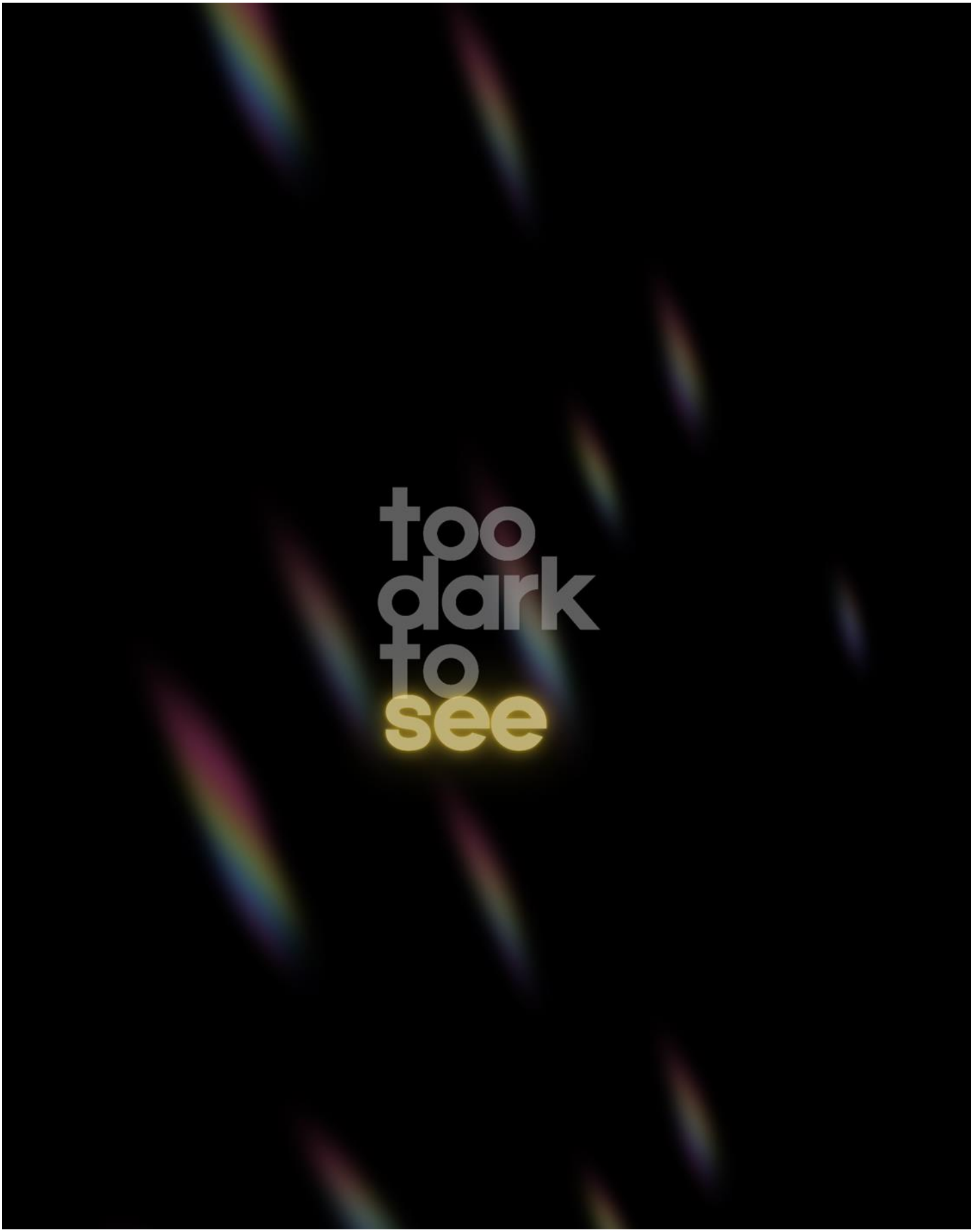


Bethany Lutheran Church, Long Beach

November 22, 2026 Christ the King Sunday

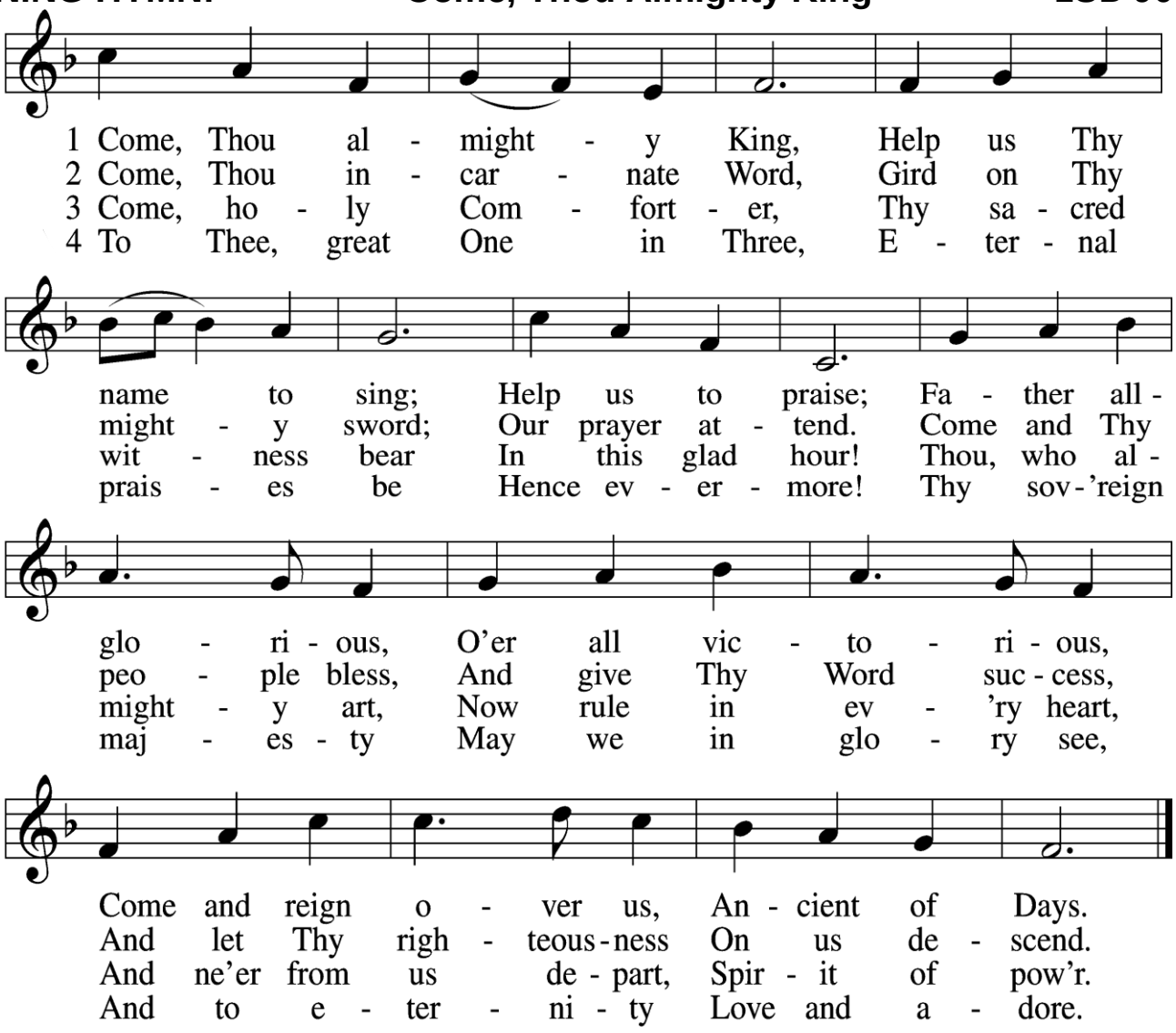
As We Gather:

One of the most prominent themes throughout God's Word is light and darkness. From God's first act of creation of light in Genesis (Genesis 1:3) to the promise in Revelation that God Himself will be the only light we need in the new creation (Revelation 22:5), God consistently speaks to us about light and darkness. The Psalms, Prophets, Gospels, and Epistles all communicate God's desire to call people out of darkness into His light. As we await Jesus' return, we still experience the darkness of this world—a darkness that, at times, is blinding. Nevertheless, Jesus is the light of the world—a light that shines in this darkness and overcomes it.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN: "Come, Thou Almighty King" LSB 905



INVOCATION:

L: Arise! Shine! Your light has come, and the glory of the Father has dawned over you. Jesus is your everlasting light, and the Holy Spirit shines within your heart.

P: **Amen** *(Adapted from Isaiah 60:1, 19, 2 Corinthians 4:6)*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: Let those who walk in darkness and have no light, trust the name of Jesus and depend upon their God.

