16th Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2026

Bethany Lutheran Church Welcome Visitors.

Please sign our visitor book. There activity bags available for small children, located by the entrance of sanctuary.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

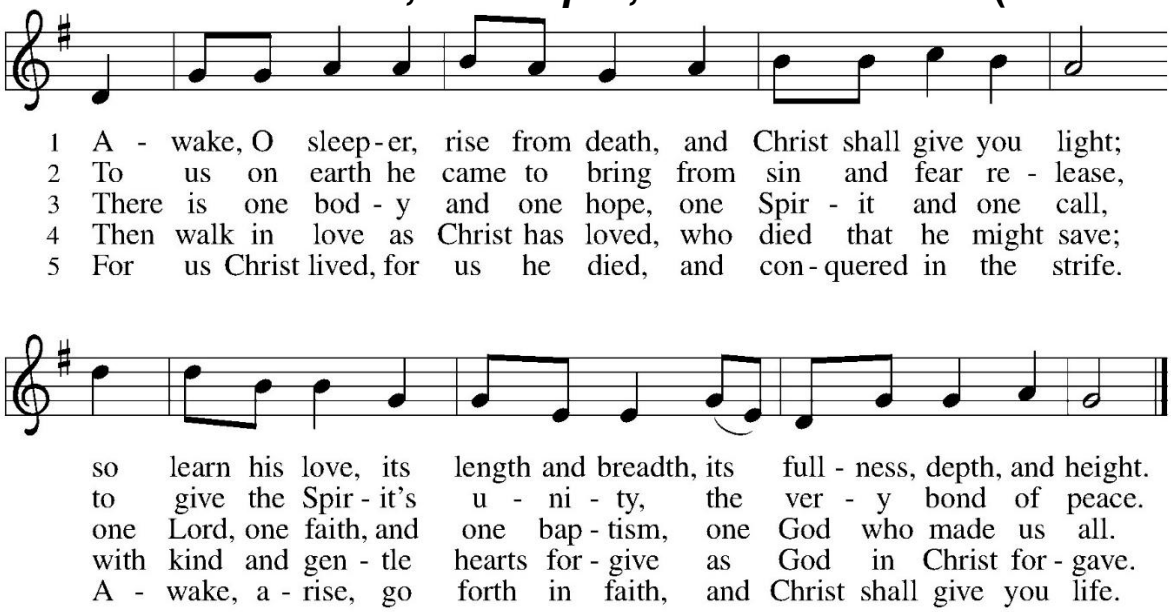
CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 103:8-13

8 LORD, you are full of compas- sion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love; 9 you will not al- ways accuse us, nor will you keep your an- ger forever.
10 You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our
iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high a- bove the earth, so great is your steadfast
love for those who fear you. 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far have you
removed our transgres- sions from us. 13 As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**
Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism…To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.
Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all. We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.
Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.
To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death* (ELW 452)

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984
Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829
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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE (ELW p. 184)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God**, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from Genesis

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" [16] So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, [17] 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. [18] Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." [19] But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? [20] Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. [21] So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING Romans 14:1-12

A reading from Romans.

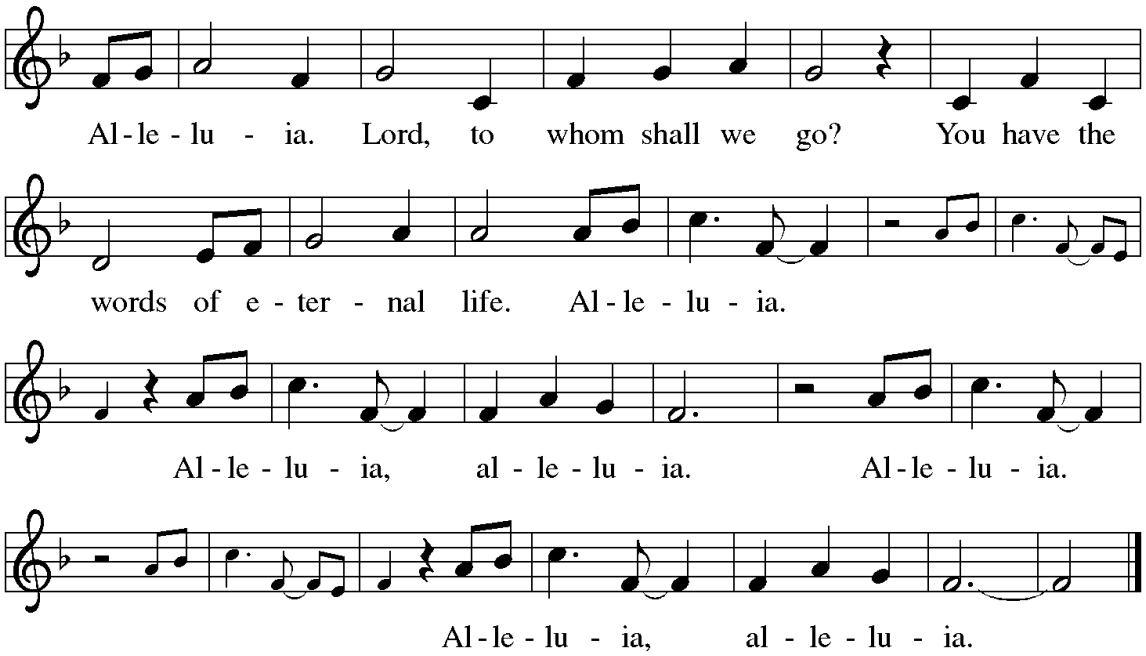
1 Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over
opinions. 2 Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables.
3 Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not
pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. 4 Who are you to pass
judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And
they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

