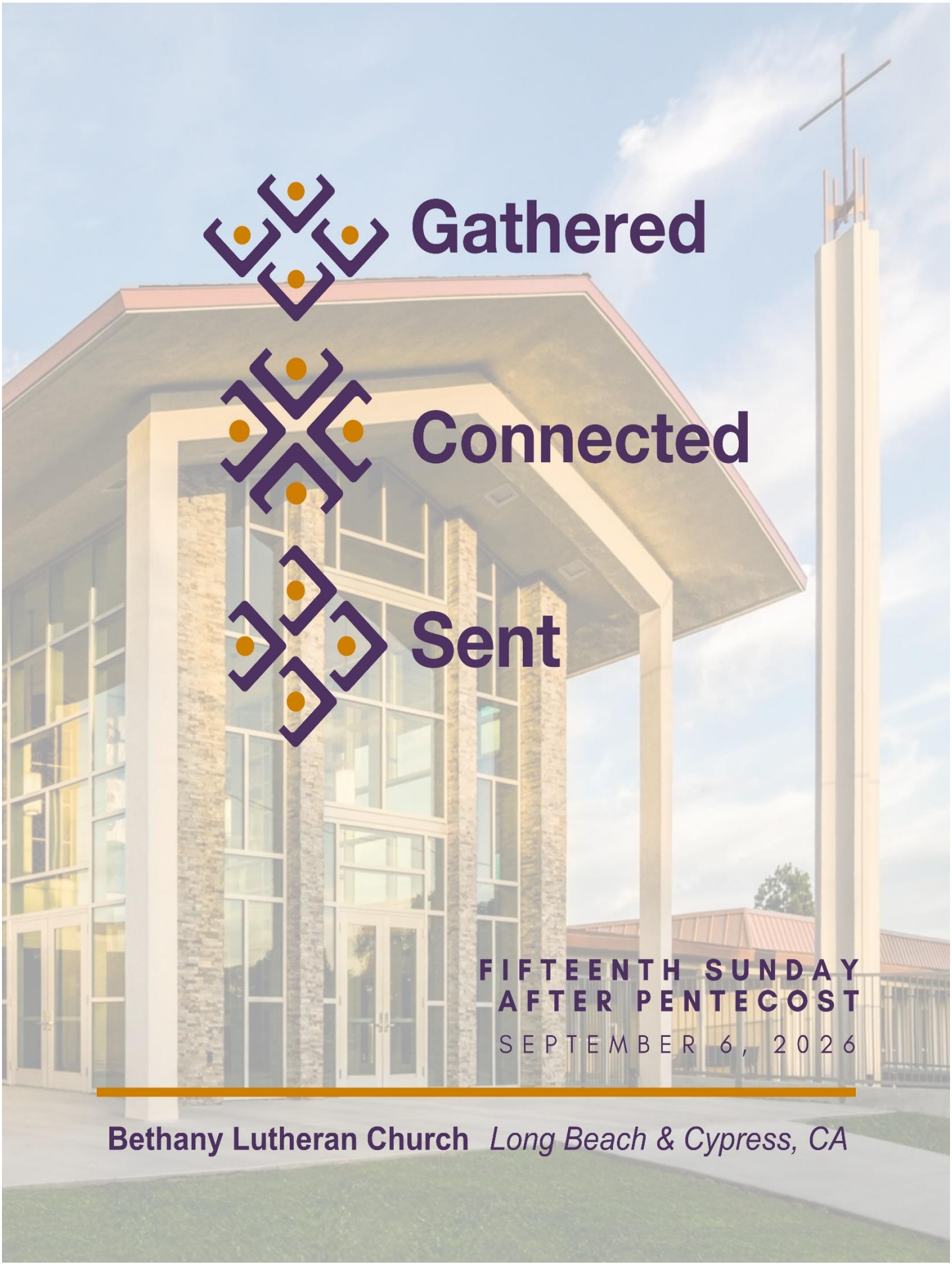


Gathered

Connected

Sent

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

Bethany Lutheran Church *Long Beach & Cypress, CA*

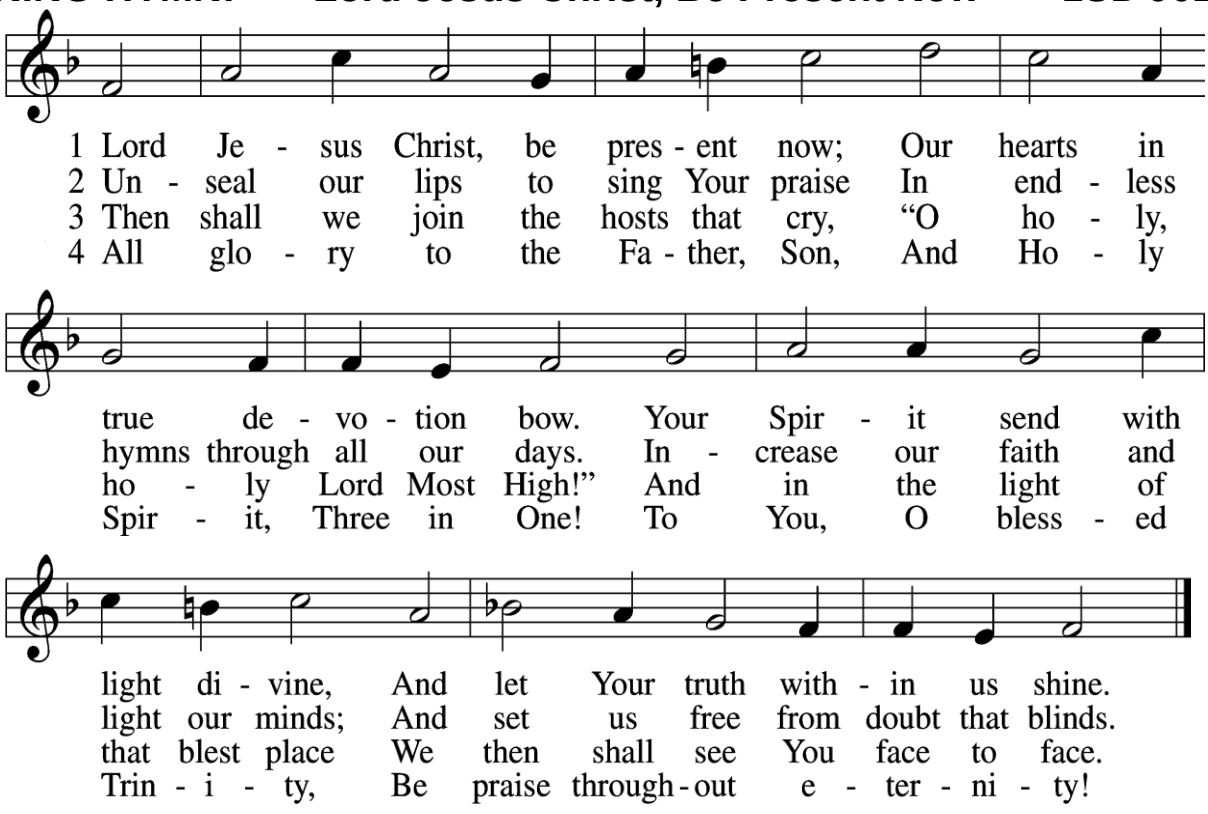
As We Gather

"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: "*Herr Jesu Christ dich zu uns wend'*, BWV 655 & 726 Organ
~ J. S. Bach

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN: "Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now" LSB 902



