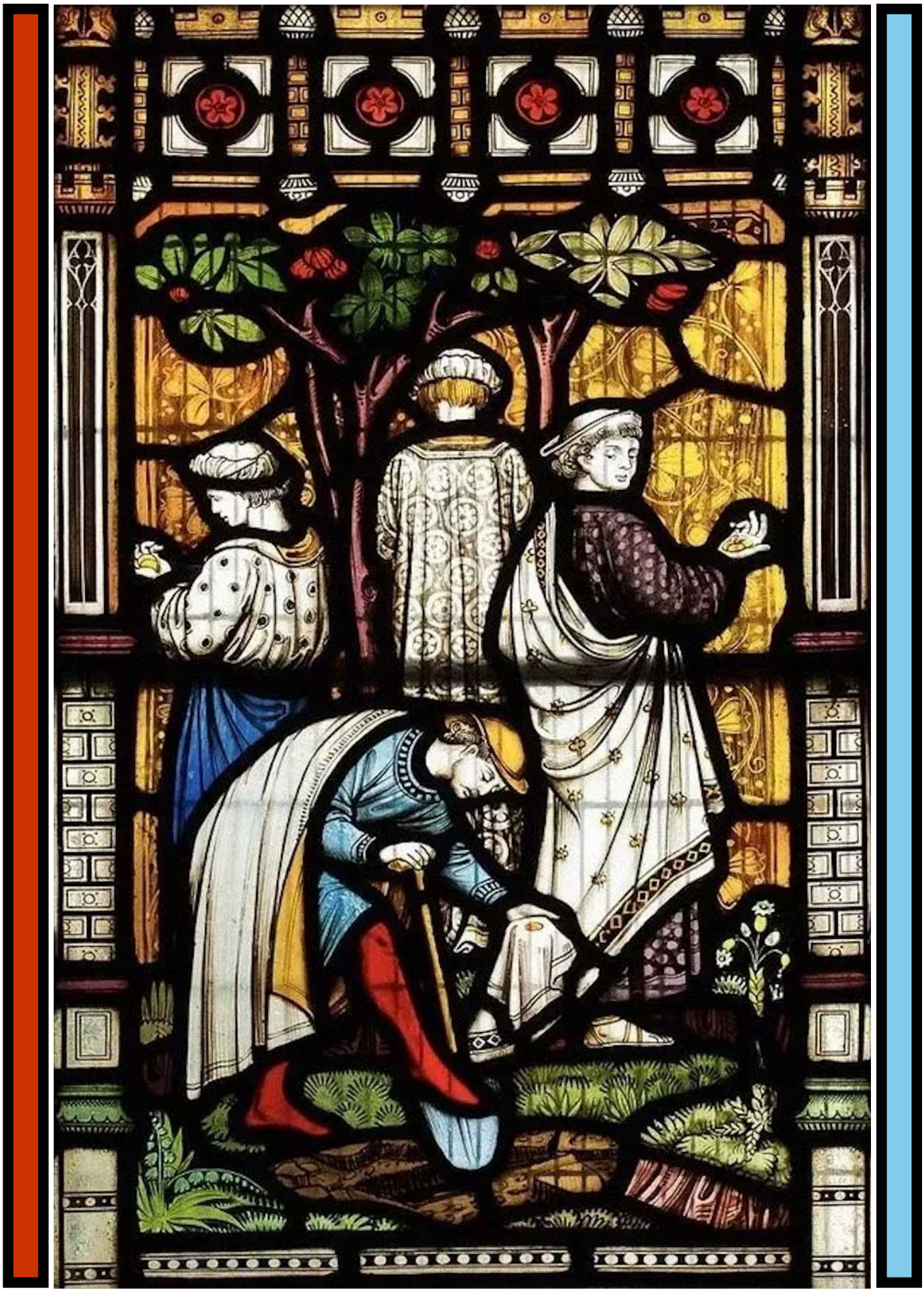


AS WE GATHER

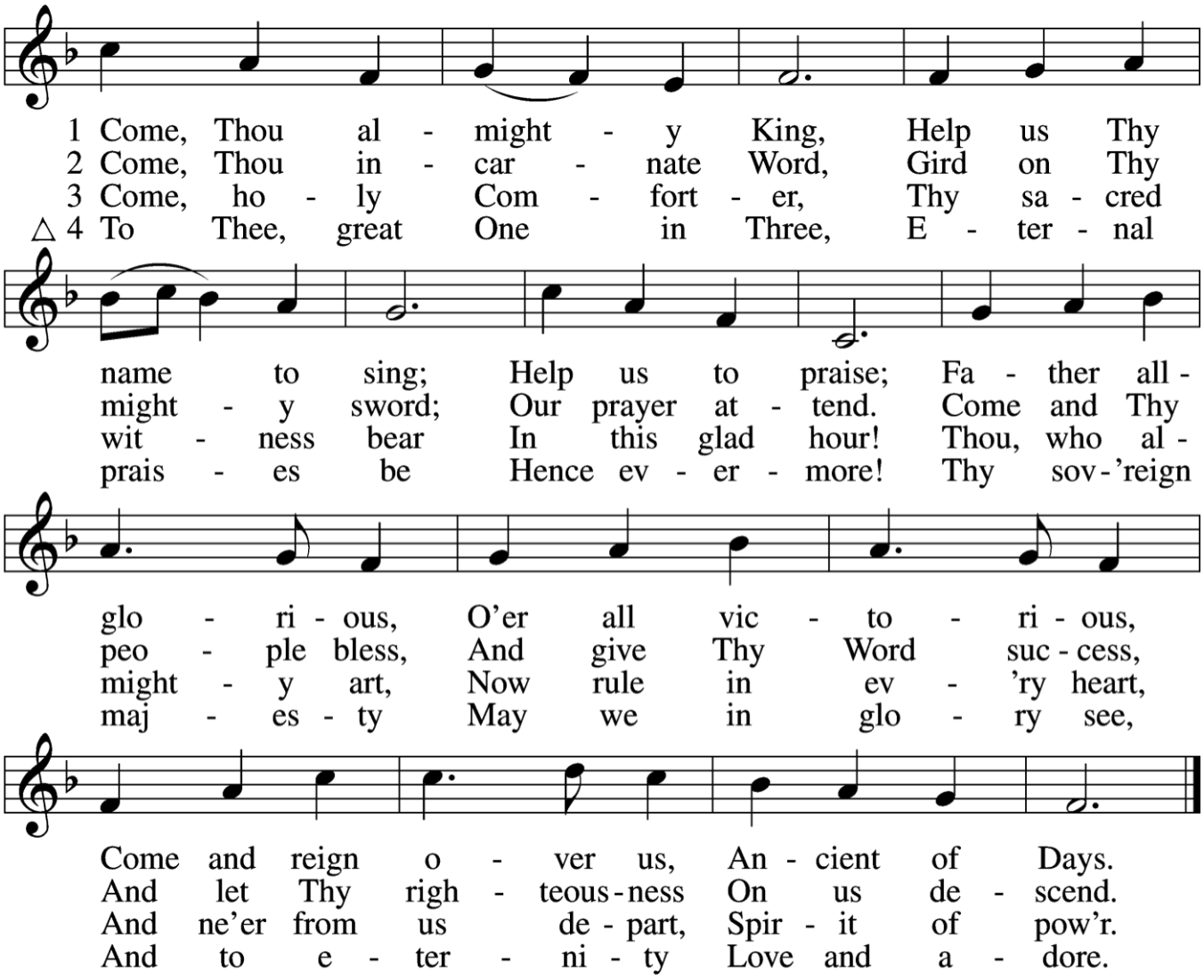
As we reach the end of the Church Year, there is a heightened sense of urgency in all the Readings, hymns, and other propers. These remind us that Christ will certainly come again, that this return draws closer with each passing day, and that we do not know when that day will be. Therefore, we are to be ready and prepared for Jesus to come again – and to meet Him at our own death. Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians in the Epistle, warns that "the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2). Paul warns against complacency, exhibited by those who say, "There is peace and security" (v. 3). In the Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the talents, warning again that we do not know when He, the master, will return; the precious gift of faith must be invested in His means of grace now (Matthew 25:14-30). In the Old Testament Reading, the prophet Zephaniah warns about complacency and misjudging God's character, so that he can point us to God's true nature: "a mighty one who will save" (Zephaniah 3:17).

PRELUDE *"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"* setting by Joseph Herf

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY *(The congregation stands at the ringing of the bell.)*

OPENING HYMN *"Come, Thou Almighty King"* Page 905



INVOCATION

Page 184

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,
People: who made heaven and earth.

Pastor: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
People: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Page 185