5 Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be
alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. 6 Those who observe the day,
observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to
God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

7 For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. 8 If we live, we live
to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we
die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be
Lord of both the dead and the living.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise
your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 11 For it is
written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall
give praise to God." 12 So then, each one of us will be held accountable. The word of
the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

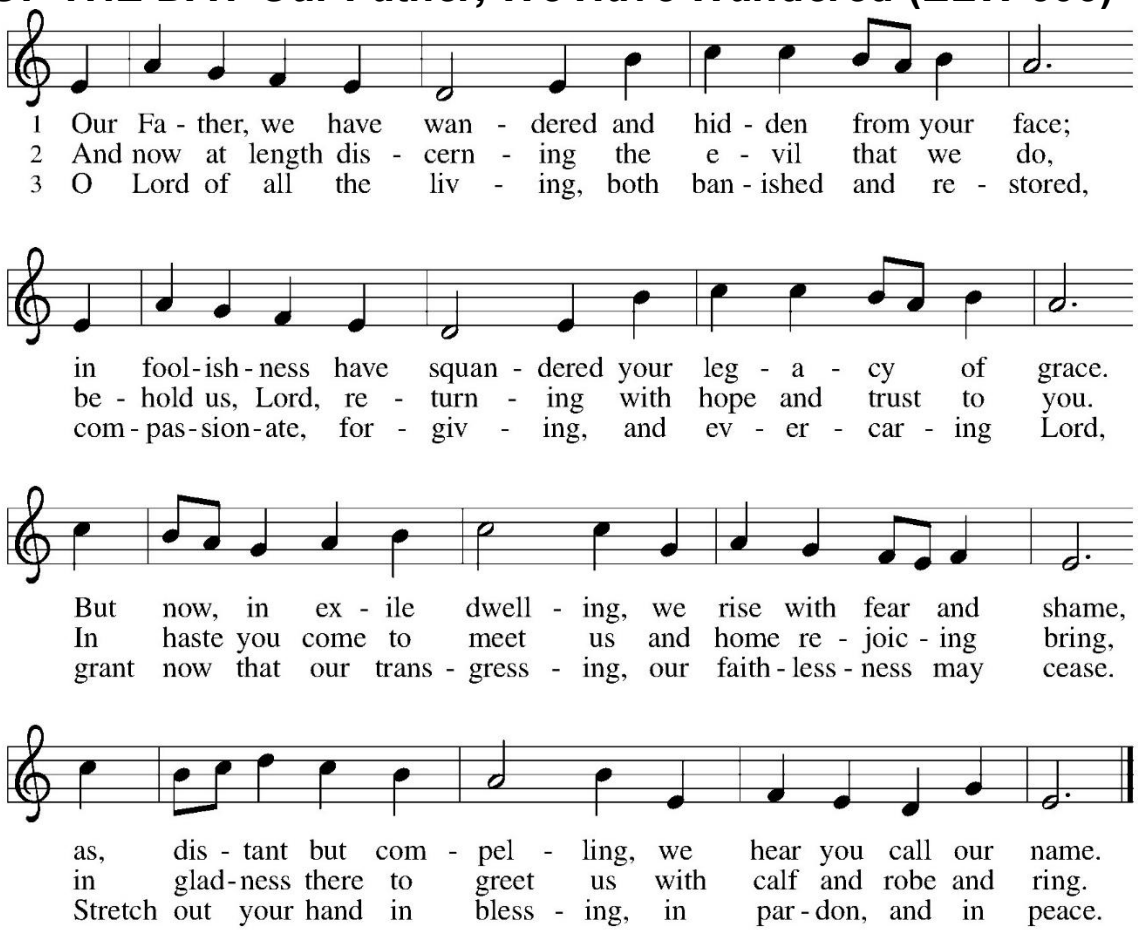
The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