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)*

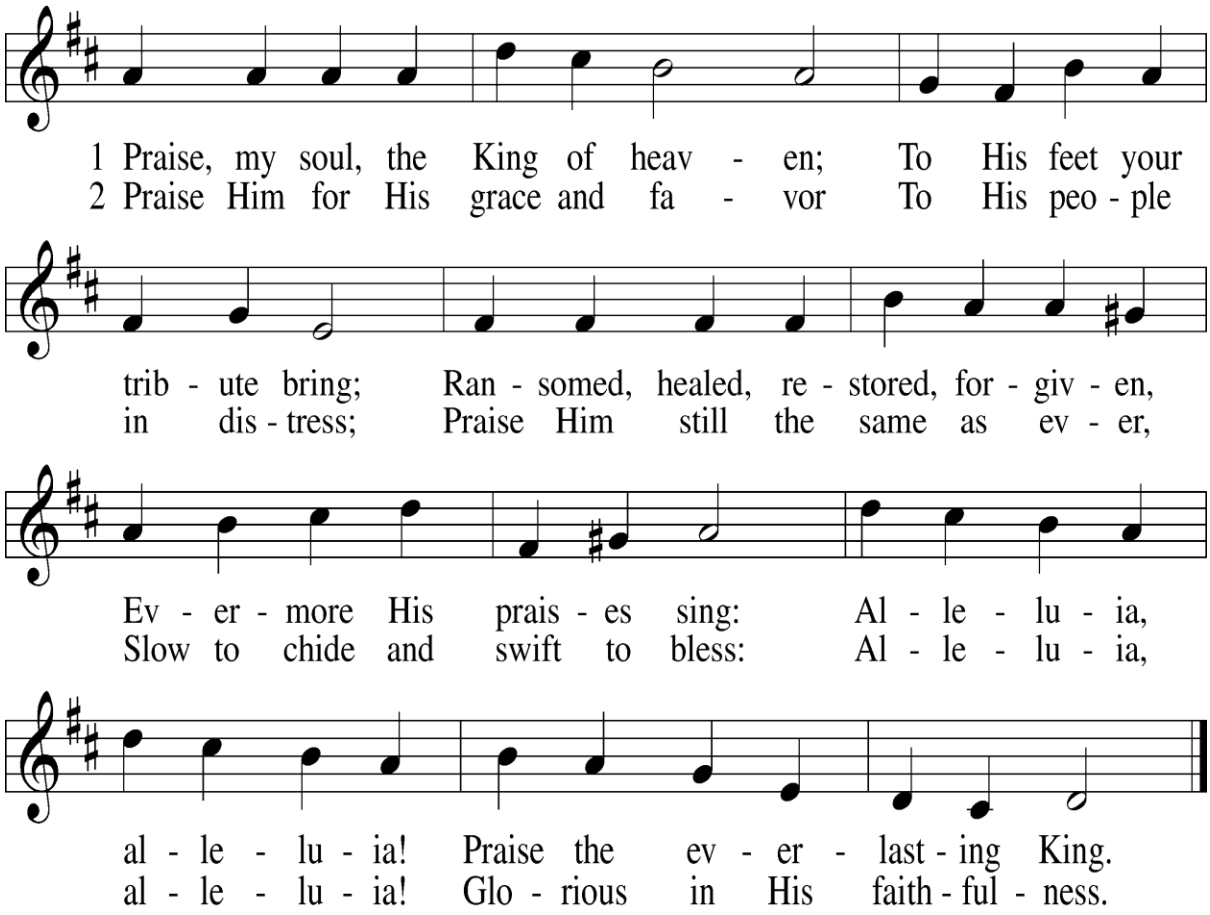
L: I am here to announce that there is no condemnation for you who are Christ's own people. God didn't deal with the problem of sin as something remote or unimportant. In His Son, Jesus, He personally took on the human condition and set it right once and for all. Now God has taken up residence in your 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: "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" LSB 793