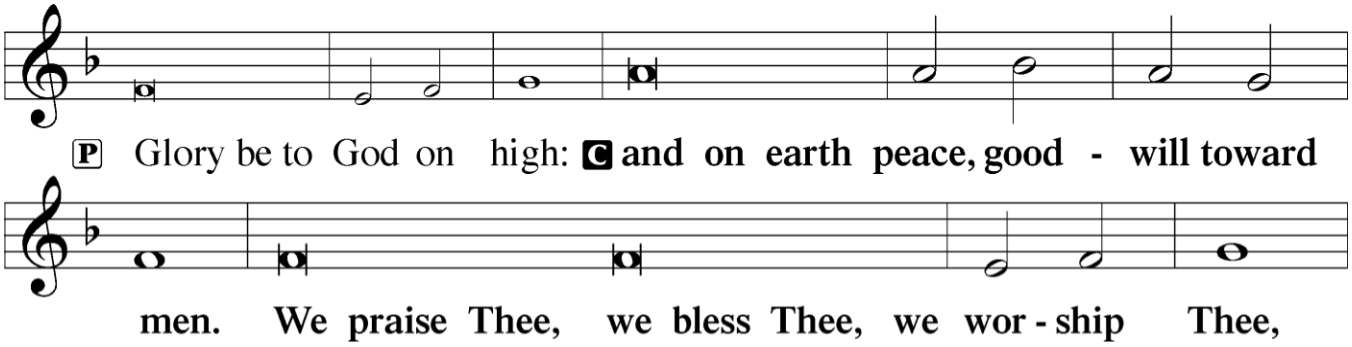
Pastor: O almighty God, merciful Father,
People: **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

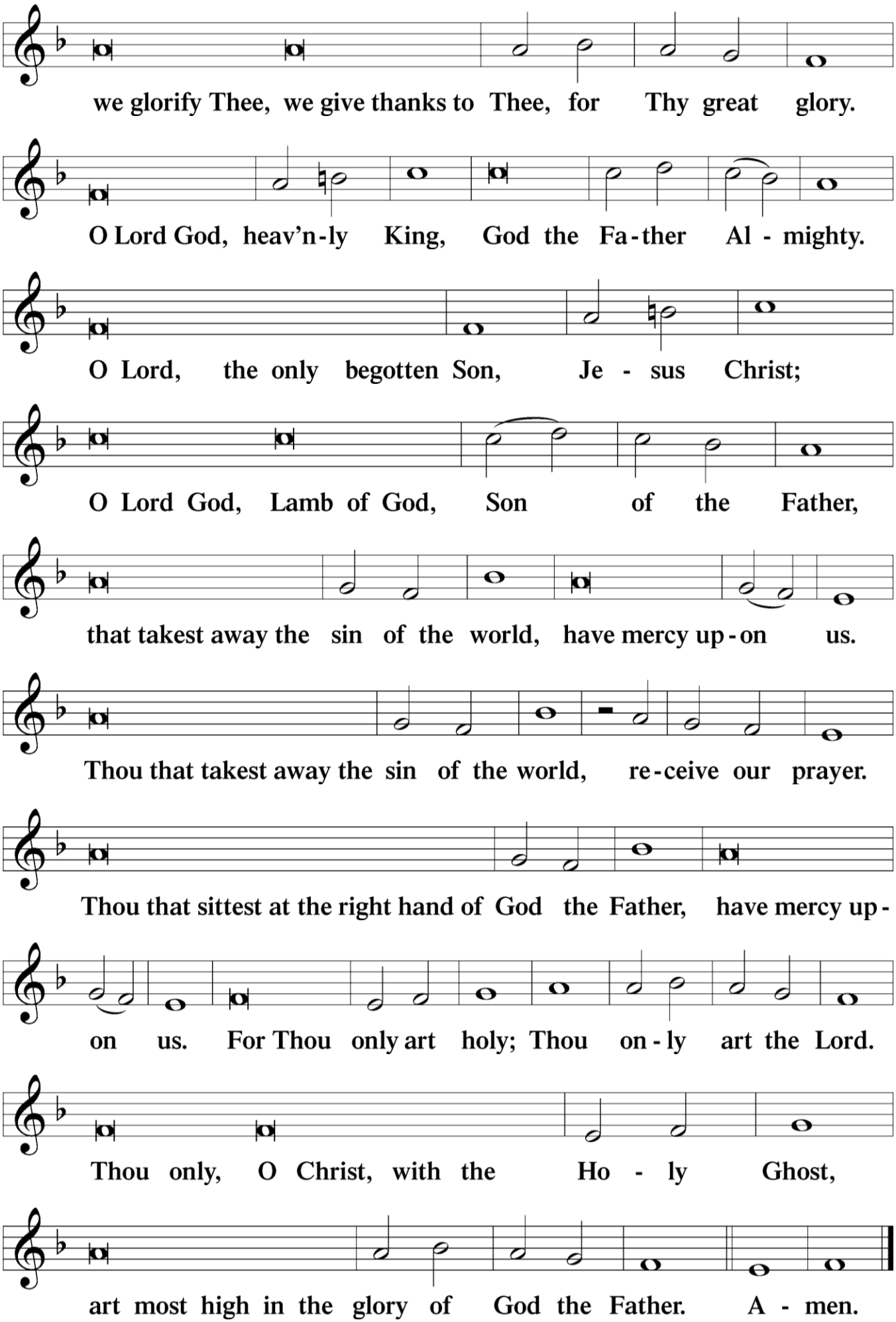
Pastor: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