21 Peter came and said to [Jesus,] "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how
often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "Not seven
times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

23 "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to

settle accounts with his slaves. [24] When he began the reckoning, one who owed him
ten thousand talents was brought to him, [25] and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered
him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment
to be made. [26] So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with
me, and I will pay you everything.' [27] And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave
released him and forgave him the debt. [28] But that same slave, as he went out, came
upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the
throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' [29] Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with
him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' [30] But he refused; then he went and
threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. [31] When his fellow slaves saw what
had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord
all that had taken place. [32] Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked
slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. [33] Should you not have
had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' [34] And in anger his lord
handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. [35] So my heavenly
Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from
your heart." The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Our Father, We Have Wandered* (ELW 606)

Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929–2006
Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612
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CREED

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 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

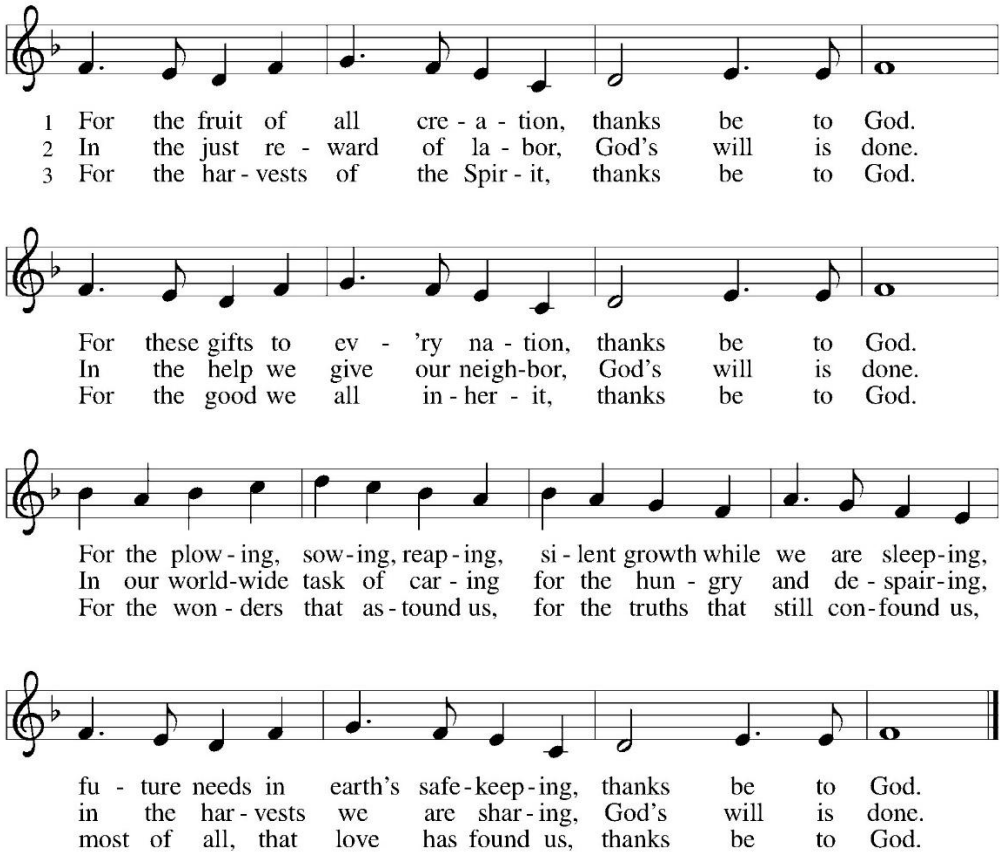
Each prayer petition ends: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING *For the Fruit of All Creation* (ELW 679)

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional
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OFFERING PRAYER