FIRST READING: ***Ezekiel 33:7-9***

"Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for the people of Israel. Listen to what I say, and warn them for me. Suppose I say to a wicked person, 'You wicked person, you will certainly die,' and you say nothing to warn him to change his ways. That wicked person will die because of his sin, and I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn a wicked person to turn from his ways and he doesn't turn from them, then he will die because of his sin. However, you will save yourself. —GW®

SECOND READING: *Romans 13:1-10*

Every person should obey the government in power. No government would exist if it hadn't been established by God. The governments which exist have been put in place by God. Therefore, whoever resists the government opposes what God has established. Those who resist will bring punishment on themselves.
People who do what is right don't have to be afraid of the government. But people who do what is wrong should be afraid of it. Would you like to live without being afraid of the government? Do what is right, and it will praise you. The government is God's servant working for your good.

But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid. The government has the right to carry out the death sentence. It is God's servant, an avenger to execute God's anger on anyone who does what is wrong. Therefore, it is necessary for you to obey, not only because you're afraid of God's anger but also because of your own conscience.

That is also why you pay your taxes. People in the government are God's servants while they do the work he has given them. Pay everyone whatever you owe them. If you owe taxes, pay them. If you owe tolls, pay them. If you owe someone respect, respect that person. If you owe someone honor, honor that person.

Pay your debts as they come due. However, one debt you can never finish paying is the debt of love that you owe each other. The one who loves another person has fulfilled Moses' Teachings. The commandments, "Never commit adultery; never murder; never steal; never have wrong desires," and every other commandment are summed up in this statement: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." Love never does anything that is harmful to a neighbor. Therefore, love fulfills Moses' Teachings. —GW®

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HOLY GOSPEL: *Matthew 18:1-20*

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

He called a little child and had him stand among them. Then He said to them, "I can guarantee this truth: Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a child like this in my name welcomes me.

“These little ones believe in me. It would be best for the person who causes one of them to lose faith to be drowned in the sea with a large stone hung around his neck. How horrible it will be for the world because it causes people to lose their faith. Situations that cause people to lose their faith will arise. How horrible it will be for the person who causes someone to lose his faith!

“If your hand or your foot causes you to lose your faith, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life disabled or injured than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into everlasting fire. If your eye causes you to lose your faith, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hellfire.

