

But Simon Peter answered Him,
"Lord to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life."
John 6:68

14th Sunday after Pentecost August 25, 2024

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In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

Welcome

Shannon Thomsen

Confession and Forgiveness

P. In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

P. Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P. God, our provider,

C. help us.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

P. Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, ✝ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

C. Amen.

The Peace

P. May the peace of the Lord be with you always.

C. And also with you.



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

Refrain

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all;
For this holy house, for all who worship and praise,
Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor;
that we may live out truth and justice and grace,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

For peace in our hearts, for peace in our homes, for friends and family;
For life and for love, for our work and our play,
Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

For your Spirit to guide; that you center our lives in the water and the Word;
That you nourish our souls with your body and blood,
Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

Prayer of the Day

A. Let us pray . . . Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal.
Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and
evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C. Amen.

First Reading

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.

¹Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴“Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.

L. Word of God. Word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 34:15-22

Spoken Responsively

¹⁵The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous,
and God’s ears are open to their cry.

**¹⁶The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.**

¹⁷The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them
and delivers them from all their troubles.

**¹⁸The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

¹⁹Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers them from every one.

**²⁰God will keep safe all their bones;
not one of them shall be broken.**

²¹Evil will bring death to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

**²²O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

Second Reading

Ephesians 6:10-20

Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

L. Word of God. Word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

P. The holy gospel according to St. John, the sixth chapter.
C. Glory to you, O God.

John 6:56-69

The “hard saying” that offends Jesus’ disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: “To whom shall we go?”

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

P. The gospel of the Lord.
C. Praise to you, O Christ.



Sermon

Rev. John Pearson

Hymn of the Day

Blessed Assurance

ELW 638

The Apostles' Creed

L. With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**C. I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and 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**

Prayers of Intercession

A. Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence

A. Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness. Merciful God,

C. receive our prayer.

A. Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates. Merciful God,

C. receive our prayer.

A. God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations. Merciful God,

C. receive our prayer.

A. God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts. Merciful God,

C. receive our prayer.

A. God of new life, protect students and teachers for a new school year. Bring an end to school shootings and cycles of violence. Move us to do all that is necessary to ensure a safe future for our children. Merciful God,

C. receive our prayer.

Other Prayers

A. God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys. Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end. Merciful God,