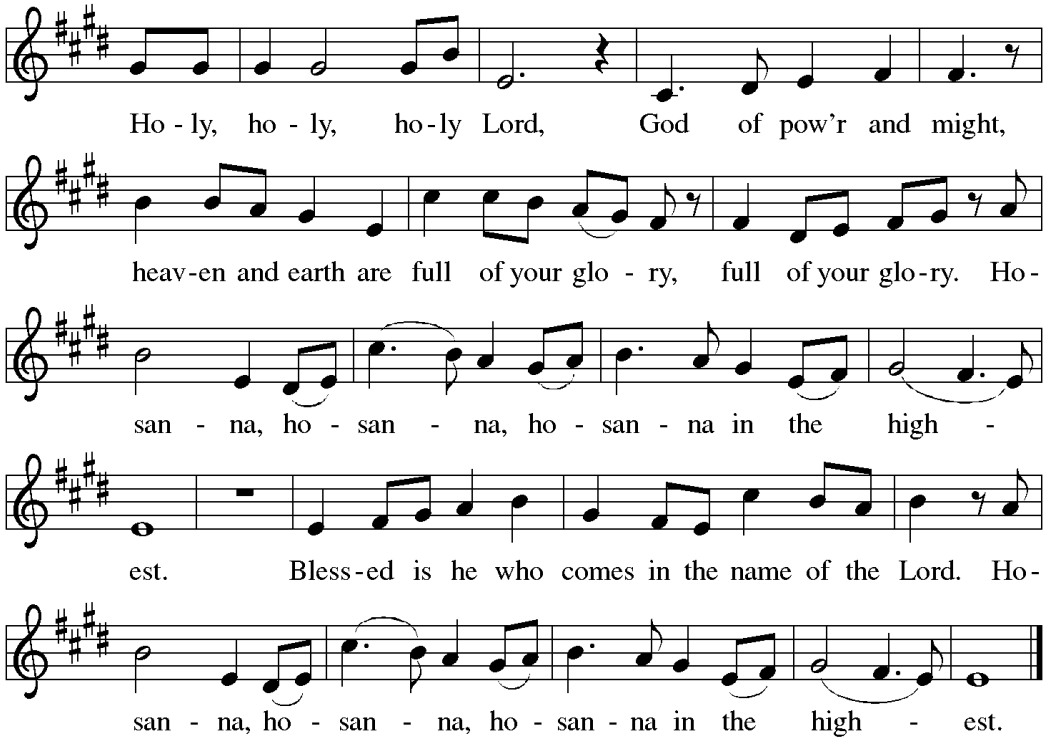
GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal: you we praise and glorify, you we worship and adore…For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