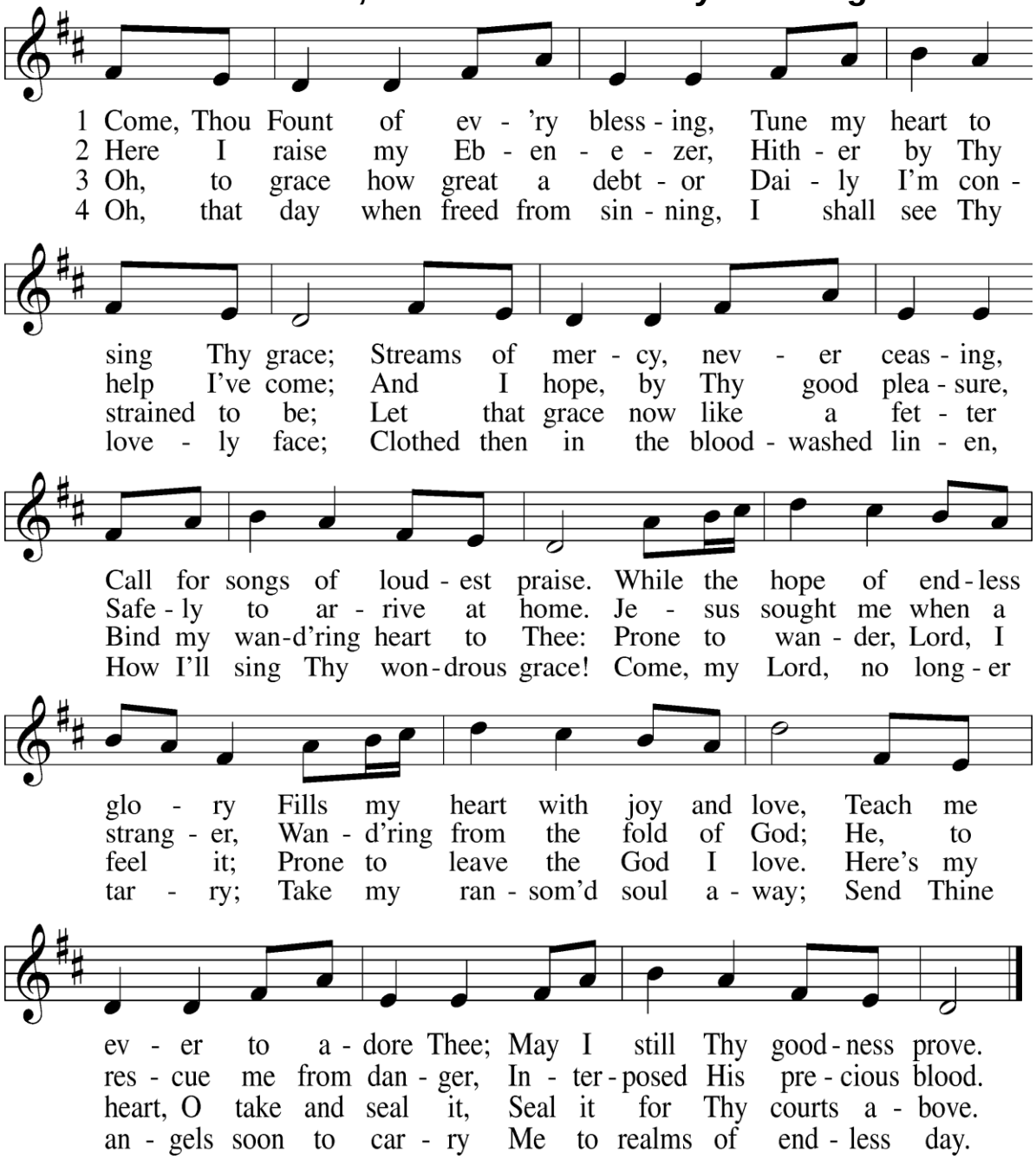
“Be careful not to despise these little ones. I can guarantee that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father, who is in heaven.

“What do you think? Suppose a man has 100 sheep and one of them strays. Won’t he leave the 99 sheep in the hills to look for the one that has strayed? I can guarantee this truth: If he finds it, he is happier about it than about the 99 that have not strayed. In the same way, your Father in heaven does not want one of these little ones to be lost.

“If a believer does something wrong, go, confront him when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have won back that believer. But if he does not listen, take one or two others with you so that every accusation may be verified by two or three witnesses. If he ignores these witnesses, tell it to the community of believers. If he also ignores the community, deal with him as you would a heathen or a tax collector. I can guarantee this truth: Whatever you imprison, God will imprison. And whatever you set free, God will set free.

