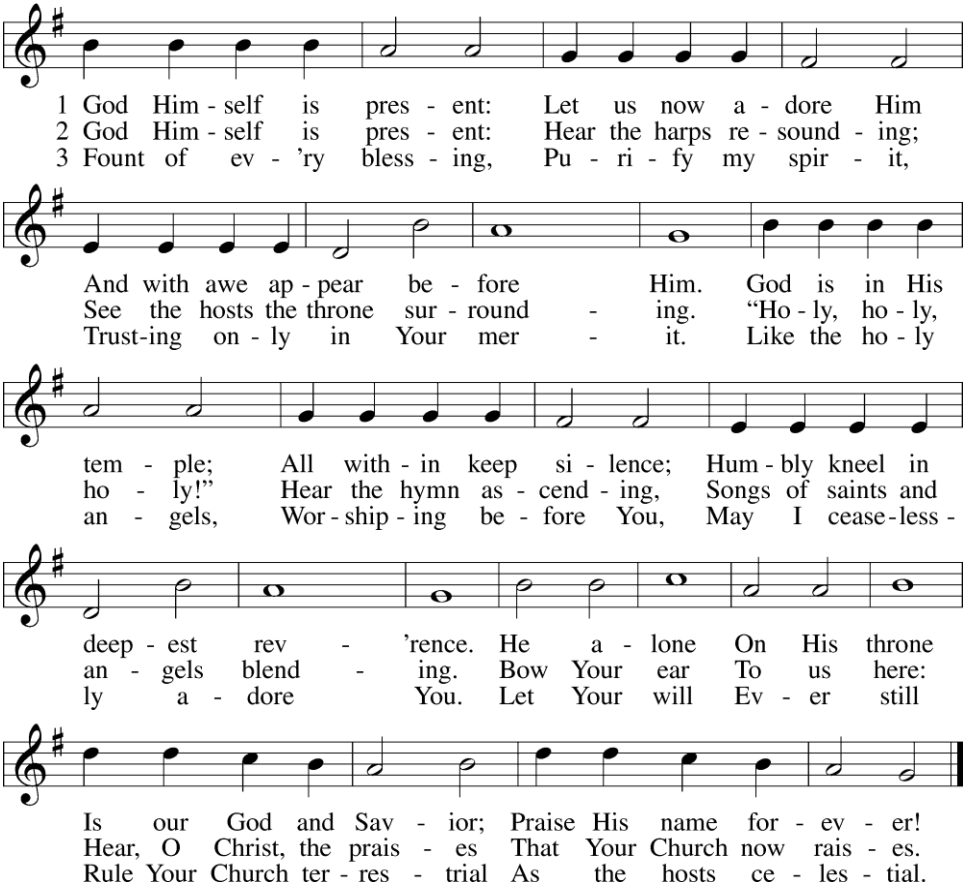
As We Gather

"This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. We can never read it or ponder over it too much; for the more we deal with it, the more precious it becomes and the better it tastes." Martin Luther Luther's Works vol. 35:365

PRELUDE: **"Praeludium in C, BuxWV 136"** Organ
~Dietrich Buxtehude

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN: **"God Himself Is Present"** LSB 907



INVOCATION:

L: Grace and peace to you from God our Father, from the Lord Jesus Christ and from the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from both. *(Romans 1:7)*

P: Amen

CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: Jesus Christ, through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. *(Romans 1:4)*

P: We are among those who have been called to belong to Him. *(Romans 1:6)*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

L: When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race.

P: Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned, including me. *(Romans 5:12)*

L: The Law of God is good. The trouble is with me!