P: **Jesus has come into the world as the light of the world so that everyone who believes in Him will not remain in the dark but will have the light of life.**
(Adapted from Isaiah 50:10, John 8:12, 12:46)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION: *(Adapted from Job 33:27-28, Psalm 139:11-12, Malachi 4:2, John 3:19-21, 1 John 1:5-7)*

L: This is the message of Truth from God: God is light, and there isn't any darkness in Him. Jesus, the light of the world, has come into the world, but we have loved the darkness rather than the light, because of the evil of our sin.

P: **I have sinned and twisted what was right, but it didn't pay off for me. I have stayed in the dark so that my evil won't be exposed. I have asked the darkness to hide me and the light to become night around me.**

(Time of silent confession)

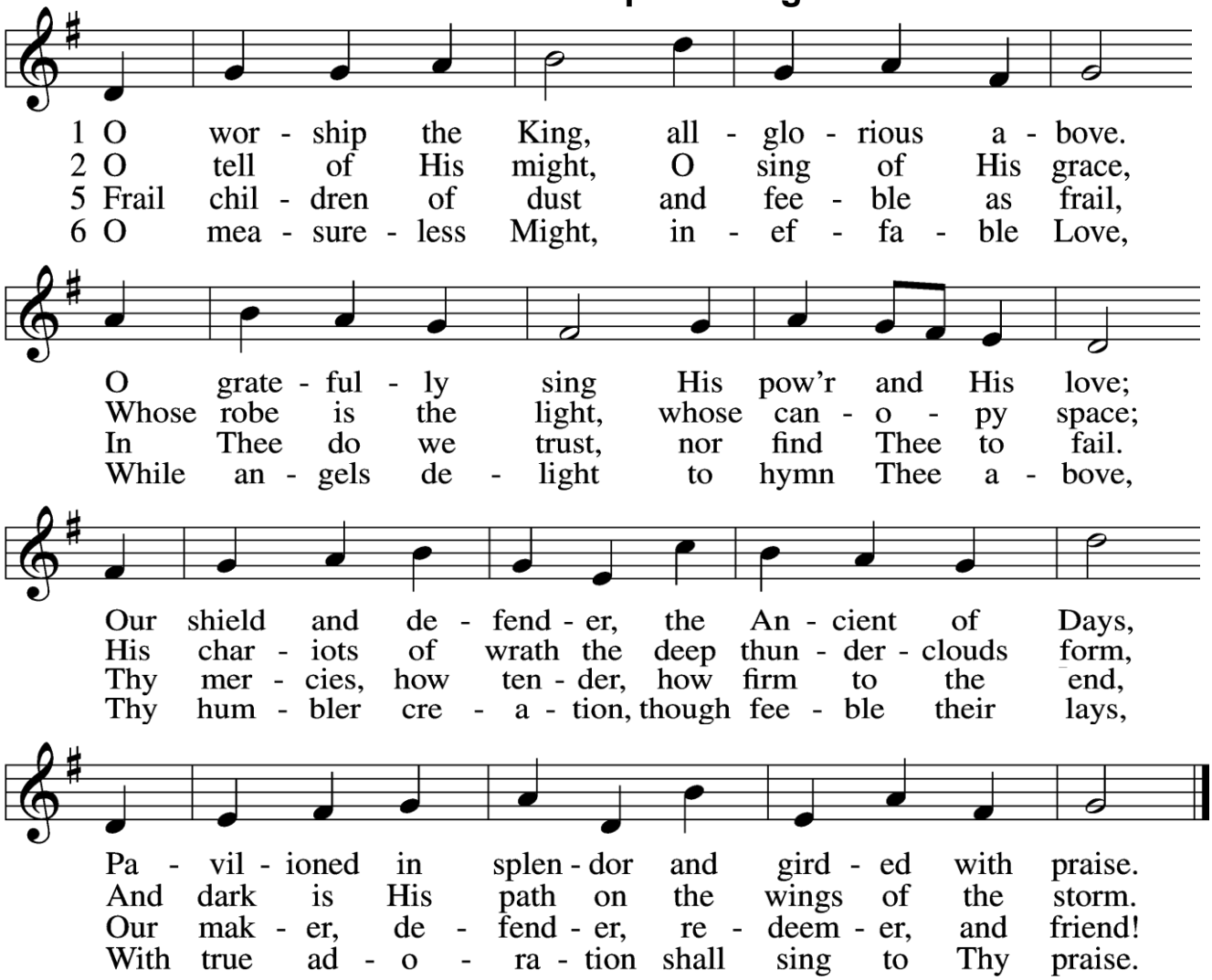
L: But even the darkness isn't dark to you, God. The night shines like the day. Darkness and light are the same to you.

P: **I come into Your light to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, Your Son.**

L: People of God, the Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in His wings. You are forgiven and cleansed of all your sin. Jesus has rescued your soul from going down into darkness, and you now live in His light.

P: **Amen.**

RESPONSIVE HYMN: **"O Worship the King"** LSB 804



PRAYER OF THE DAY:

L: Blessed are You, Lord God, King of the universe. You led the people of Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

P: **Enlighten our darkness by the light of Jesus Christ; may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.**

L: For You are merciful, and You love Your whole creation.

P: **And we, Your people, glorify You: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.** *(Adapted from "Thanksgiving for Light," Evening Prayer, LSB)*

FIRST READING: *Ezekiel 34:11-16; 20-24*

" 'This is what the Almighty Lord says: I will search for my sheep myself, and I will look after them. As a shepherd looks after his flock when he is with his scattered sheep, so I will look after my sheep. I will rescue them on a cloudy and gloomy day from every place

where they have been scattered. I will bring them out from the nations, gather them from the countries, and bring them to their own land. I will take care of them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. I will feed them in good pasture, and they will graze on the mountains of Israel. They will rest on the good land where they graze, and they will feed on the best pastures in the mountains of Israel. I will take care of my sheep and lead them to rest, declares the Almighty Lord. I will look for those that are lost, bring back those that have strayed away, bandage those that are injured, and strengthen those that are sick. I will destroy those that are fat and strong. I will take care of my sheep fairly

" 'So this is what the Almighty Lord says to them: I will judge disputes between the fat sheep and the skinny sheep. You fat sheep push the skinny sheep with your sides and shoulders, and you knock down all the sick sheep with your horns. You have scattered them all over. So I will rescue my sheep, and they will no longer be prey. I will judge between one sheep and another. Then I will place one shepherd over them, my servant David, and he will take care of them. He will take care of them and be their shepherd. I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David will be their prince. I, the Lord, have spoken.'" —GW®

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HOLY GOSPEL: *Matthew 25:31-46*

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all his angels are with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. The people of every nation will be gathered in front of him. He will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right but the goats on his left.

"Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, my Father has blessed you! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me into your home. I needed clothes, and you gave me something to wear. I was sick, and you took care of me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'

"Then the people who have God's approval will reply to him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or see you thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you as a stranger and take you into our homes or see you in need of clothes and give you something to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

"The king will answer them, 'I can guarantee this truth: Whatever you did for one of my brothers or sisters, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did for me.'

"Then the king will say to those on his left, 'Get away from me! God has cursed you! Go into everlasting fire that was prepared for the devil and his angels! I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger,

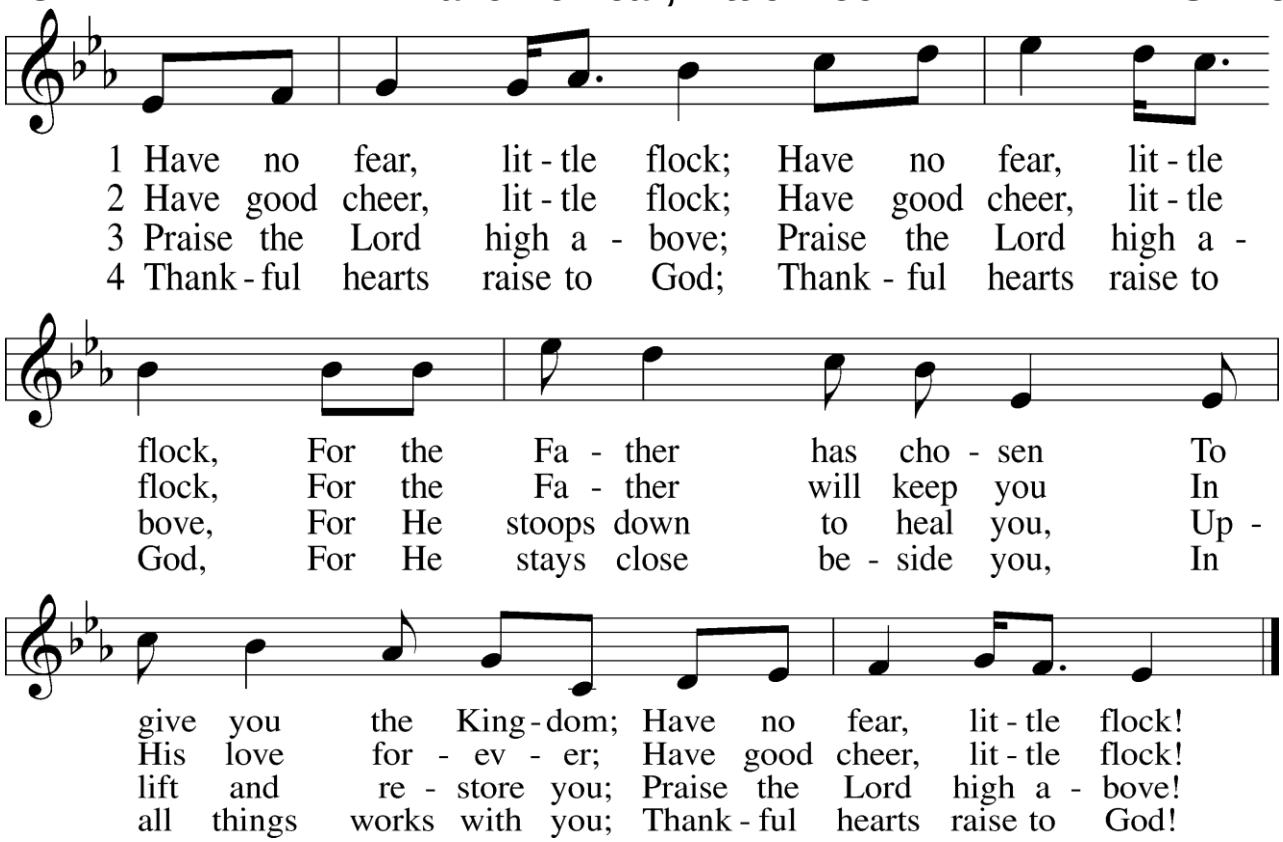
and you didn’t take me into your homes. I needed clothes, and you didn’t give me anything to wear. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t take care of me.’

“They, too, will ask, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or as a stranger or in need of clothes or sick or in prison and didn’t help you?’

“He will answer them, ‘I can guarantee this truth: Whatever you failed to do for one of my brothers or sisters, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you failed to do for me.’

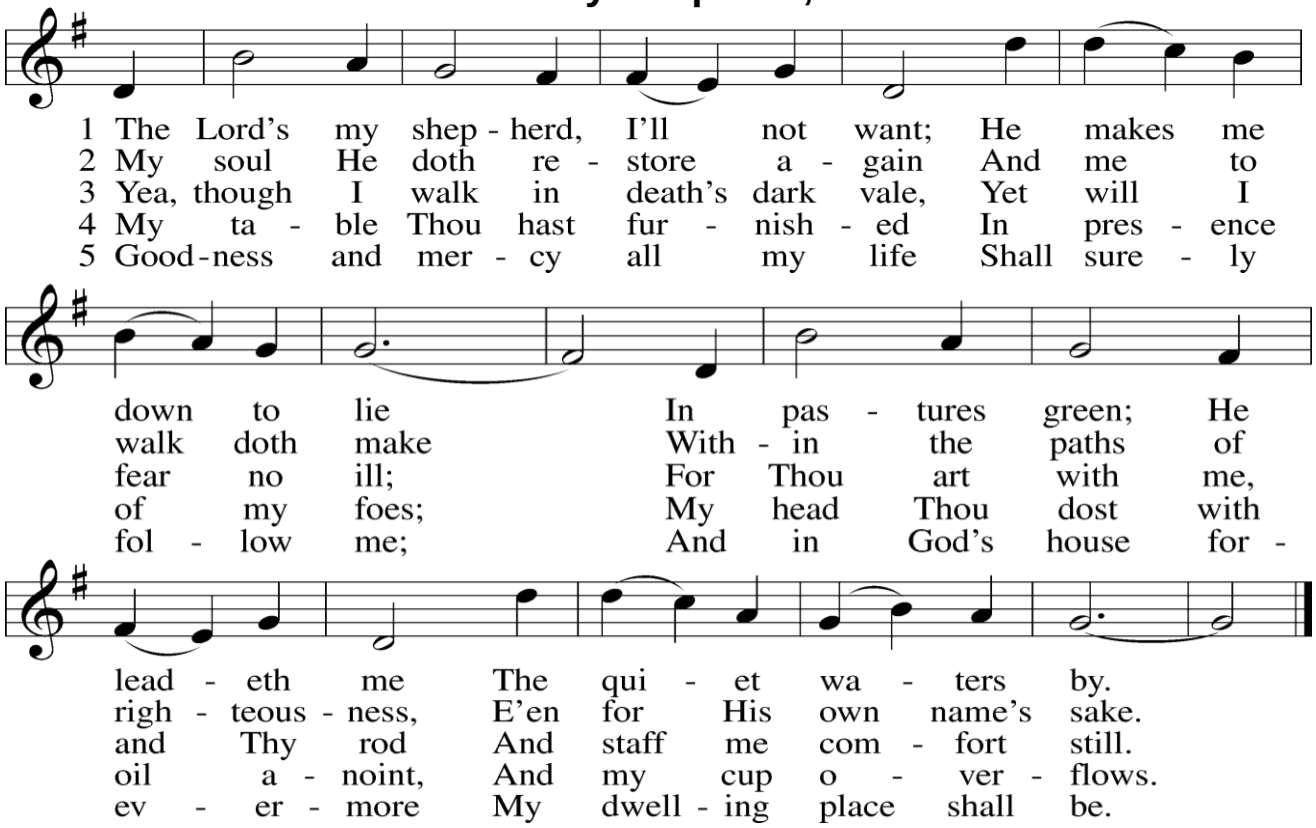
“These people will go away into eternal punishment, but those with God’s approval will go into eternal life.” —GW®