Service of the Word

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Page 187




we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-
on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.
Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,
art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY Page 172

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Zephaniah 1:7-16

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated His guests. And on the day of the Lord's sacrifice – "I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud. "On that day," declares the Lord, "a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills. Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will He do ill.' Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them." The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE READING 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

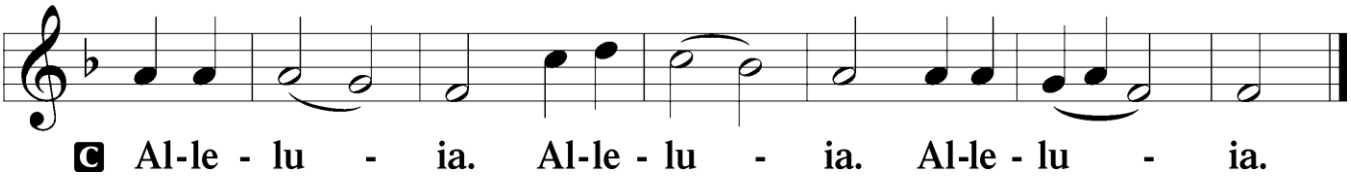
Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For

God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

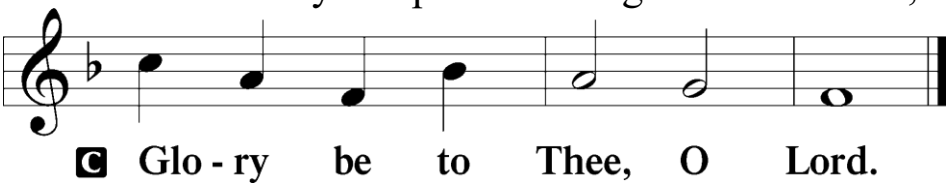
ALLELUIA

Page 190



HOLY GOSPEL

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

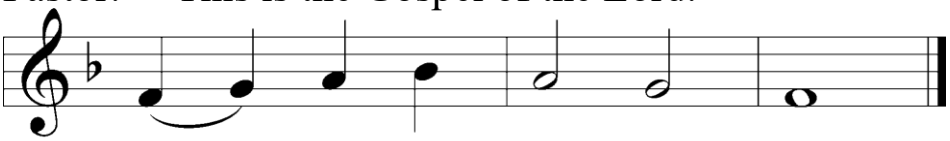


Matthew 25:14-30

"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who

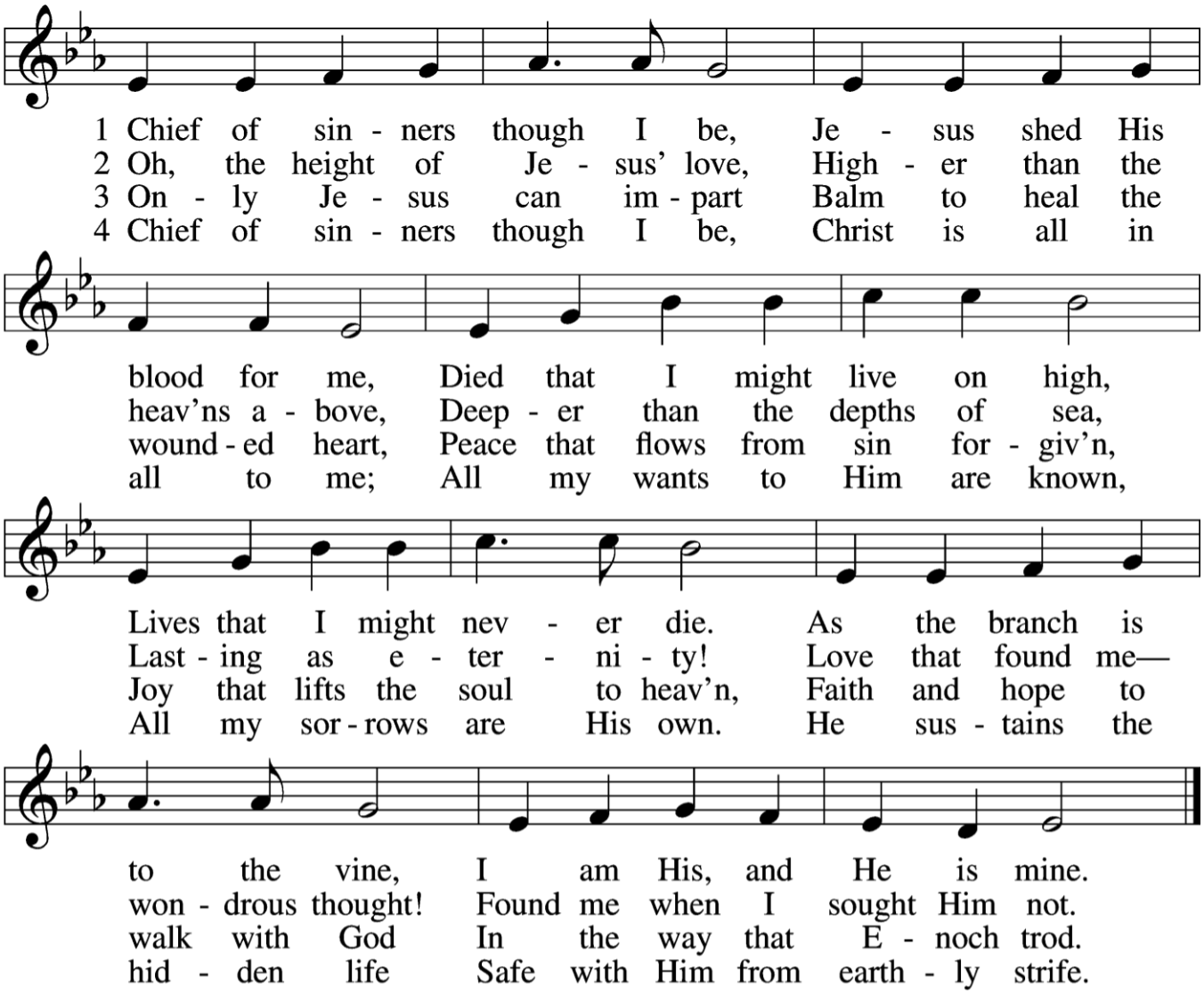
has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY *"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"* Page 611, vs. 1-4



SERMON *"Do You Have Any Talents?"*

Pastor Bradford Hildebrandt

Text: Matthew 25:14-30

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OUR GIFTS AND OFFERINGS

We give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

Prayer Requests: Please print prayer requests on the blue "Prayer" card and hand it to an usher during this time.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *"How Great Thou Art"* Robert A. Hobby

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 the Sacrament

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

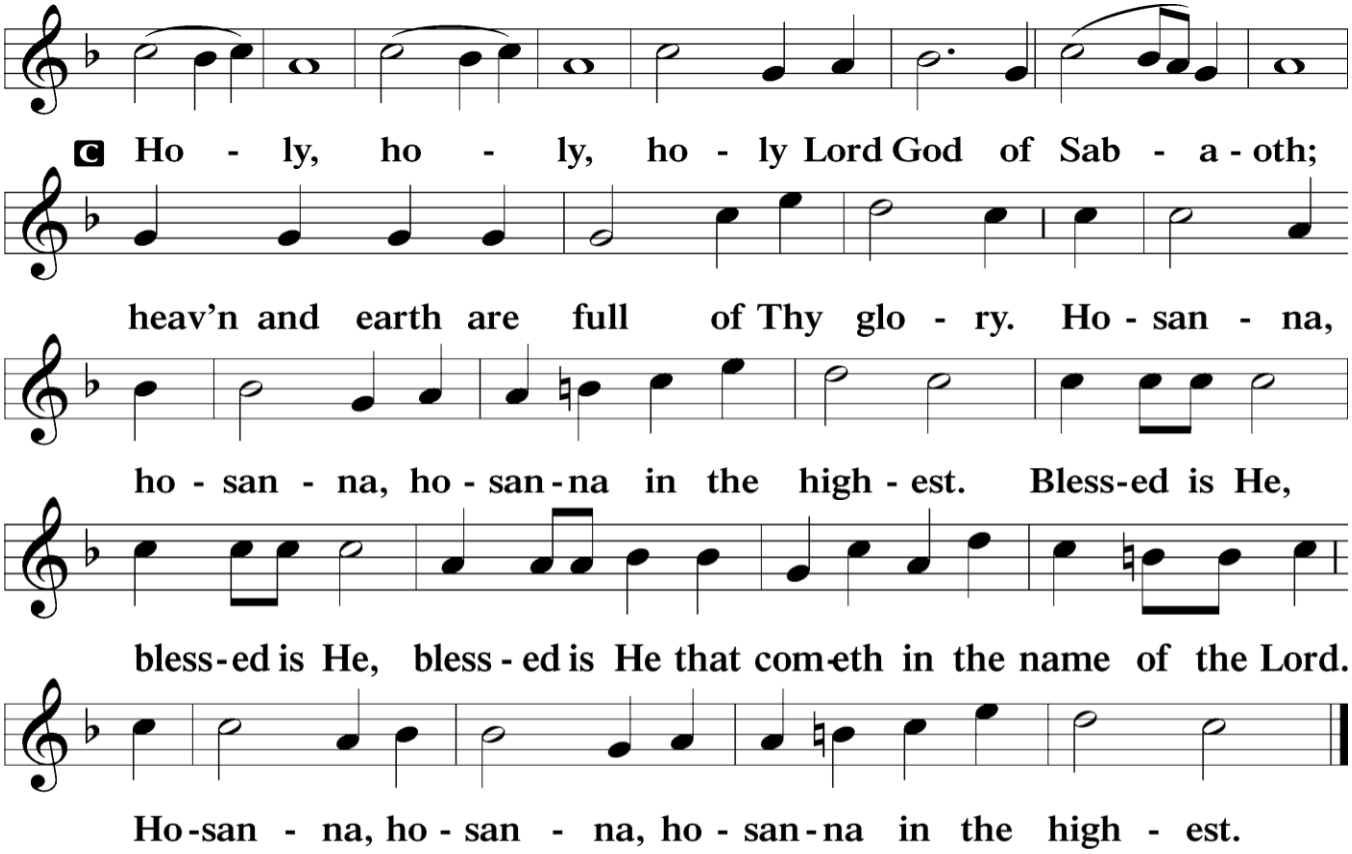
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, having created all things, took on human flesh and was born of the virgin Mary. For our sake He died on the cross and rose from the dead to put an end to death, thus fulfilling Your will and gaining for You a holy people. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

Page 195



WORDS OF OUR LORD

Pastor: 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." 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.

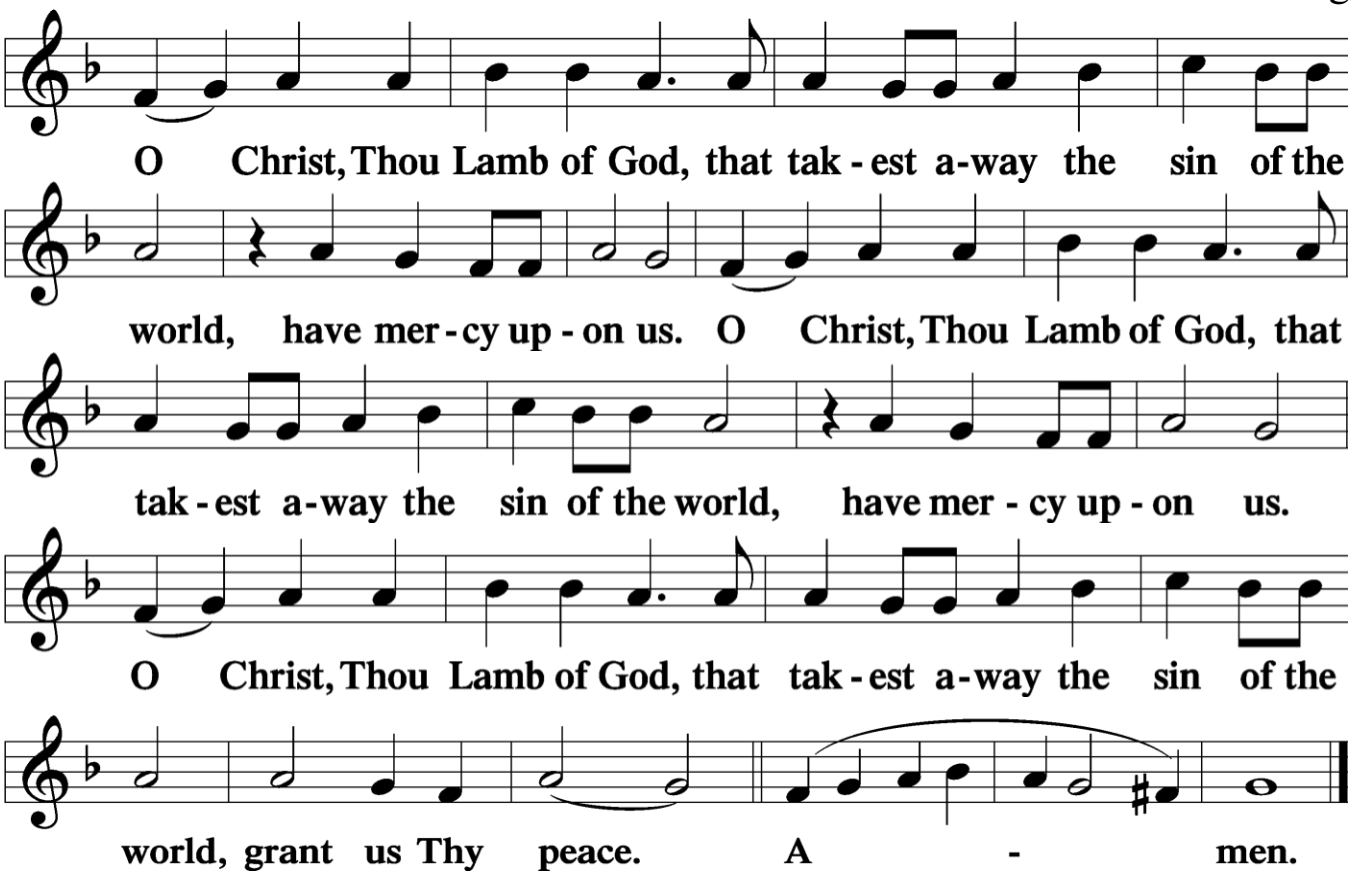
PAX DOMINI

Page 197

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

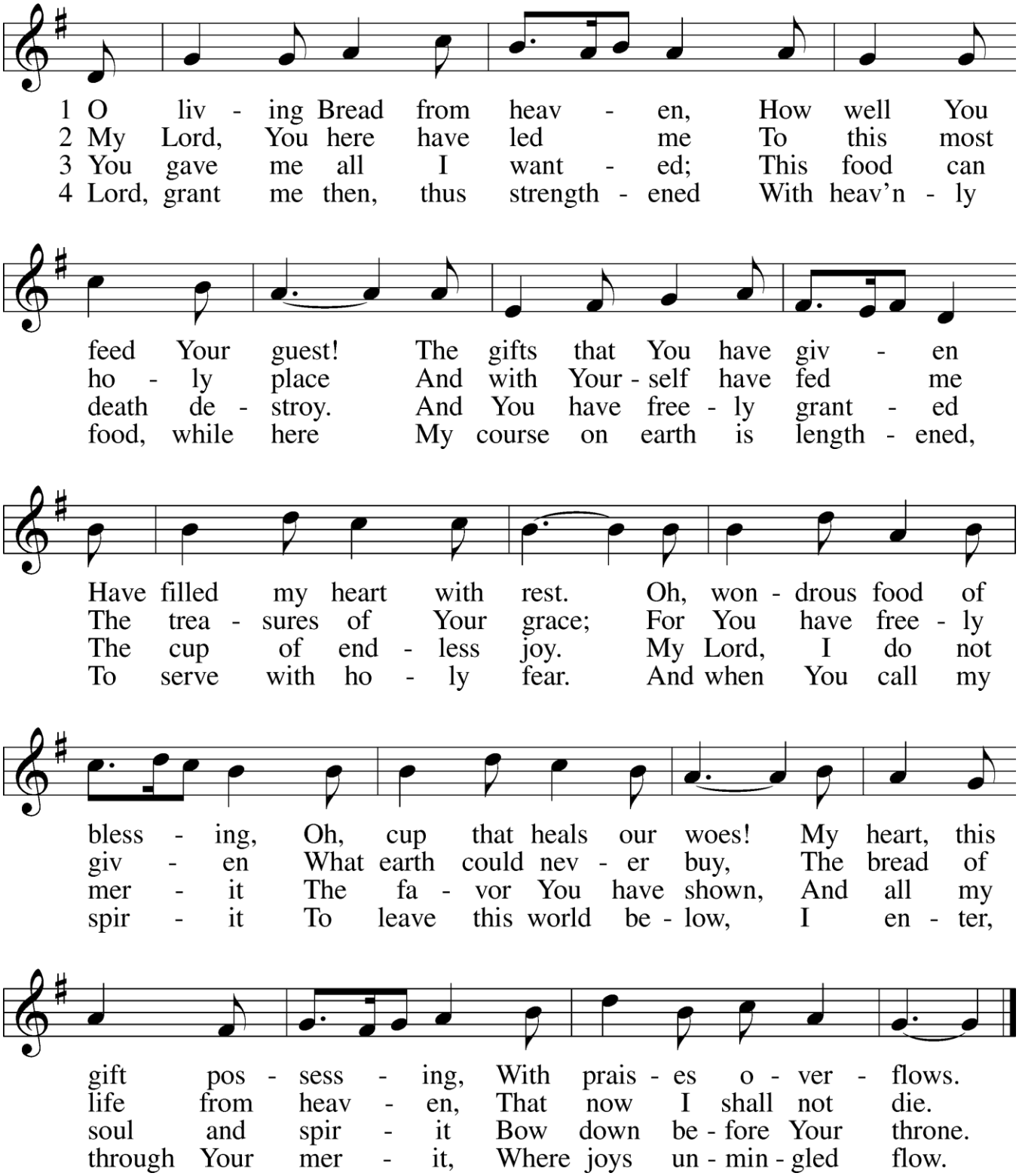
Page 198



DISTRIBUTION

(Please review our statement of faith inserted into the front of the hymnal.)

At this time we invite you to come up to commune. <u>Please note that whoever takes Holy Communion here confesses the teachings of this congregation</u> (1 Co. 11:26). If you do not agree with or do not know what we teach, you may still come to the rail—simply cross your arms as a sign that you do not wish to commune at this time and you will receive a blessing.