P: I am bound in sin. I don't even fully understand myself. There are times in which I really want to do what is good and right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I despise. I am a hypocrite. I know perfectly well that what I do is at times wrong, and my guilty conscience shows that I agree that the law is good. But I can't help myself. So far as my sinful nature is concerned, I am rotten to the core. No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. So many have been the times that I have wanted to do right, but I couldn't. I wanted to do good, but didn't. So often when I have tried not to do wrong, I have done so anyway. What a miserable person I am! Lord, free me from the life that is dominated by sin, and rescue me from death. For the sake of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen. *(Romans 7:18-19&25)*

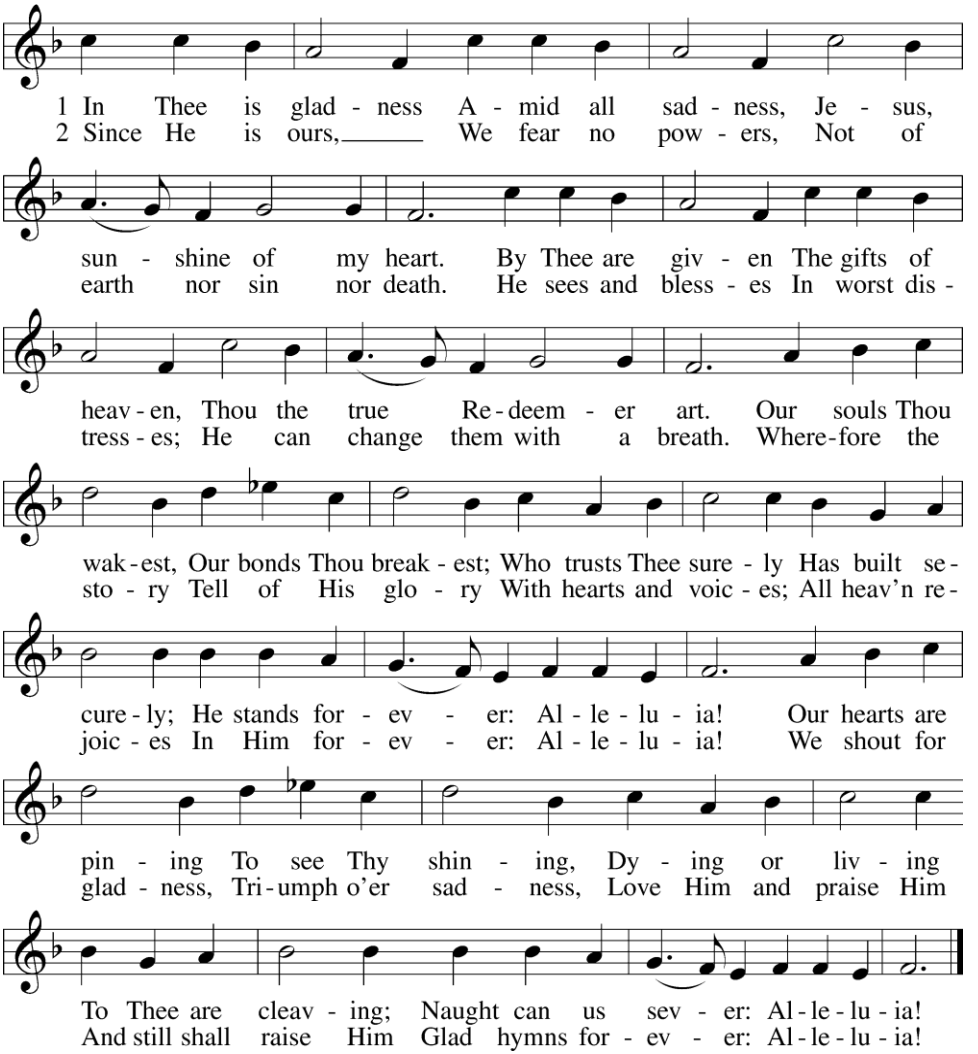
L: I am here to announce that there is no condemnation for you who are Christ's own people. God didn't deal with the problem of sin as something remote or unimportant. In His Son, Jesus, He personally took on the human condition and set it right once and for all. Now God has taken up residence in your life, go in peace and serve the Lord.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

L: Oh, the depth of the riches of Your wisdom and knowledge, O God.