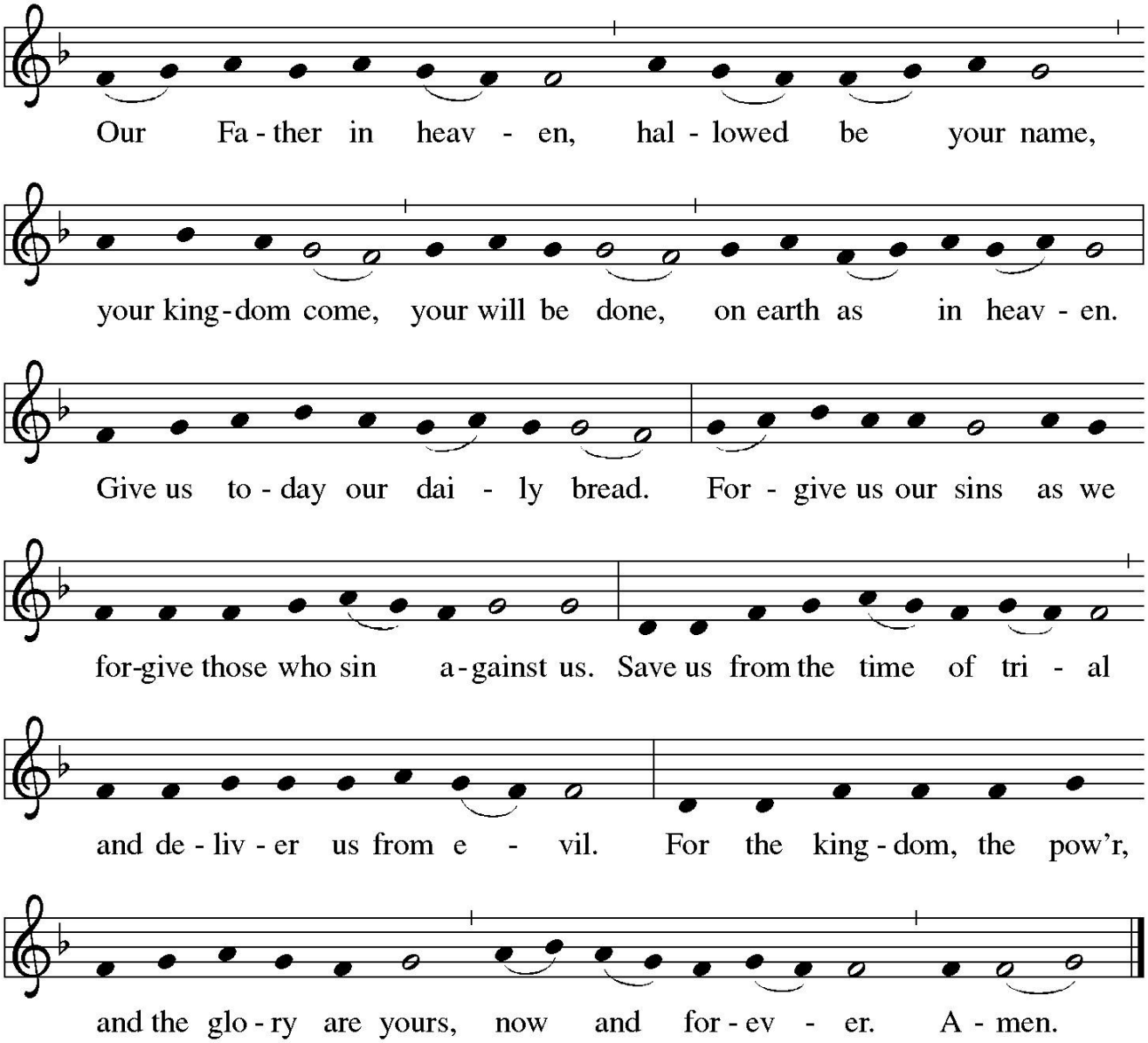
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Son, the first-born of your new creation. We remember his life lived for others, and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth. We await his coming, when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom, all our sins and sorrows will be no more. **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, holy and merciful one, holy and compassionate, send upon us and this meal your Holy Spirit, whose breath revives us for life, whose fire rouses us to love. Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food. Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit, that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world. **Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

Holy and benevolent God, receive our praise and petitions, as Jesus received the cry of the needy, and fill us with your blessing, until, needy no longer and bound to you in

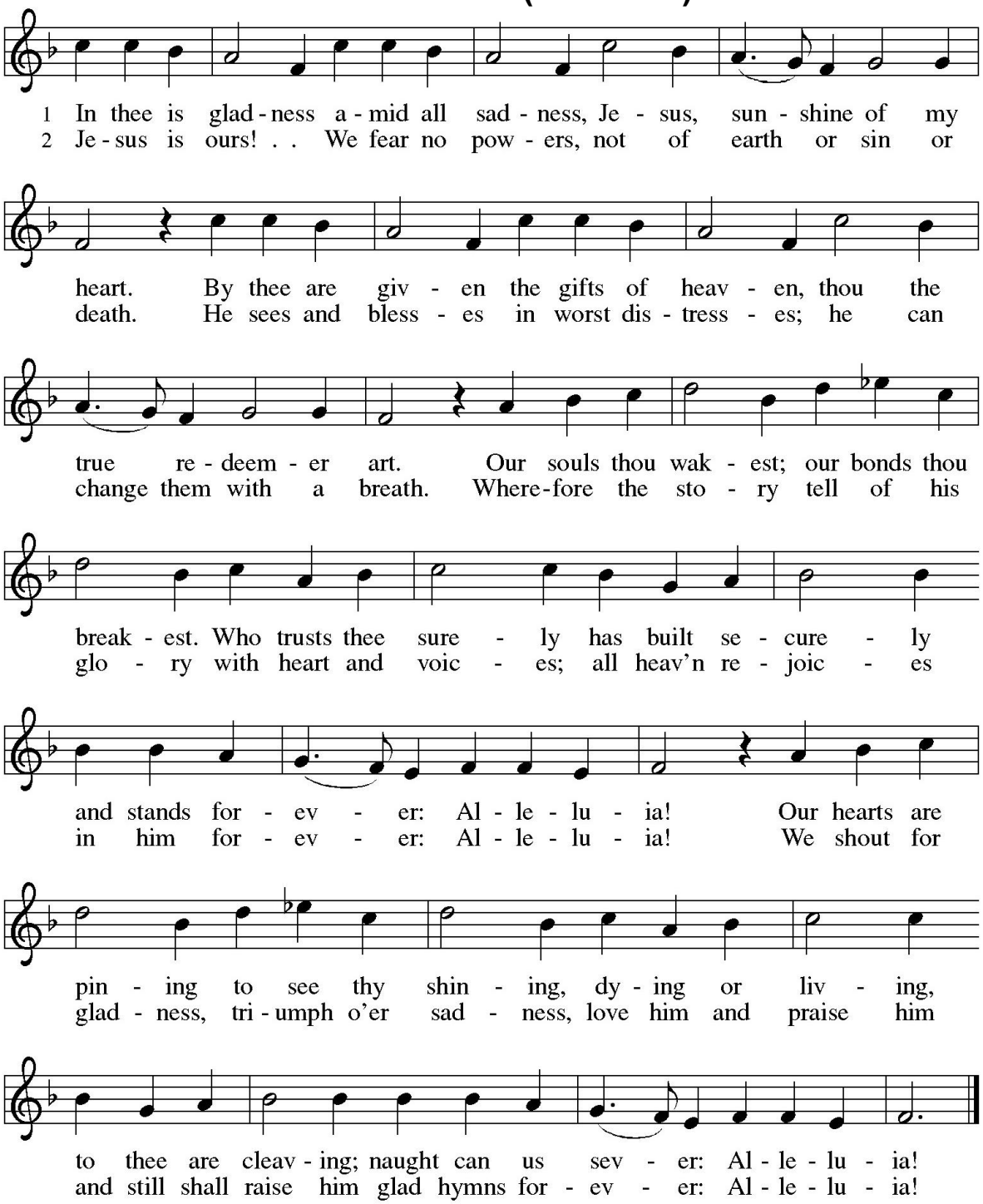
love, we feast forever in the triumph of the Lamb: through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God, O Living One, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER – (SUNG)