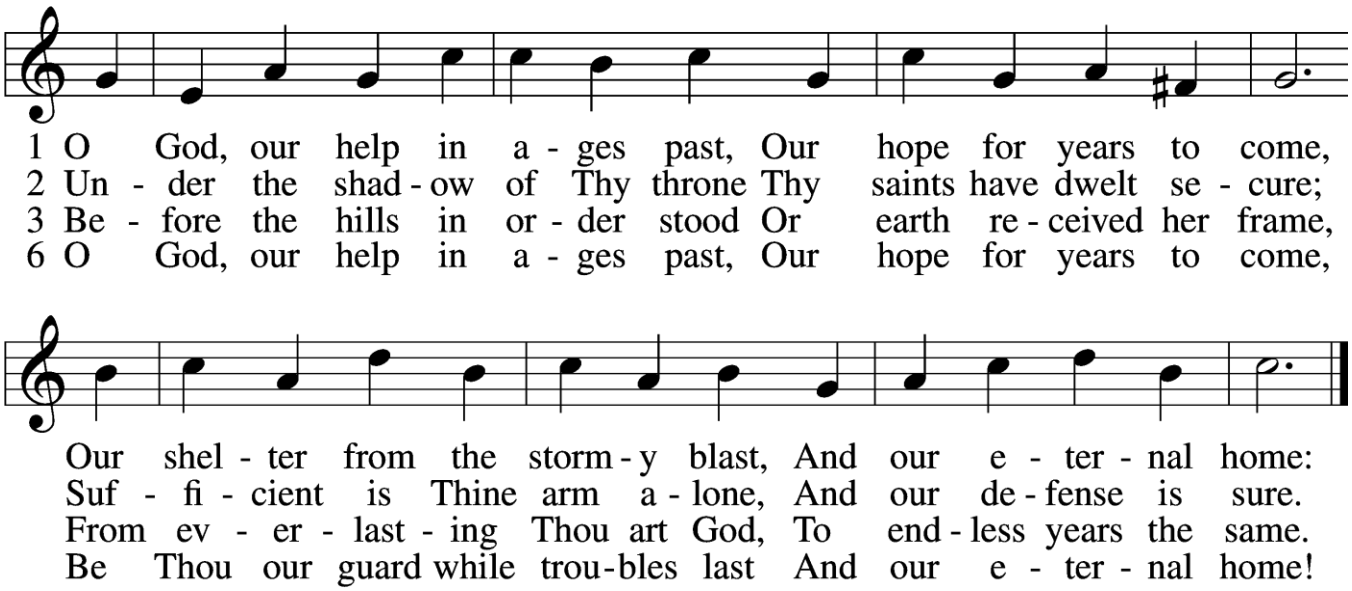

1 O liv - ing Bread from heav - en, How well You
2 My Lord, You here have led me To this most
3 You gave me all I want - ed; This food can
4 Lord, grant me then, thus strength - ened With heav'n - ly
feed Your guest! The gifts that You have giv - en
ho - ly place And with Your - self have fed me
death de - stroy. And You have free - ly grant - ed
food, while here My course on earth is length - ened,
Have filled my heart with rest. Oh, won - drous food of
The trea - sures of Your grace; For You have free - ly
The cup of end - less joy. My Lord, I do not
To serve with ho - ly fear. And when You call my
bless - ing, Oh, cup that heals our woes! My heart, this
giv - en What earth could nev - er buy, The bread of
mer - it The fa - vor You have shown, And all my
spir - it To leave this world be - low, I en - ter,
gift pos - sess - ing, With prais - es o - ver - flows.
life from heav - en, That now I shall not die.
soul and spir - it Bow down be - fore Your throne.
through Your mer - it, Where joys un - min - gled flow.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The LORD bless You and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD look on you in favor and ✢ give you peace.

People: Amen.

SENDING HYMN *"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"* Page 733, vs. 1-3, 6



POSTLUDE

****

OFFERTORY INFORMATION

"How Great Thou Art" stands as one of the most beloved and globally recognized anthems of the Christian faith. The hymn's remarkable journey began in 1885 when Swedish senator Carl Boberg was inspired to write the poem *"O Store Gud"* after witnessing a sudden, majestic thunderstorm clear into a peaceful afternoon sky filled with the singing of birds. Over the next several decades, the text traveled across borders, being translated into German and then Russian, before English missionary Stuart K. Hine encountered it in Ukraine in the 1930s. Deeply moved by the faith of the local believers, Hine translated the verses into English, added the poignant third and fourth verses to reflect Christ's sacrifice and final return, and paired them with the soaring traditional Swedish folk melody we sing today. Popularized globally by George Beverly Shea during the mid-century Billy Graham Crusades, the hymn beautifully bridges the awe of God's majestic creation with the intimate grace of redemption, culminating in a powerful, triumphant declaration of eternal praise.