P: From You and through You and to You are all things. To You be glory forever! *(Romans 11:33 & 36)*

HYMN OF PRAISE: **"In Thee Is Gladness"** LSB 818



PSALM 121 ***(We read responsively)***

L: I lift up my eyes to the hills.
P: **From where does my help come?**

L: My help comes from the LORD,
P: **who made heaven and earth.**

L: He will not let your foot be moved;
P: **He who keeps you will not slumber.**

L: Behold, he who keeps Israel
P: **will neither slumber nor sleep.**

L: The LORD is your keeper;
P: **the LORD is your shade on your right hand.**

L: The sun shall not strike you by day,
P: **nor the moon by night.**

L: The LORD will keep you from all evil;
P: **He will keep your life.**

L: The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in
P: **from this time forth and forevermore.** —ESV®

SECOND READING: ***Romans 8:28-39***

We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God—those whom He has called according to His plan. This is true because He already knew His people and had already appointed them to have the same form as the image of His Son. Therefore, His Son is the firstborn among many children. He also called those whom He had already appointed. He approved of those whom He had called, and He gave glory to those whom He had approved of.

What can we say about all of this? If God is for us, who can be against us? God didn't spare His own Son but handed Him over to death for all of us. So, He will also give us everything along with Him. Who will accuse those whom God has chosen? God has approved of them. Who will condemn them? Christ has died, and more importantly, He was brought back to life. Christ is in the honored position—the one next to God the Father on the heavenly throne. Christ also intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love Christ has for us? Can trouble, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, or violent death separate us from His love? As Scripture says:

> "We are being killed all day long because of You.
> We are thought of as sheep to be slaughtered."

The one who loves us gives us an overwhelming victory in all these difficulties. I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love which Christ Jesus our Lord shows us. We can't be separated by death or life, by angels or rulers, by anything in the present or anything in the future, by forces or powers in the world above or in the world below, or by anything else in creation. —GW®

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HOLY GOSPEL: ***Matthew 13:44-52***

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field. When a man discovered it, he buried it again. He was so delighted with it that he went away, sold everything he had, and bought that field.

“Also, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who was searching for fine pearls. When he found a valuable pearl, he went away, sold everything he had, and bought it.

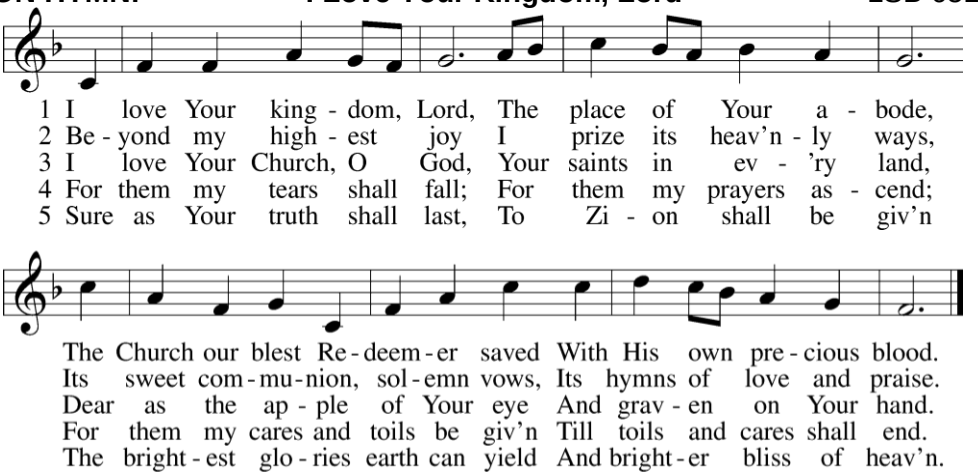
“Also, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea. It gathered all kinds of fish. When it was full, they pulled it to the shore. Then they sat down, gathered the good fish into containers, and threw the bad ones away. The same thing will happen at the end of time. The angels will go out and separate the evil people from people who have God’s approval. Then the angels will throw the evil people into a blazing furnace. They will cry and be in extreme pain there.

“Have you understood all of this?”

“Yes,” they answered.

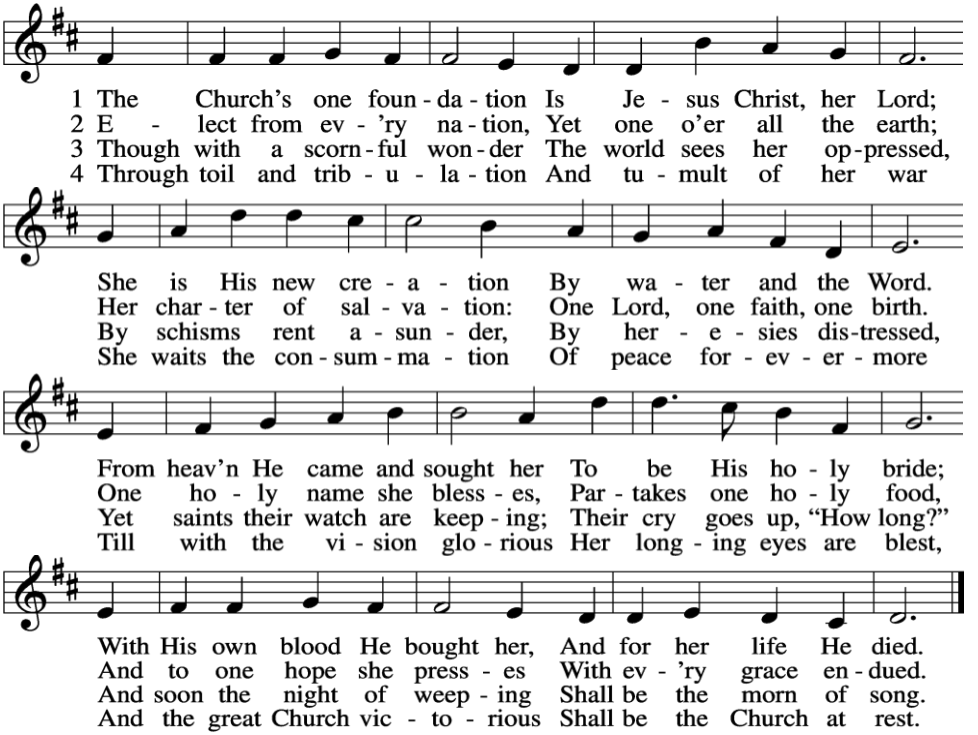
So Jesus said to them, “That is why every student of the Scriptures who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a home owner. He brings new and old things out of his treasure chest.” –GW®

SERMON HYMN: **“I Love Your Kingdom, Lord”** LSB 651



MESSAGE: ***Romans 8:28-39***

HYMN OF THE DAY: "The Church's One Foundation" LSB 644



CONFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED *(*catholic means the universal Christian Church)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary,
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

OFFERING: *The Offering Box is located in the center aisle. If you so desire, Text Giving is now available by texting GIVE to 562-210-0463. For On-line Giving information, contact Andria at arosas@bethanylutheran.org or call 562-421-4711, ext. 21. Thank you!*

CONSECRATING THE GIFTS:

L: Lord of all good, our gifts we bring You now;
P: **Use them Your holy purpose to fulfill.**

L: Tokens of love and pledges they shall be
P: **that our whole life is offered to Your will.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER:

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.

****** At our 8:00 a.m. service, we will continue on page 10 with Announcements.***

****** At our 9:30 a.m. service, we continue with the Celebration of Holy Communion:***

✢ Service Holy Communion ✢

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at Bethany in the joyful confession that our Lord gives us His very Body and Blood for the forgiveness of sins in this sacrament. God intends this gift for His children who recognize their sin, trust in Christ as their Savior, desire to live for Him alone and join in this joyful confession.