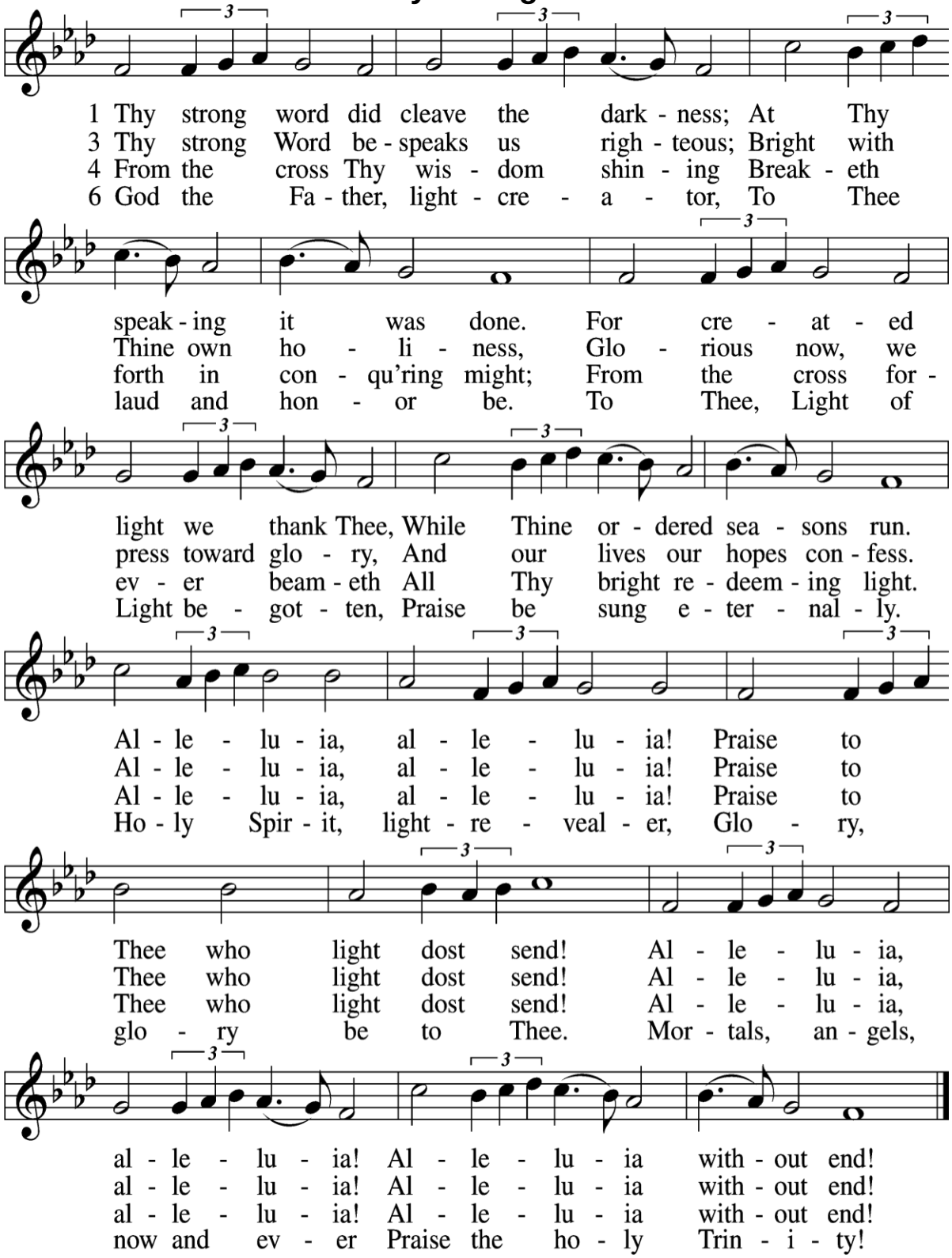
“I can guarantee again that if two of you agree on anything here on earth, my Father in heaven will accept it. Where two or three have come together in my name, I am there among them.” —GW®

SERMON HYMN: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" LSB 686



MESSAGE: ***Romans 13:1-10***

HYMN OF THE DAY: “Thy Strong Word” LSB 578



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.

✢ Service of 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.

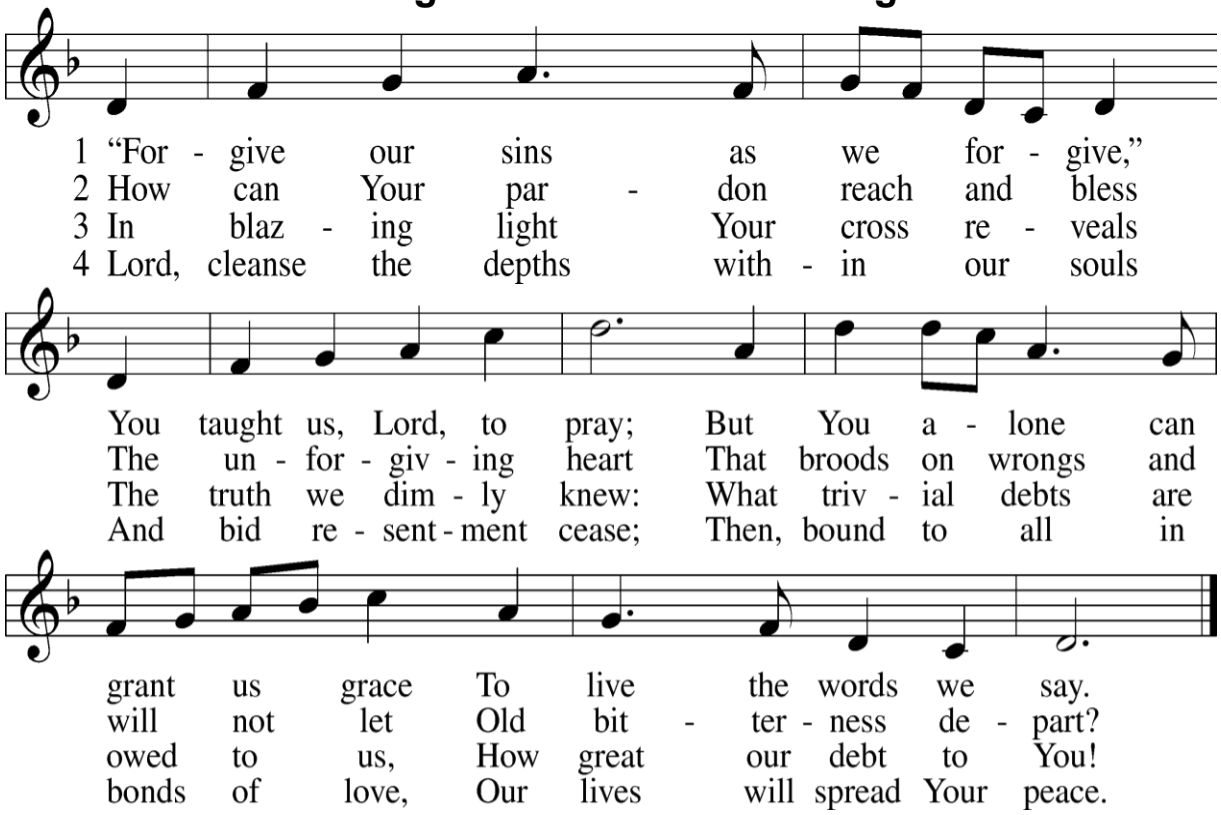
To prepare for communion you can find prayer prompts on the front page of the Lutheran Service Book. Or simply pray: "Dear Lord Jesus, at Your gracious invitation, You invite me to come to You; to eat and drink Your holy body and blood as You Yourself have promised to give in this sacred meal. Forgive 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;***