C. receive our prayer.

P. We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping.

C. Amen.

The Offering

Anthem

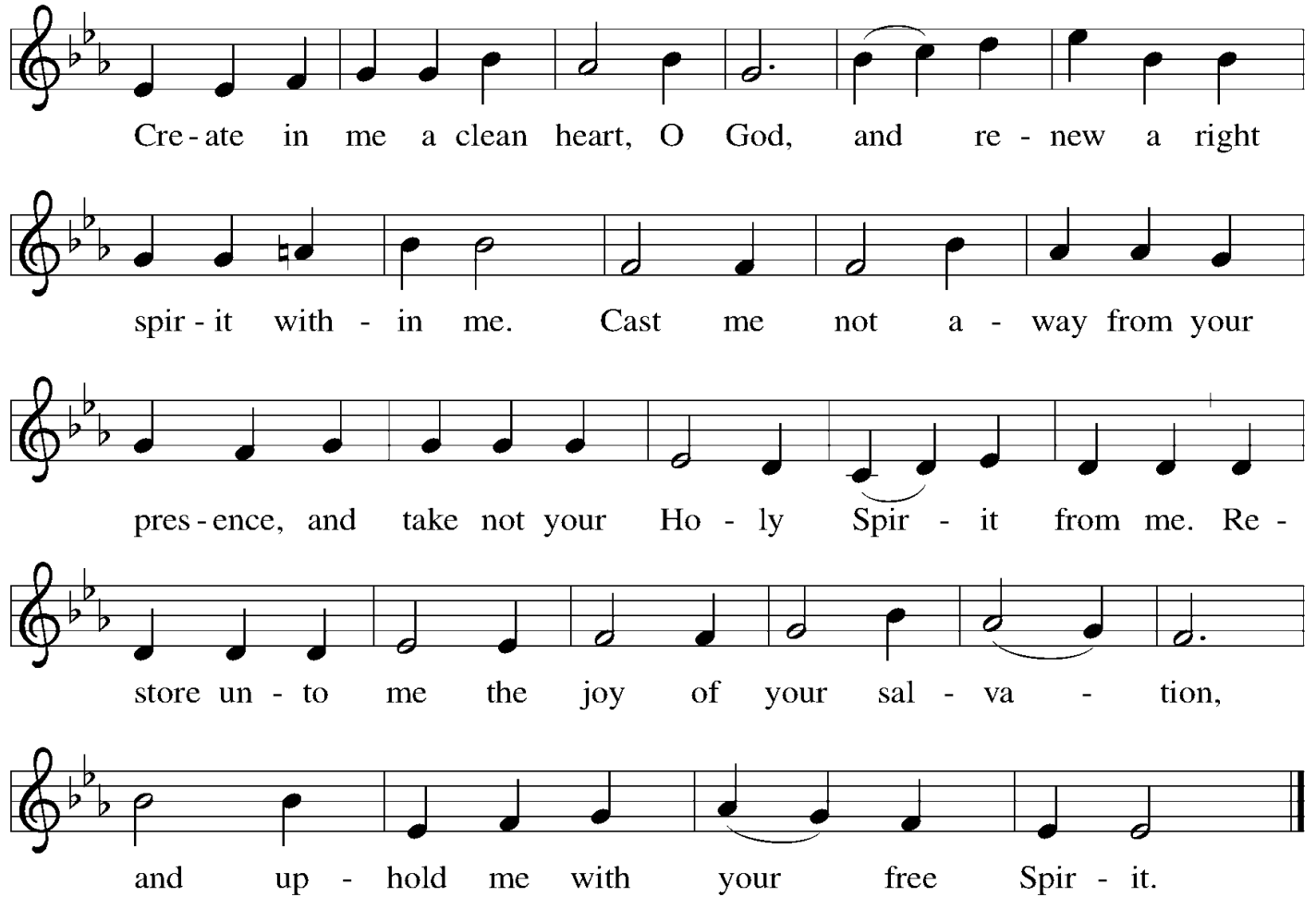
Build Us Up, Lord

Popup Choir

Canticle

Create in Me a Clean Heart

ELW 188



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Offertory Prayer

A. Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world.

C. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

P. Lift up your hearts.

C. We lift them to the Lord.

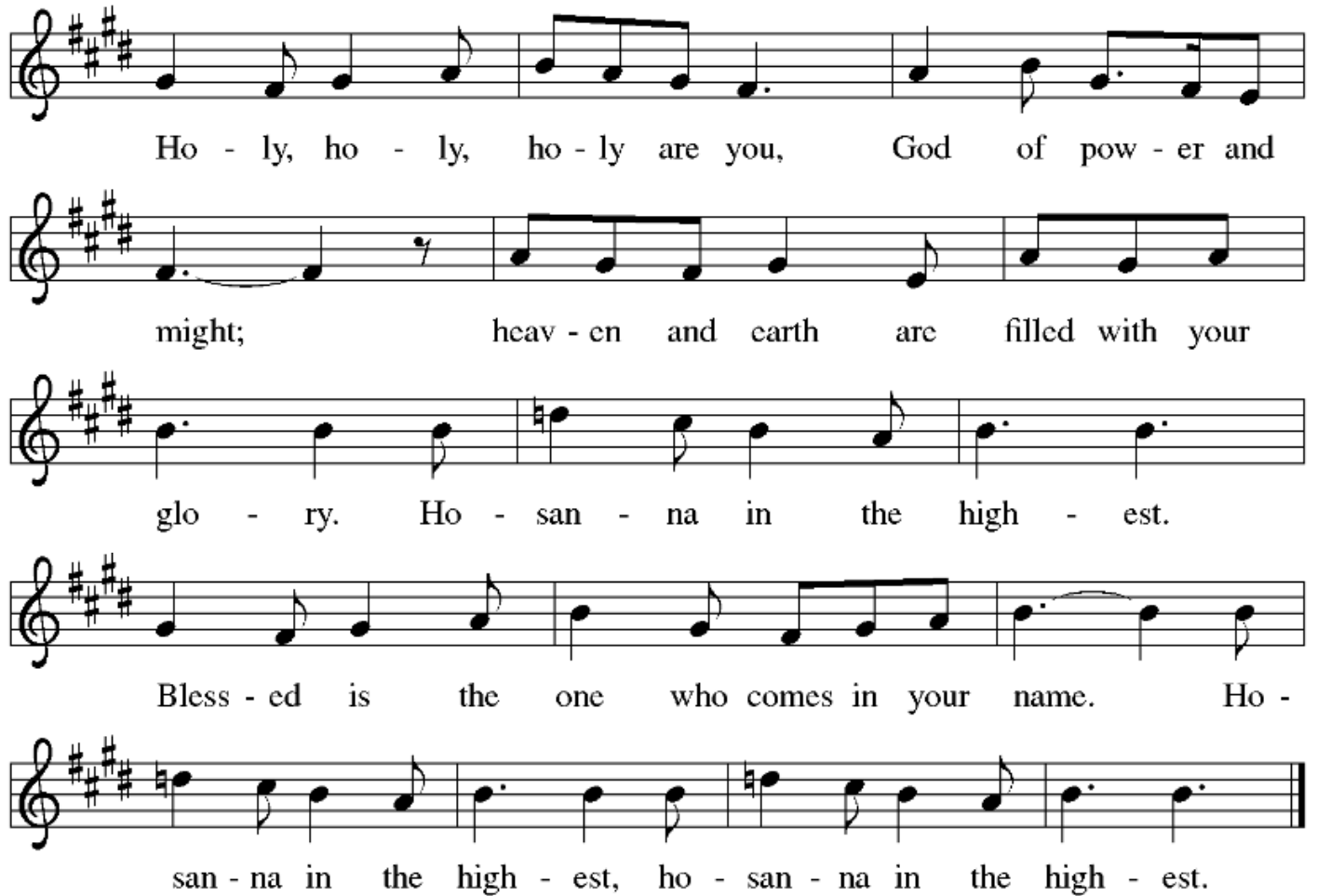
P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give our thanks and praise.