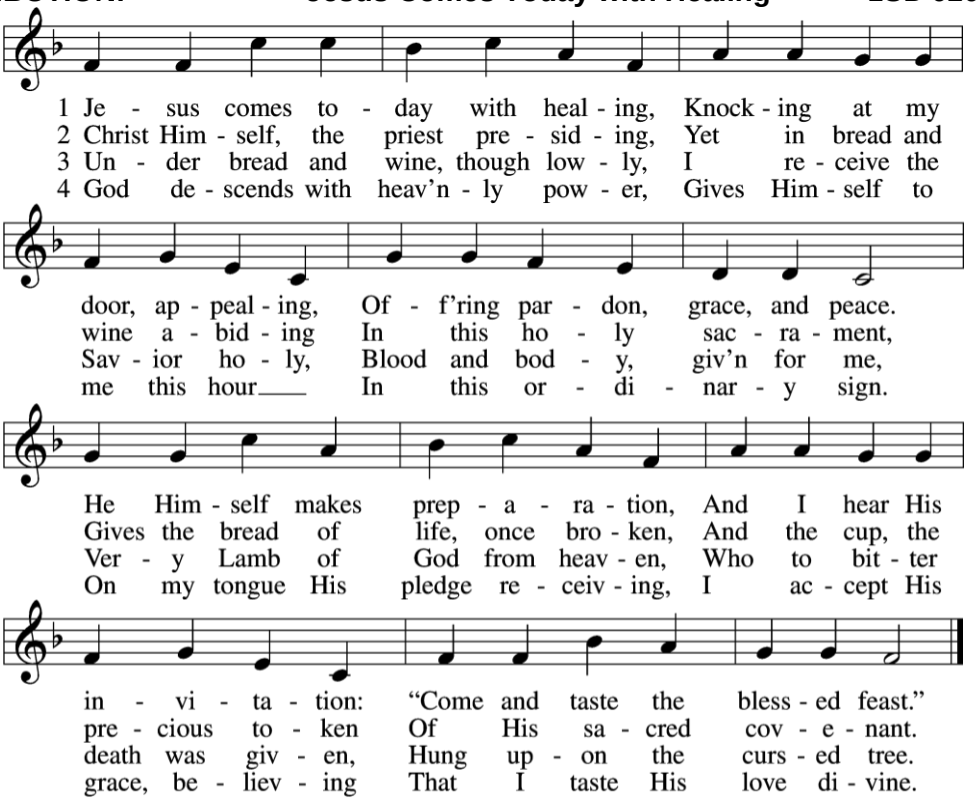
To prepare for communion you can find prayer prompts on the front page of the Lutheran Service Book. Or simply pray: "Dear Lord Jesus, at Your gracious invitation, You invite me to come to You; to eat and drink Your holy body and blood as You Yourself have promised to give in this sacred meal. Forgive me of my sin, through this Your meal of Forgiveness. Let me experience the fullness of Your love, through this Your meal of love. Strengthen my faith, through this meal of Yours that calls for and bestows faith. Empower me to live for You, through this Your meal that promises life everlasting and equips me for daily living as one who has received You and Your gifts. Amen."

For those communing, who so desire, center cups in each tray are ***alcohol free.***
For those with dietary restrictions, the wafers next to the Christ candle are ***gluten free****;*

We will practice the Easter tradition of continuous communion. We will not kneel at the altar, rather we come forward and remain standing as we receive the bread and wine. After receiving the elements, you are invited to return to your seat and continue in meditation, prayer and song.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

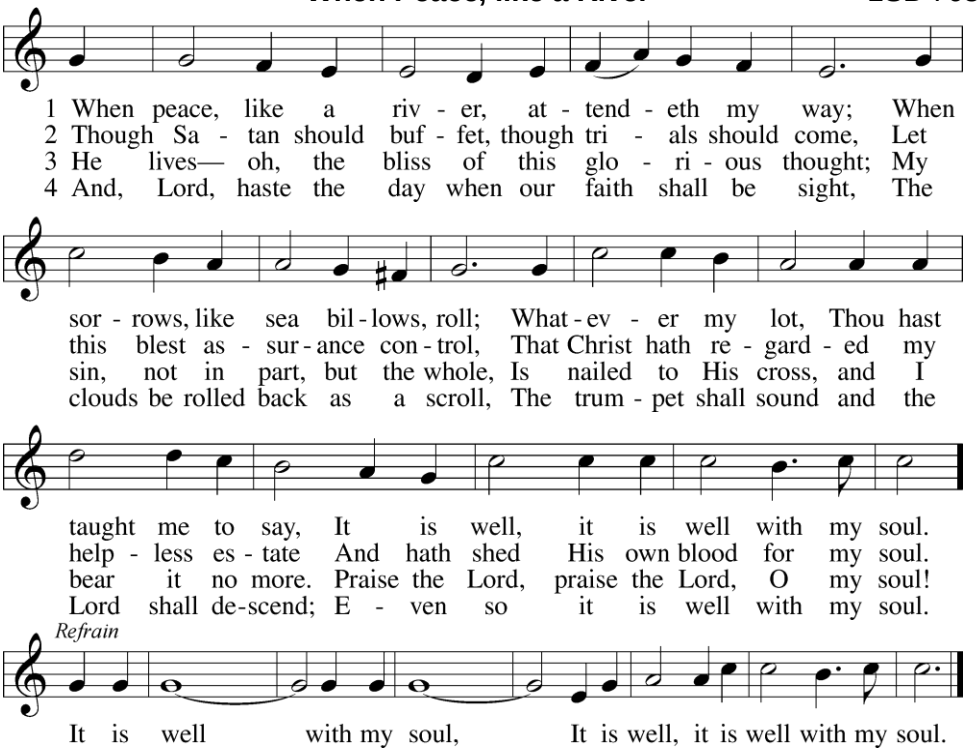
DISTRIBUTION: "Jesus Comes Today with Healing" LSB 620



5 Let me praise God's boundless favor,
Whose own feast of love I savor,
Bidden by His gracious call.
Wedding garments He provides me,
With a robe of white He hides me,
Fits me for the royal hall.

6 Now have I found consolation,
Comfort in my tribulation,
Balm to heal the troubled soul.
God, my shield from ev'ry terror,
Cleanses me from sin and error,
Makes my wounded spirit whole.

"When Peace, like a River" LSB 763



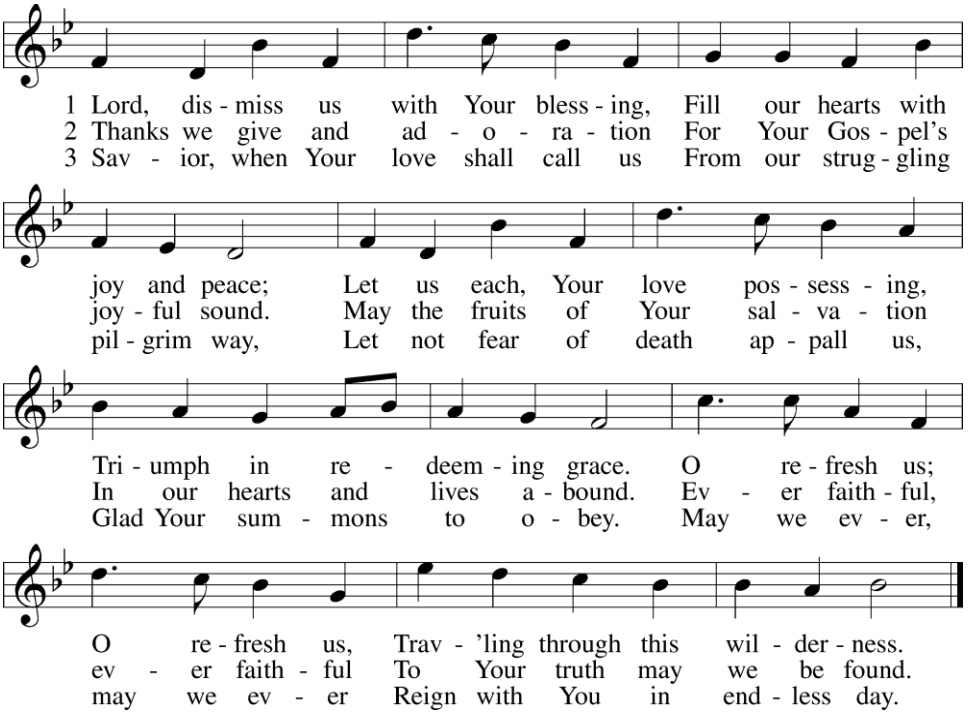
POST COMMUNION PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION:

