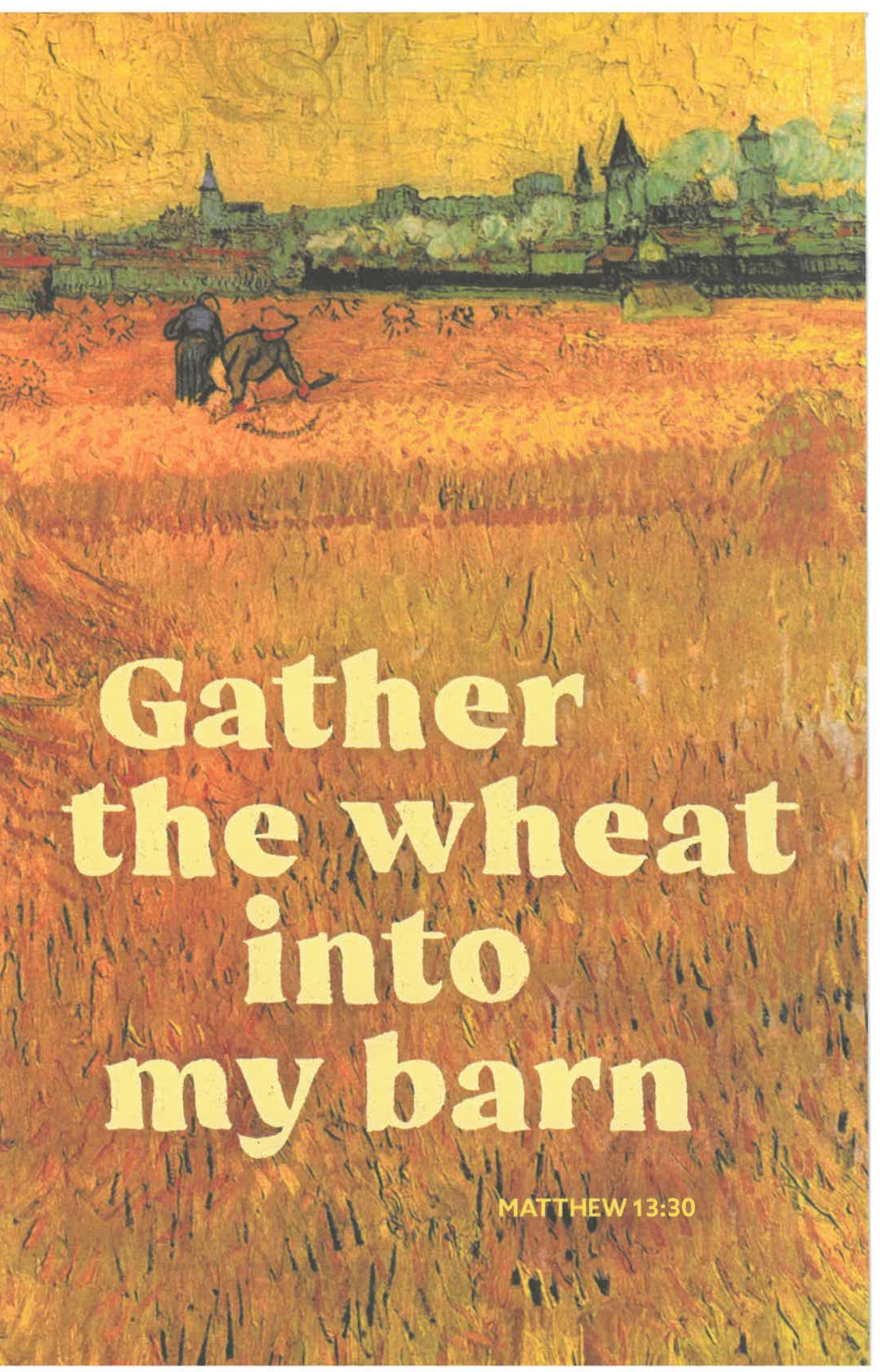




**Gather
the wheat
into
my barn**

MATTHEW 13:30

8th Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2026

10:00 a.m.

Welcome to people new to this church or faith, long time Lutherans, and Christians from every tradition. Welcome to all who have no church home, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. Welcome to new visitors and old friends. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation and marital status, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners and questioning believers. This is a place where you are welcome to celebrate and sorrow, rejoice and recover. This is a place where lives are made new. Welcome on this day.

Please fill out the “Worship Slip” and place it in the offering plate.

(*) Asterisk means, “Please stand as you are able.”

Music Music from the Four Prayers I Tone.
R. Purvis for the Pianoforte

The Gathering

*Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign
marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Seeking reconciliation with God and neighbor,
let us remember the gift of baptism and confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of mercy

**C: We confess that we have sinned against you,
Against one another,
And against the earth entrusted to our care.
We are worried and distracted by many things,
And we fail to love you above all else.
We store up treasures for ourselves
And turn away from our neighbors in need.
Forgive us,
that we may live in the freedom of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P: When we were laid low by sin and the world's evil,
God made us alive together with Christ,
Forgiving us + all our trespasses
By taking the sin of the world to the cross.
For freedom Christ has set us free:
Rejoice in this good news!

C: Amen.

*Opening Hymn *“A Mighty Fortress is our God”* Red #504

A mighty fortress is our God,
A sword and shield victorious;
He breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
And wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
Has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
He arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
Whom God himself elected.

(continued)

You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

Though hordes of devils fill the land
All threat'ning to devour us,
We tremble not, unmoved we stand;
They cannot overpow'r us.
Let this world's tyrant rage;
In battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail;
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.

God's Word forever shall abide,
No thanks to foes, who fear it;
For God himself fights by our side
With weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
Goods, honor, child, or spouse,
Though life be wrenched away,
They cannot win the day.
The Kingdom's ours forever!

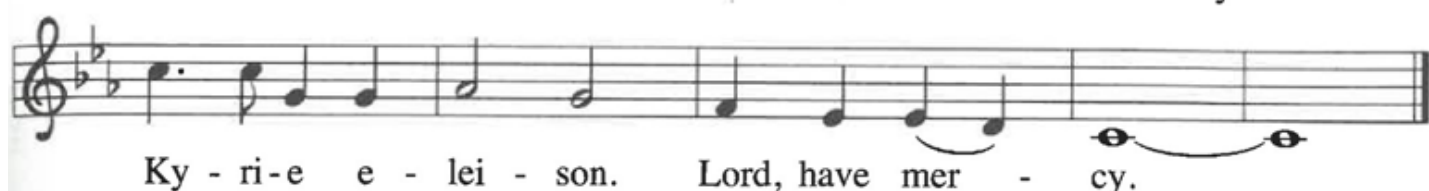
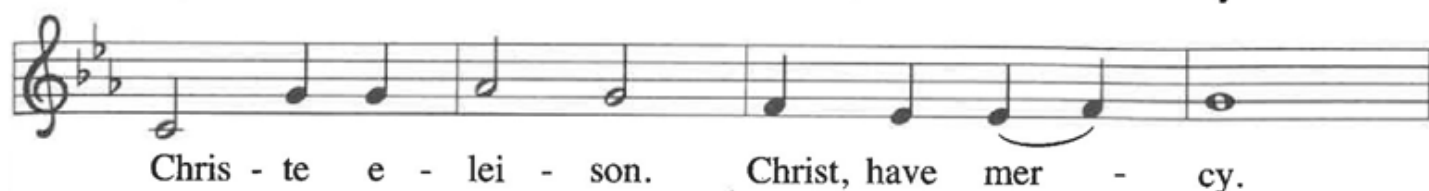
*Greeting

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

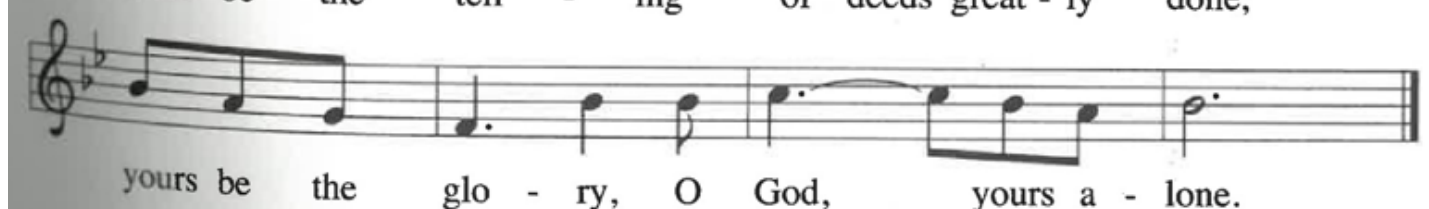
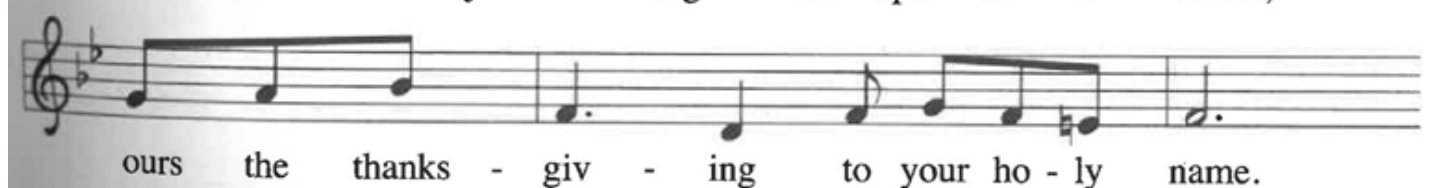
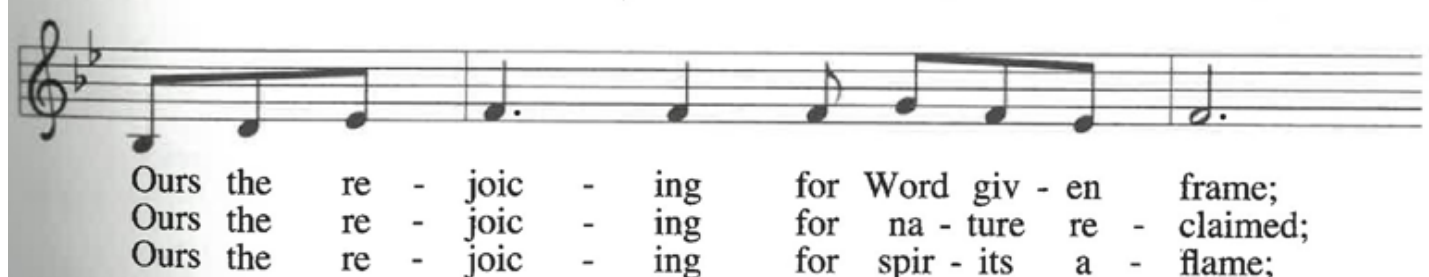
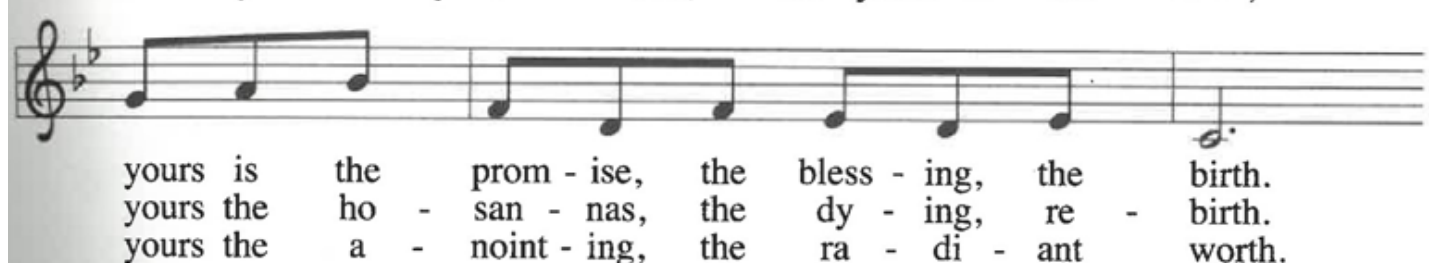
C: And also with you

*Kyrie & Hymn of Praise

Blue #31



One of the following or another song of praise may be sung.



*Prayer of the Day

The Word of God

God Stories - How has God's Word come alive in your life?

First Reading

Isaiah 44:6-8

Celebrate pg. 1

R: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 86:11-17 (read responsively)

Cel. pg. 2

Second Reading

Romans 8:12-25

Celebrate pg. 3

R: Word of God, Word of Life.

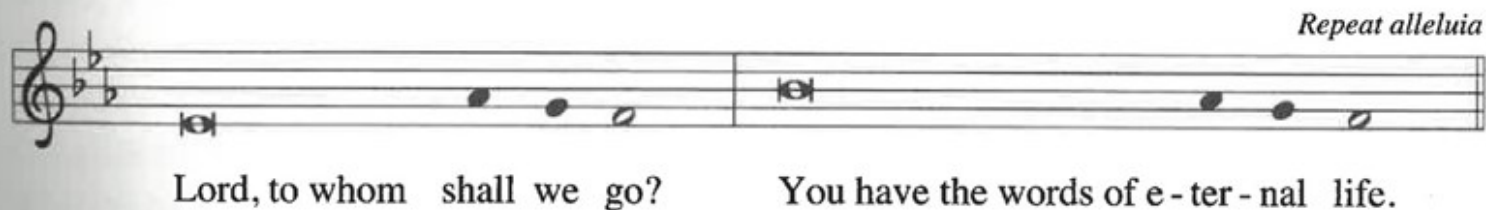
C: Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation

Blue #33



The proper verse may be sung, or all may sing one of these verses.



*Gospel Reading

Mathew 13:24-43 Celebrate pg. 3

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. Matthew, the 13th Chapter

C: Glory to you, O God.

(The Gospel is read)

P: This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

Message

Pr. Larry Vilaro

*Hymn of the Day “Children of the heavenly Father” R #781

Children of the heavenly Father
Safely in his bosom gather
Nestling bird or star in heaven
Such a refuge ne’er was given

God his own doth tend and nourish
In his holy courts they flourish
From all evil things he spares them
In his mighty arms he bears them

Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord his children sever
Unto them his grace he showeth
And their sorrows all he knoweth

Though he giveth or he taketh
God his children ne’er forsaketh
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy

The Communion Meal

*Passing of the Peace

P: May the peace of God be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Offering — We honor and worship God by returning some of the gifts with which we have been blessed.

Music Music for the Parable of the Sower,
for the Gospel of Matthew

Offering Prayer

P: Blessed are you, O God,
For the greening earth given for all,
For the talents we are given to share,
And for this bread and fruit of the vine.
Transform us to be the body of Christ,
That, feasting on this food and drink,
Our lives may reflect your generosity;
Through Christ our Lord,

C: **Amen**

*Great Thanksgiving

P: May God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to God**

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

C: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*Eucharistic Prayer

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our JOY,
that we should at all times and in all places,
offer thanks and praise to you,
almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection,
You pour out your Holy Spirit,
Uniting in one body,
people of every tongue and nation.

*Words of Institution

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.”
After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
And gave it for all to drink, saying:
“this cup is the new covenant in by blood, shed for you
And for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

*Lord's Prayer

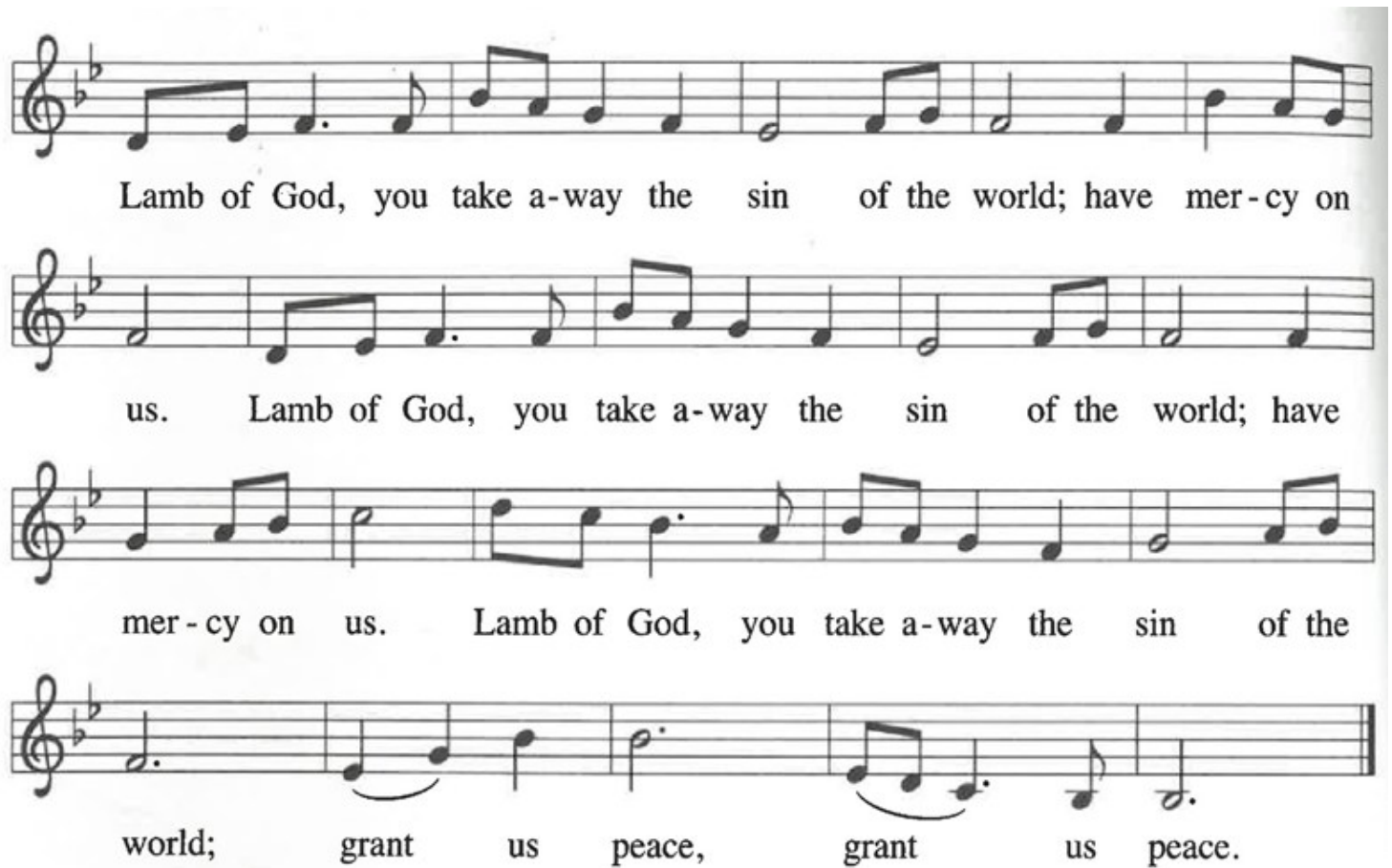
P: God, remember us in you love and teach us to pray:

**C: Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today, our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
Now and forever.
Amen**

P: God invites you to this table of bounty.
Come, the banquet is ready.

(Please be seated)

Communion Gathering Song



The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "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." The score includes a double bar line at the end of the fourth staff.

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 Hymn "Eat This Bread" Red #472

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry.

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst.

The Sending

*Prayer after Communion

P: O God, in this Holy Communion
You have welcomed us into your presence,
Nourished us with words of mercy,
And fed us at your table.
Amid the cares of this life,
Strengthen us to love you with all our heart,
Serve our neighbors with a willing spirit,
And honor the earth you have made;
Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

*Blessing

P: Live your lives in Christ,
rooted and built up in God's Spirit.
May you abound in thanksgiving;
And may the blessing of the holy Trinity, + one God,
Be upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen

*Closing Hymn *"Here I Am, Lord"* Red #574

"I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin
My hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?"

REFRAIN

Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, If you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

“I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people’s pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?” REFRAIN

“I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?” REFRAIN

*Dismissal

P: Go in Peace, Christ is sending you.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

Music “Variation III” from Grand Choeur
 Molto Maestoso—Richard Purvis

Serving Today

Reader: Janet Slay

Coffee Host: Robert & Judi Alvarado

Altar Guild: Tina Gates

Office Support: Sheila Buswell & Sherilyn Jager



New Ways of Giving

Our *Virtual Offering Plate* has been enhanced. Donations can be made by: credit card, debit card, PayPal, Venmo and Zelle.

- 1) **Vanco**, our regular electronic giving provider;
- 2) **PayPal / Venmo / Zelle** for single one-time gifts;
- 3) **PayPal** with the possibility of recurring donations and an option to cover the fees.

All are available at
<https://ststephenslutheran.org>



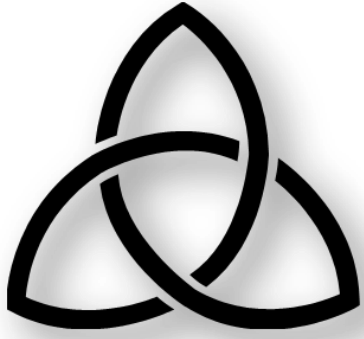


Prayer Concerns

SHORT TERM *Barbara Allen, Jordan Perez, Yvonne Lowery, Lydia, Fred, Sioux Antonella, Jan Dun, James Price, ,Peggy Reed, Rev. Will & Dorothy Sieburg, Pam Huypner, Karin Zaun & family, Bob Zigler, Kathybelle, Taiyo, Sam, Nancy's Family, Kat, Penny, Kathy Freeman, Colin, Camryn, Dorothy Ronning, Bob Holzwarth, Mary Robe & Family, Sina & Bella, Chad Fields, James, Don, Pr. Gary & Corinne Stevenson, Kevin, Liz, Sam, Kathy M., Nancy, Grey, Levi, James, Galahad, Debbie, Sam, Nate Barker, Robbin, Middle East Peace, Tom Dawson, Dustin, Father Jack Davis, Adolfo, Elida, Jeannie, Anetta, Jane, Gary & Marjie Toops, Rachel B., Anne & Chloe Johnston, Isaac & Marissa, Mateo & Lina, Atlas, Katarina.*

LONG TERM *Those suffering with Mental Illness, James Sheehan, Biergiel—Colclough family, Eric Utto-Galarneau, Beth UG, Brian Utto, Kathy Brooks, Joel Hurtgamm, Dawit & family (Ethiopia), Miller, April, Aaron Johnson, Shelby, Ashley, Frank, Joe, Lisa & Beau, Linda Johnson, Jan Shadle, Vi Olly, Mike, Susan Anderson, Brouse Family, Janet Baker, Sandy Godvine, Janelle Yung, Karin, Will, Chris & John B., Immigrant families, The Homeless, People of Ukraine, People of Palestine/Israel, Our Nation's leaders, Mt. Cross, St. Stephen's Child Development Ctr, S.S. Senior Housing, Pastor Jim & Our Church Family, men & women of Armed Forces, and the Youth of today.*

** Please notify when to remove **



Trinity Tuesday

(Pub Theology / Discussion)

One Beverage ~ One Hour ~ One Question

Tuesday August 4 at 6:30pm

First Tuesday of the month at Discretion Brewery

*BRING YOUR DEEPEST QUESTIONS,
AN OPEN HEART,
& A CURIOUS MIND*

Gather with us for an evening of meaningful conversation and real community. Bring your questions about faith, life, and everything in between. No judgment, no limits—just authentic dialogue over a cold one.

Whether you've been with us from the start or you're stepping through the door for the first time, there's a seat waiting for you.

Past conversations: How do we see God? How are we called? Why do bad things happen to good people? Recognizing our God-given talents. How do we forgive?

Kathy Allen 430-6359 for more info.



On ZOOM
with Pr. Larry

Check email on
Tues. for link

WEDNESDAYS

7:30 – 8:30 pm

We will be looking at the upcoming scripture readings for Sunday, to enrich our worship experience and uncover some of the deeper truths of our faith. As we grow in our faith, we grow in community.

Larry Vilardo <lvilardo@earthlink.net>

Host AFC Shelter Dinner

August 29 5:45—7:15 pm

St. John's - 125 Canterbury Dr, Aptos



Come offer your resources to our neighbors without housing. Along the way, we find a deeper understanding that we are all worthy of dignity and connection. You can assist those without homes to a better life.

Since 2012, the AFC has been sponsoring a nightly transitional shelter for 15 participants at faith communities from Santa Cruz to Aptos. We rotate daily from site to site. St. Stephen's has committed to dinners months with 5th Saturdays. Call office for more info 476-4700



Greetings! My vision is to recruit talented church members who are interested in music used in worship and love to praise God, as I do.

Let's celebrate, and enhance our weekly singing, playing, praying together, here in our God centered / worship gatherings. Won't you take a moment and speak to yourself and see if this is good for you and others. Relax, pray, and say yes!

Be a leader in these four instrumental parts to an orchestra—find (1 player each) and build a team:

Strings Wood Brass Percussion

I will work with you also. You will not be a lone contact person.

Support team:

Posters, artwork etc.

Pre-recorded music, listen & order

Website, communications etc.

Yours in Christ and Mission,
Gary



Upcoming Events:

July Benevolence Offering = ELCA World Hunger

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| July 21 | Scouts 6:00 pm |
| July 22 | Bible Study Zoon 7:30 pm |
| July 23 | Men's A.A. Group 7:00 pm |
| July 24 | A. A. Group 7:00 pm |
| July 26 | Coffee Host needed |
| July 30 | NL Collating 10:30 am Help needed |
| Aug. 4 | Trinity Tuesday 6:30 pm
Discretion Brewry 41st Ave.
Faith Questions genuine community |
| Aug. 6 & 20 | Women's Bold Café 6:00pm
devotions and potluck |
| Aug. 9 | Back to School Blessing
Students & Educators |
| Aug. 9-30 | Coffee Hosts needed |
| Aug. 23 | Farewell Potluck for Pastor Larry |
| Aug. 29 | Host AFC Shelter Dinner St. John's, Aptos 6 p
Sign up for one item |
| Aug. 30 | "Holy Closure" worship honoring our preschool |

Pr. Larry will have brief office hours Tues. & Weds. Afternoons

Now through August 24 Pastor Jim on sabbatical

Our Mission Statement

St. Stephen's is a welcoming, healing community who worship God in Christ, nurture people growing in faith, serve others with acceptance and love, invite people to share the joy of the Spirit.

Reconciling in Christ

*"We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace.
We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of
race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity,
gender expression, or relationship status.
We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or
mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic
circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.
Our unity is in Christ."*

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church E.L.C.A.
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Santa Cruz, CA 95062
831/476-4700 FAX 831/476-3918
email: office@ststephenslutheran.org
Web Address: www.ststephenslutheran.org
Office Hours: Mon.—Fri. Noon—5:00 pm

Ministers: The People of St. Stephen's
Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp
Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp
Music Director: Gary Roberts
Pre-School Director: Kathy Berens
Sunday School: Leslie Lapp
Custodian: John Hopping
Powerpoint: Jay Johnston, Kent Madsen & Barbara Rice

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