P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The Sanctus



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

P. In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

The 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

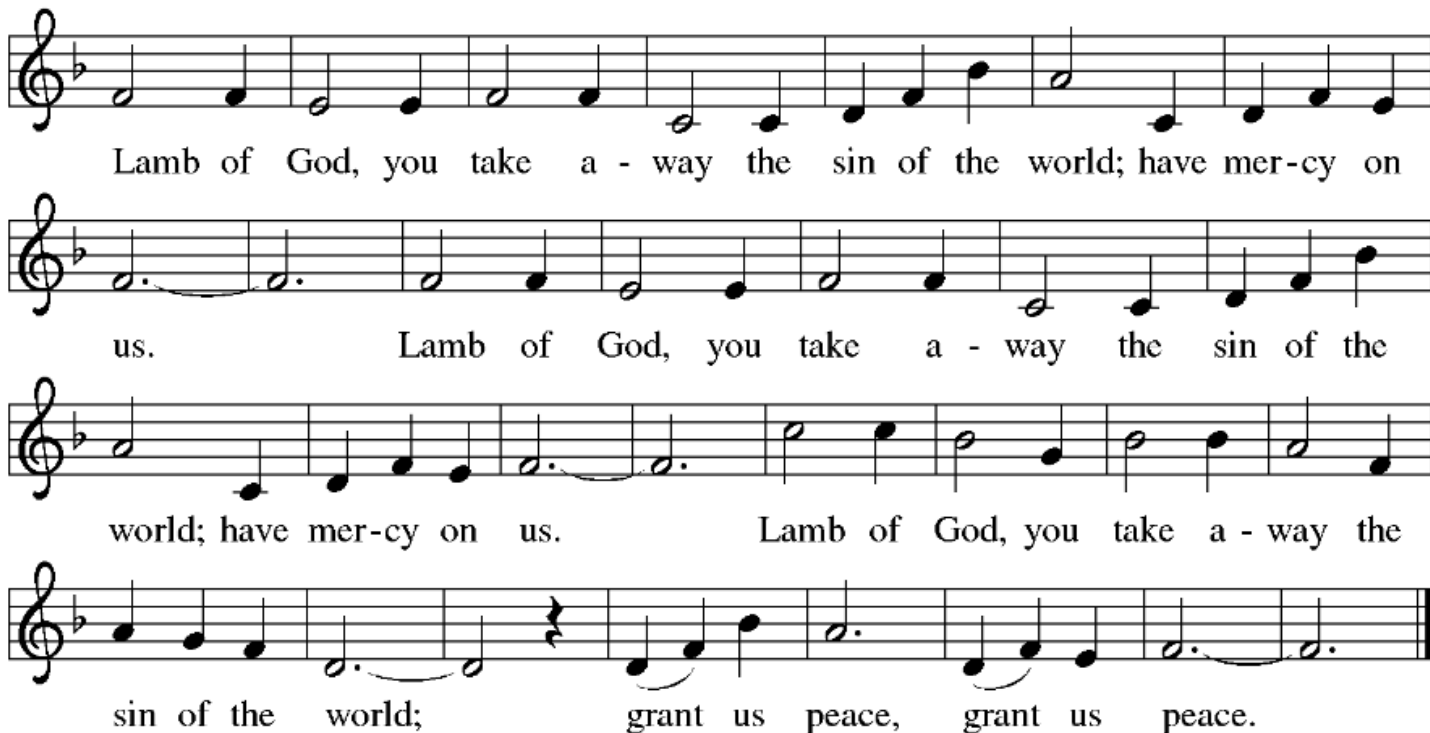
Invitation to Communion

P. Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

All are welcome, no exceptions.

C. Alleluia!

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion Hymns

Taste and See

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

ELW 493

ELW 490

Post Communion Blessing

P. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his peace.

C. Amen

Post Communion Prayer

A. Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray.

C. Amen



Benediction

P. The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ☩ be upon you now and forever.

C. Amen.

Sending Hymn

Will You Come and Follow Me

ELW 798

Dismissal

A. Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

C. Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Trumpet Tune on *"Praise the Lord, Sing Hallelujah!"*
Larry Visser

Gail Hrobuchak

Servers for Sunday, August 25th

Assisting Minister/Reader Shannon Thomsen
Reader Shannon Thomsen
Altar Guild Helen Holderman
Greeters/Counters Shannon Thomsen/Enid Weatherwax
Acolyte Antonio Smith
Supply Pastor Rev. John Pearson



Sign-up sheets for the various worship assistant slots are on the board in the hallway. Please consider spending time giving glory to God by filling one of these positions on a Sunday.

Flowers this week are provided by Betty Powers in loving memory of her husband, Jim Powers.



Candles this month are given by Ginny King in memory of Dennis and in honor of their 58th Wedding Anniversary.



Honor a loved one by making a donation for the candles in the sanctuary for the month or the flowers that beautify the church each Sunday. Sign-up sheets are on the board in the hallway.

KEEPING YOU **Informed**

Look your best! Our member Bob DeVito is working to update our picture directory and replace the outdated photos in the Fellowship Hall. If you have not yet done so, please see Bob after worship this week to have your portrait taken. We hope to complete this project by September 8.

Remember to register for the "Rise Against Hunger" event on Saturday, September 7, 10 am-12 noon at our partner church, Christ the King, in Cary. We plan to pack 15,000+ meals for hungry people around the world. It's a fun event, so plan to bring the family! Wear your yellow "God's Work. Our Hands" T-Shirt; extra shirts will be available at the event. Here's the link to register: <http://events.riseagainsthunger.org/CTK>

LOOKING AHEAD: On September 15, Lord of Life will participate in the National Back to Church Day! We are planning an exciting outdoor service with special music and a BBQ picnic, so save the date and invite friends and family to come to church that day.