SERMON HYMN: “Have No Fear, Little Flock” LSB 735



MESSAGE: *“Too Dark to See”* *Ezekiel 34:11-16 & 20-24*

HYMN OF THE DAY: "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" LSB 710



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

We believe in one God, the Father, the 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.

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, we believe Thy Word, though dim our faith may be.

P: And all the things we do, O Lord, we do it unto Thee. *(Adapted from LSB 781, stz. 6)*

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 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.

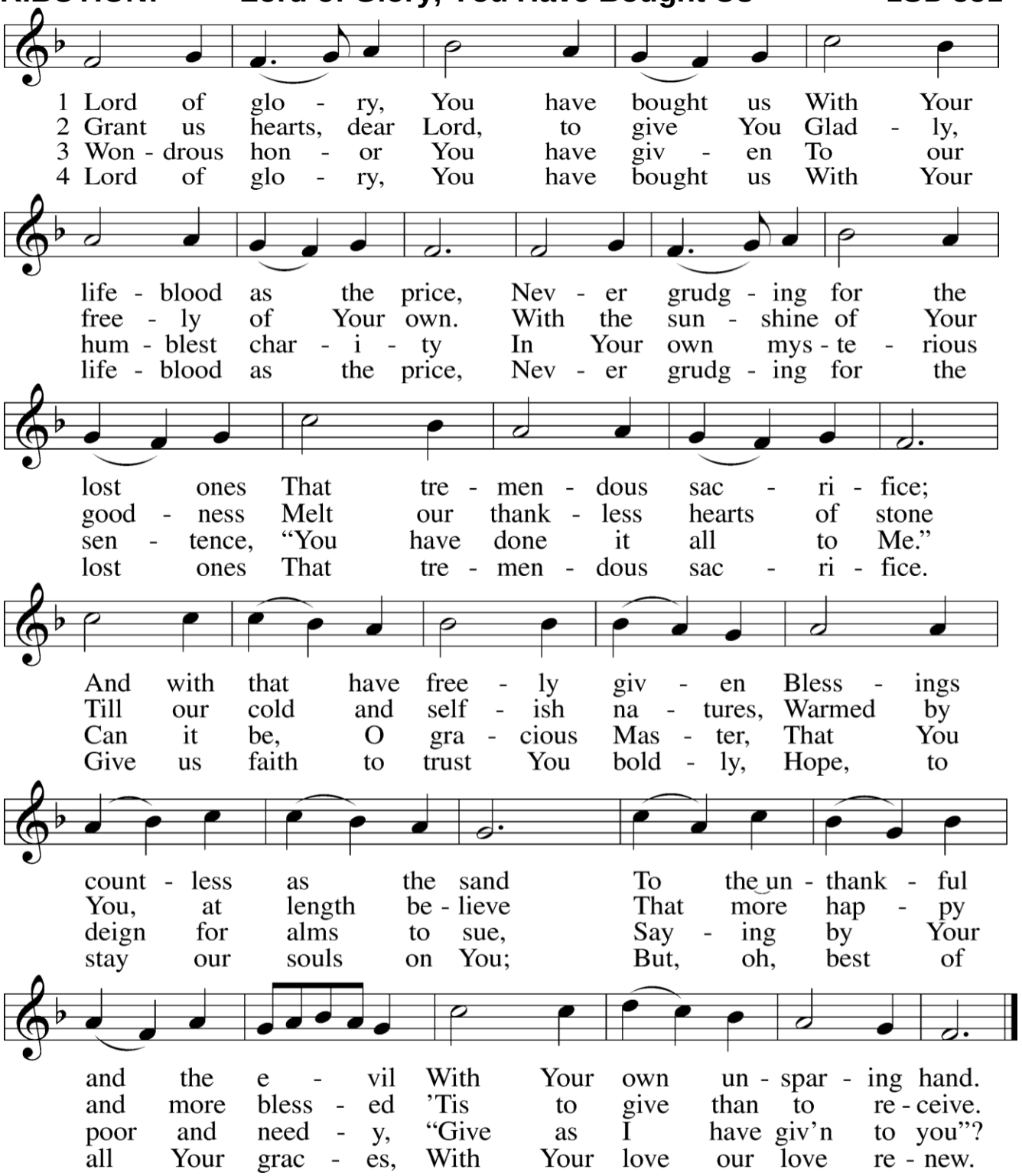
To prepare for communion you can find prayer prompts on the front page of the Lutheran Service Book. Or simply pray: "Dear Lord Jesus, at Your gracious invitation, You invite me to come to You; to eat and drink Your holy body and blood as You Yourself have promised to give in this sacred meal. Forgive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

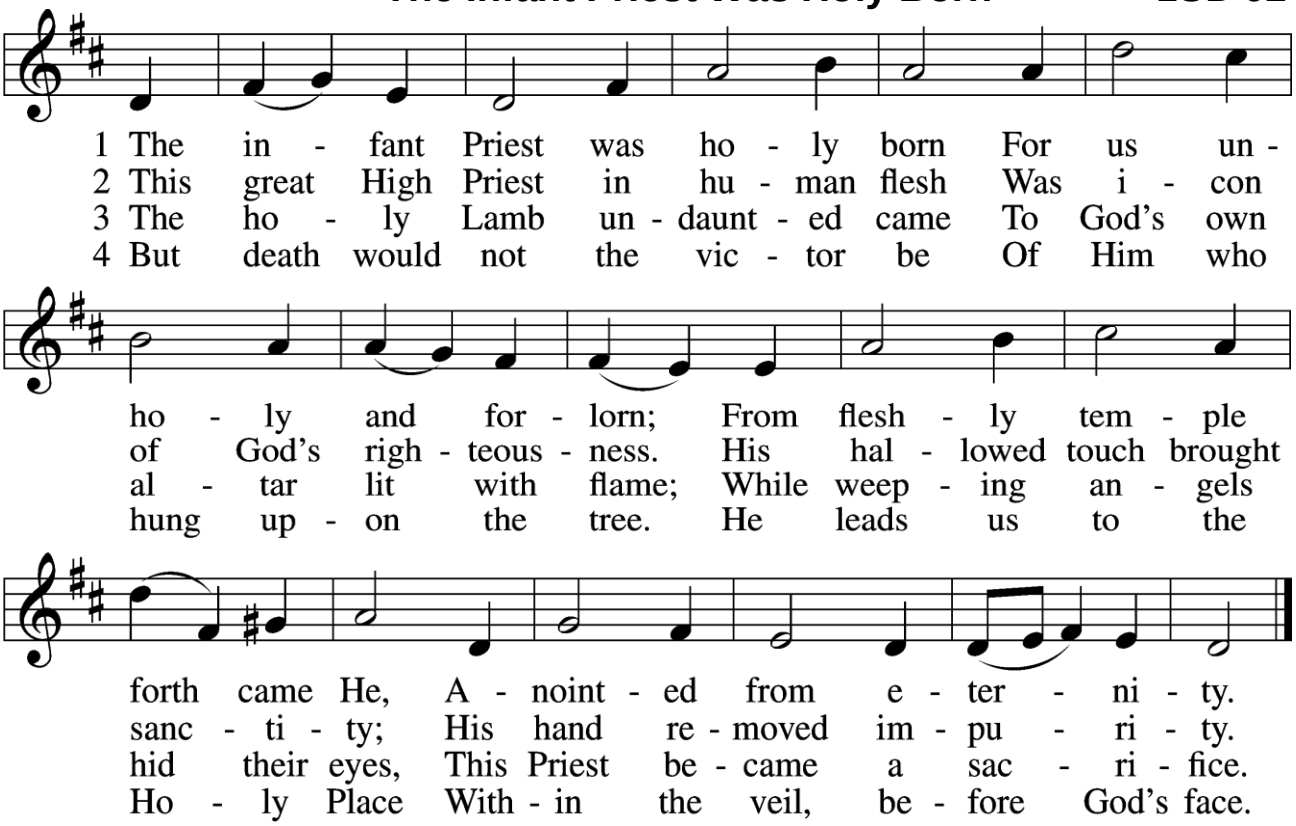
We will practice the Easter tradition of continuous communion. We will not kneel at the altar, rather we come forward and remain standing as we receive the bread and wine. After receiving the elements, you are invited to return to your seat and continue in meditation, prayer and song.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION: "Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us" LSB 851



"The Infant Priest Was Holy Born" LSB 624



5 The veil is torn, our Priest we see,
As at the rail on bended knee
Our hungry mouths from Him receive
The bread of immortality.

6 The body of God's Lamb we eat,
A priestly food and priestly meat;
On sin-parched lips the chalice pours
His quenching blood that life restores.

7 With cherubim and seraphim
Our voices join the endless hymn,
And "Holy, holy, holy" sing
To Christ, God's Lamb, our Priest and King.

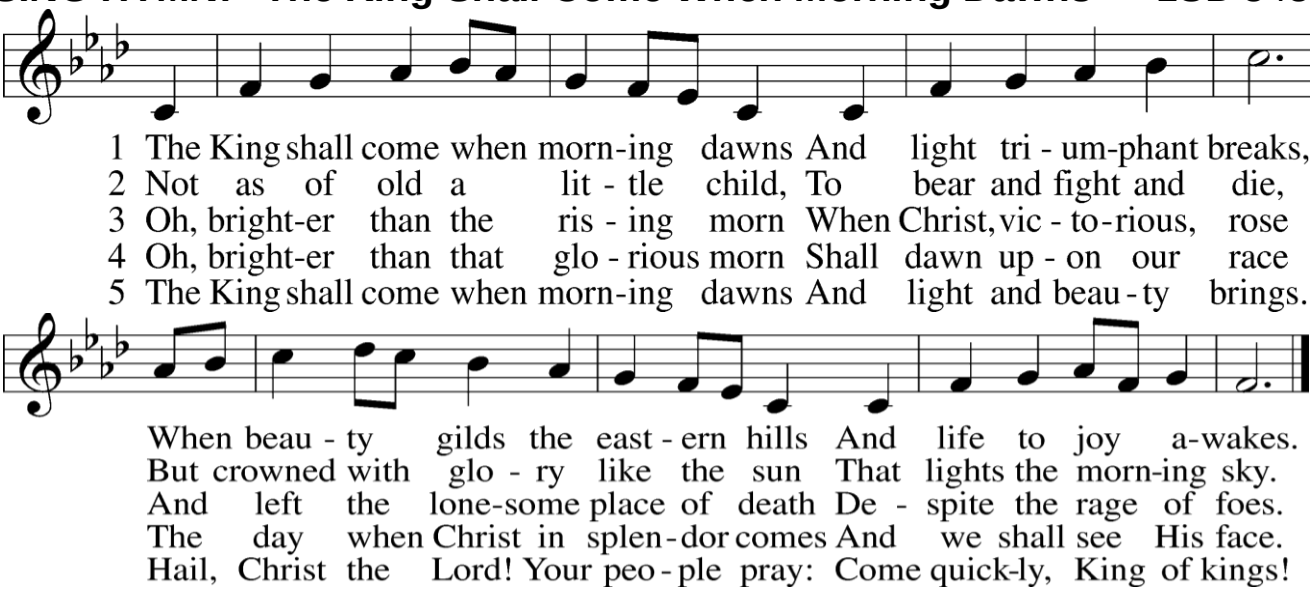
ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION:

L: God our Father has rescued us from the power of darkness and has brought us into the kingdom of His Son, whom He loves. Once you lived in the dark, but now the Lord has filled you with the light of His Spirit. Go now as children who have that light.

P: **Amen.** *(Adapted from Ephesians 5:8, Colossians 1:13)*

CLOSING HYMN: "The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns" LSB 348



POSTLUDE

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"O Worship the King" LSB 804 Text: Robert Grant, alt.; Tune William Croft; setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941. Text and Music: Public domain.

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SERVING GOD'S HOUSE TODAY:

Lector 8:00…Mike Riordan
Liturgist…Pastor John Alwood
Organ/Piano…Kevin Bowers

Lector 9:30…Shannon Morgensen
Preacher...Vicar Johnny Trinklein
Children's Message…Kayleigh Lopez

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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.

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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. Please feel free to ask an usher if you need assistance locating a worship bag for your child—we're happy to help.

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