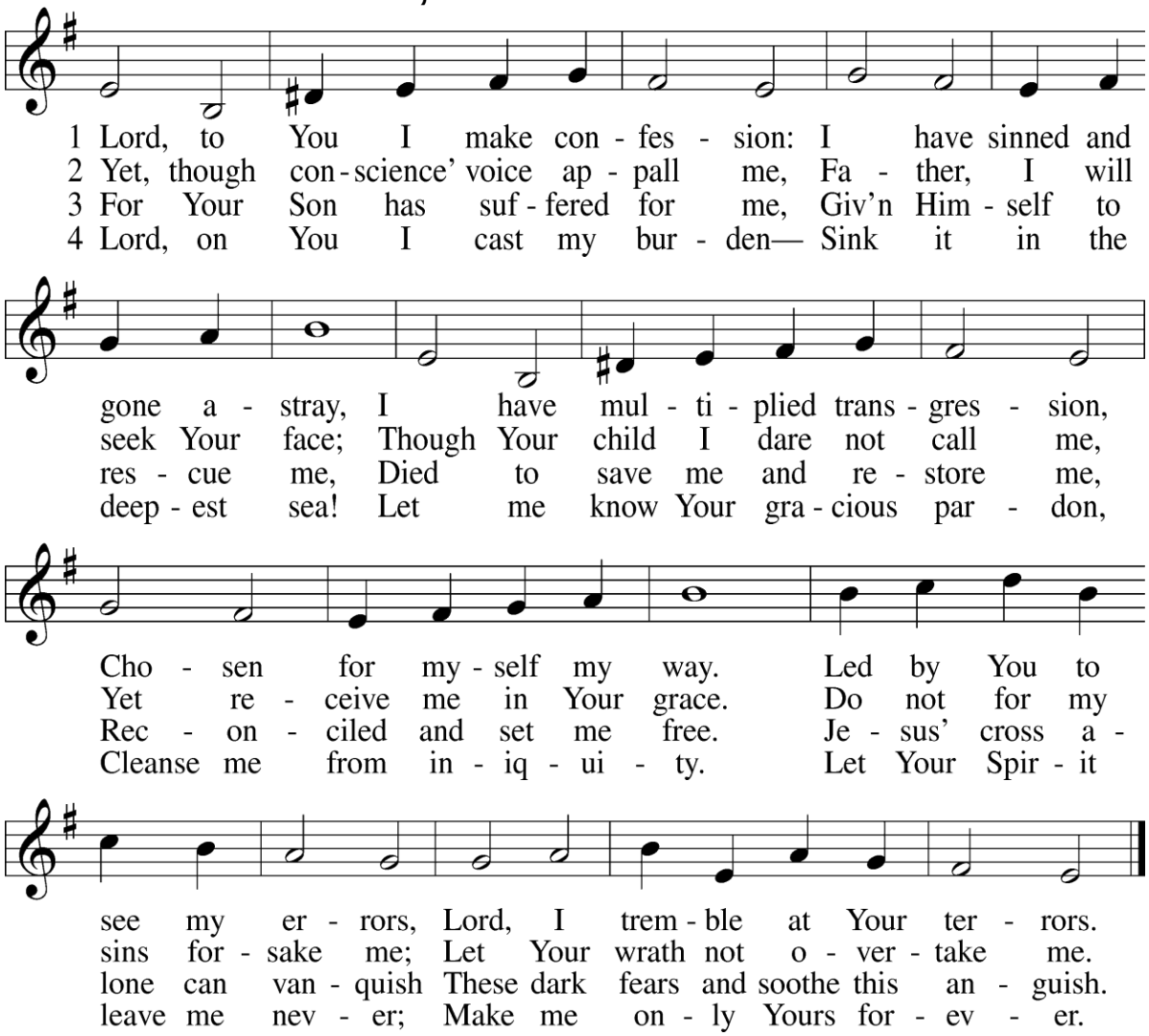
We will practice the Easter tradition of continuous communion. We will not kneel at the altar, rather we come forward and remain standing as we receive the bread and wine. After receiving the elements, you are invited to return to your seat and continue in meditation, prayer and song.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION: "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" LSB 843



“Lord, to You I Make Confession” LSB 608



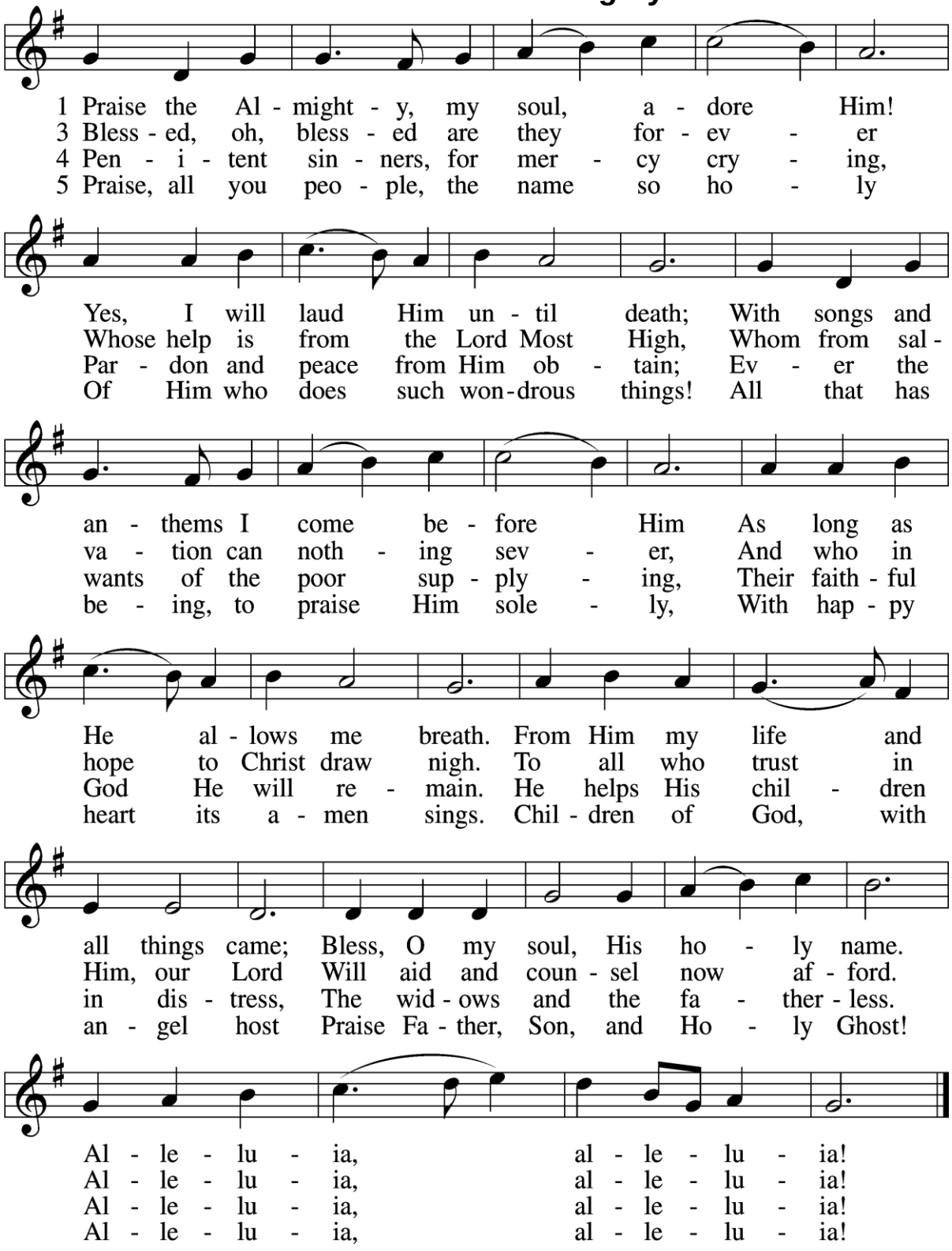
POST COMMUNION PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION:

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

CLOSING HYMN: **"Praise the Almighty"** LSB 797



POSTLUDE: ***"Lobe den Herren, o meine Seele"*** Organ

~Robert J. Powell

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Liturgy (or the appropriate portion thereof) from *Lutheran Service Book* ©2006 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission. LSBHymnLicense.net License #000012696

"Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now" LSB 902
Text: *Lutherisch Hand-Büchlein*, Altenburg, 1648; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.
Tune: *Cantionale Germanicum*, Gochsheim, 1628; setting: *Service Book and Hymnal*, 1958.
Text and Music: Public domain

"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" LSB 793
Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793-1847
Tune: John Goss, 1800-80 Text and Tune: Public domain

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" LSB 686
"Ebenezer" means "Thus far has the LORD helped us
This was the name given to the stone of remembrance
that Samuel raised to God's glory (1 Sam. 7:12).
Text: Robert Robinson, 1735-90, alt. Music: *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second*, Harrisburg, 1813. Text and music: Public domain.

"Thy Strong Word" LSB 578
Text: Martin H. Franzmann, 1907-76.
Tune: Thomas J. Williams, 1869-1944; setting: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923, alt..
Text/setting: ©1969 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONELICENSE #A-706149. Tune: Public domain.

"Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" LSB 843
Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905-87, alt.
Tune: English; adapt. and harm. Ralph Vaughan Willams , 1872-1958, alt.
Text: © 1969 Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONELICENSE #A-706149. Music: Public domain.

"Lord, to You I Make Confession" LSB 608
Text: Johann Franck, 1618-77; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.
Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598-1662; setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941.
Text and Tune: Public domain.

"Praise the Almighty" LSB 797
Text: Johann Dnaiel Herrnschmidt, 1675-1723; tr. Alfred E. R. Brauer, 1866-1949, alt.
Tune: *New-vermehrte Christliche Seelenharpf*, Ansbach, 1665; setting: *Christian Worship*, 1993
Text and Music: Public domain.

✢ ✢ ✢

SERVING GOD'S HOUSE TODAY:

Crucifer 9:30…Logan Noble
Lector 8:00…Greg Goebel
Lector 9:30…Vance Frederick
Liturgist …Pastor John Alwood
Preacher...Vicar Johnny Trinklein
Organist…Robert Bottoms
Children's Message…Kayleigh Lopez
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.

✢ ✢ ✢

** Please visit our websites to find out more about our Church, School & Preschool.

Bethany Lutheran Church and its Ministries are found at: www.bethanylutheran.org

Bethany Lutheran School information can be found by visiting: www.bethanylutheran.org/school/

Bethany Preschool's website: www.bethanylutheran.org/preschool/

** Get weekly updates by signing up for the **Bethany Broadcast**—our weekly capsule of worship highlights and campus-wide information.

To sign up for the weekly **Bethany Broadcast**: https://bit.ly/BethanyBroadcastSignUp

DONATE TO BETHANY'S FLOWER FUND!

Flowers are used to decorate the altar every Sunday, for special seasons such as Christmas and Easter, as well as other important dates during the church calendar. You are able to make two types of donations to the Altar Flower Fund: a general donation and a special request with recognition.



- **A SPECIAL REQUEST WITH RECOGNITION*** is a special type of Altar Flower donation. This request will be printed in the bulletin. For example, it could be given in memory of a person who has gone before us, for a wedding anniversary, baptismal birthday or a birthday celebration, etc. **This recognition has a suggested donation of $85.**

- **A GENERAL DONATION TO THE ALTAR FLOWER FUND** enables Bethany to have flowers in worship and for our shut-in and hospitalized members to receive flowers from our flower ministry team, even when no one has ordered flowers for specific purposes on Sunday. **This General Donation is for any amount you wish to give.**

***If you are making a **Special Request with Recognition**, please use this form to let us know of your donation **for a specific Sunday date** and what the significance of that donation is towards. **IMPORTANT:** Please complete this form at least **2 weeks prior** to that date, so that information regarding your donation can be printed in the Sunday bulletin for the date requested.

Sign up to donate to Bethany's Altar Flower Fund, please use this URL:

https://bit.ly/BLCAltarFlowers

Or scan Bethany's Flower Fund QR code to the right:

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
AND CONTACT INFO!



LONG BEACH OFFICE:
Monday – Thursday: 8 am – 12 pm
longbeachoffice@bethanylutheran.org
562.421.4711

CYPRESS OFFICE:
Monday – Friday: 9 am – 1 pm
cypressoffice@bethanylutheran.org
714.942.1793



OUR NEW TWO-CAMPUS WORSHIP & BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE



LONG BEACH CAMPUS
SUNDAYS 8 & 9:30 AM*



CYPRESS CAMPUS
SUNDAYS 11:10 AM
WEDNESDAYS 6:30 PM

COMMUNION
1ST SUNDAY *ALL SERVICES*
2ND SUNDAY *9:30 AM ONLY*
3RD SUNDAY *ALL SERVICES*
4TH SUNDAY *9:30 AM ONLY*

***OUR 9:30 AM SERVICE IS LIVESTREAMED ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL.**