L: Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. So let us be clothed with Christ and forgetting about satisfying the sinful self. *(Romans 13:11&14)*

CLOSING HYMN: **"Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"** LSB 924



POSTLUDE: **"In dir ist Freude, BWV 615"** Organ
~J. S. Bach

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"God Himself Is Present" LSB 907
Text: Gerhard Tersteegen, 1697-1769, abr.; tr. Frederick W. Foster, 1760-1835 and John Miller, 1756-90, alt.; sts. 1 & 3
Tune: Joachim Neander, 1650-80, alt; setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941.* Text and Music: Public Domain

"In Thee Is Gladness" LSB 818
Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549-1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.
Tune: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, c. 1556-c. 1622; setting: *Württembergisches Neues Choralbuch*, 1956.
Text and Tune: Public domain. Setting: © 1956 Bäreneiter. All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONELICENSE #A-706149

"I Love Your Kingdom, Lord" LSB 651
Text: Timothy Dwight, 1752-1817, alt. Tune: Aaron Williams, 1731-76. Text and music: Public domain.

"The Church's One Foundation" LSB 644
Text: Samuel J. Stone, 1839-1900, alt. Music: Samuel S. Wesley, 1810-76.Text and music: Public domain

"Jesus Comes Today with Healing" LSB 620
Text: Heinrich Puchta, 1808-58; tr. David W. Rogner, b. 1960
Tune: Johann Löhner, 1645-1705; adapt. Johann Balthausar König, 1691-1758. Setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941
Text: ©David W. Rogner. All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONELICENSE #A-706149. Tune: Public domain

"When Peace, like a River" LSB 763
Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-88, alt. Music: Philip P. Bliss, 1838-76 Text and music: Public domain.

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SERVING GOD'S HOUSE TODAY:

Lector 8:00…Greg Goebel 9:30…Vance Fredericks
Liturgist…Pastor Kevin Kritzer Preacher...Pastor Seth Moorman
Organist…Robert Bottoms Children's Message…Alissa Brege
Sound/Production…Felix Rivera & Jon Widmann

✢ ✢ ✢

If You're a Visitor, WELCOME! We are so glad you have joined us for worship today. If you would like more information about Bethany and its ministries, please scan the QR code to the right. You will be directed to Bethany's fillable information form.

✢ ✢ ✢

Parents of Young Children: We are so glad you and your children are here! Children are a joyful part of worship—after all, God created them with curiosity, energy, and yes, a few wiggles. Please don't feel pressure to keep them perfectly still in God's house. Their presence is truly a gift to our church family.

Worship is where we learn, together, how to listen and speak to God alongside our brothers and sisters in faith. You are welcome to quietly explain parts of the service and what our worship leaders are doing—children learn how to worship by watching and imitating you.

If it would be helpful, "worship bags" are available in the Narthex with items designed to support children and families during worship. Childcare is also available in our Nursery for children from birth through age five. Our caring and qualified staff look forward to welcoming your little one into a safe and loving environment.

Bethany's Nursery is located across the courtyard. Please feel free to ask an usher if you need directions—we're happy to help.