INVITATION TO COMMUNION
COMMUNION
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
BLESSING

SENDING SONG *In Thee Is Gladness* (ELW 867)

Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549–1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: IN DIR IST FREUDE, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, 1556–1622

DISMISSAL

We go, renewed and fed to create life-giving relationships **through worship, outreach and service. Thanks be to God.**

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Worship on Sunday morning is recorded on Facebook from the 9AM service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- If you haven't, please complete the updated information form. They are on the table by Offering Plates
- September's Food Pantry Theme is "Snack Attack" – fruit bars, granola bars, cookies, crackers, trail mix
- September 13th – Bethany Council Meeting
- September 15th – East Conference Pastor/Sams Meeting.
- September 20th – Sunday School after worship.
- September 20th – 23rd Pastor is Off.
- September 22nd – October Beacon Due.
- September 27th – WELCA Meeting after worship.
- Ladies, please check out the notice on the W-ELCA bulletin board for an opportunity to attend a contemporary Christian concert in Reedsburg on Sat., Oct 24th @ 7:00 pm.
- Items for our Baby Care Kits can be placed in the clear tote in the coat room. Please note the posted changes that Lutheran World Relief has requested. As of late we are in need of small face towels.
- Health Kits are in need of dark colored bath towels, big bar soap, and individual toothbrushes.
- Quilters could use full or queen flat sheets. Thank you.
- Thursdays Bible Study: 9am @ Bethany
- Wednesday 9 am - Quilting
- Tuesday AA meetings 6:30 pm @ East Lemonweir/ Thursday 6:30 pm @ Bethany

Prayers of Concern:

Prayers for those who cannot worship with us today.

Prayers for those who serve to protect others.

Prayers for Marcia & Ken Adams, Sonja Haske, Shirley Wehman, Joel Lingl (Galen's Brother), Mike Schultz, Shawna (Tim Parker's Sister), Sandy Hempel, Amy Andres Peterson (daughter of Tom & Roxanne Andres), Holly Berry, Dean Allard, Kalie Geitner (Galen & Janenne Lingl), Katie & Doug Johnson, Becky Bailey, Fred Wehman, Steve Werth, Jordan Wehman, Tommy Paulson (Vanessa Lucas's Brother), John Preston, Garry Olson, Yvonne Olson, Jacob Sorenson, Mickie (Ron & Patti Thompson), Fran Benson, Landon LaBerge, Marilyn Wetley, and others we silently name.

Electronic giving is available via Vanco, using this QR Code: