# St. Luke Lutheran Church

**Albuquerque, New Mexico**

# Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

## September 14, 2025 8:15 and 10:30 AM

(both services in-person)

*"… but the shepherd kept looking until he found the missing one! Then he called to all his friends and neighbors, 'Come on over!,' he cried. 'I have found my sheep! Let's have a party!'"  Luke 15:4b-6*

St Luke Lutheran Church
9100 Menaul Blvd NE Albuquerque, NM 87112 ♦ 505-299-2621 ♦ Email: StLuke@thuntek.net
Website: http://www.stlukeabq.org/ ♦ Find our Livestream online **on Saturday, Sept. 13, at 5 PM** MDT at: Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/stlukeabq/

**Welcome to worship here** at St. Luke Lutheran Church ELCA. We gather around the story of Jesus! We are glad you have joined us to worship our Lord in this Service of Word and Meal. If you are visiting, longing to be a part of a community, want to join, are searching for faith, need a good-news-shaped word, or seek healing and peace, we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the Entry Narthex, complete the goldenrod "Connections" page, give us your contact information and the opportunity to respond and welcome and get to know you. Please return to worship with us again. Read our weekly announcements on the white GPS page. If you are in need of assistance or have questions of any kind, please speak with an usher, a Staff member, a Council member or Pastor Brad Brauer, our Interim Pastor. This is Christ's Church. Here the scriptures are opened and preached. Here is Christ's Welcome Table of grace and mercy. There is a place for you here. Join us in Jesus' mission.

**Our scripture focus . . . .** Jesus eats with sinners and outcasts. Then, as a response to criticism, tells parables about finding that which is lost. God in heaven rejoices at such finding and return to God in heart, mind, and soul (repentance). We can, thus, see God as the searching shepherd and the sweeping woman, both who prepare a celebration with a community feast. Just so, God the loving, welcoming, running father finds the lost, wayward 2nd son and throws a party. (3rd Parable not heard). God finds the lost, wandering Hebrews in the Moses story. And God finds a lost, wayward sinner, a prosecutor, big "Saul" and recreates him by metamorphosis into "little" Saint Paul the evangelist and disciple, author of our Epistle Reading to Timothy (1 Tim.1), the focus of the Sermon Message. The behavior of the Searcher in the stories that Jesus tells is radically different. Such finding, searching, loving, celebrating, sweeping mercy. . . .finds us in its action at the Cross of Jesus the Christ. Where humanity is sought (and saved) exactly when and where it is lost in sin, death, and fear. Then, in the Resurrection of Jesus, we become the sheep the Shepherd carries. We are the coins that the Woman (God) dusts off, holds, and celebrates. By the power of the Holy Spirit, this Assembly of believers is that rejoicing party - our eucharist meal - God welcoming and eating with sinners. Today is the first installment in a sermon series on Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus.

**Please join us to receive HOLY COMMUNION:** At St. Luke, all Christians who desire to receive Christ's presence and blessing, in, with and under the forms of bread and wine in the Holy Communion Meal are welcome to do so, regardless of your age or denomination. If you or your children are not yet baptized into the Christian faith, please contact the pastor who would love to help you begin to receive this sacrament of grace and belonging and learn about its meanings. As Lutheran Christians, we trust and teach what Martin Luther wrote in his Small Catechism: *"These words, (given for you) and (shed for you for the forgiveness of sins) when accompanied by the physical eating and drinking, are the essential thing in the sacrament, and whoever believes these very words has what they declare and state, namely, 'forgiveness of sins, new life, and salvation.'"* By hearing these words of our Lord Jesus Christ spoken, and by receiving ordinary bread and ordinary wine (or grape juice), we believe the Holy Spirit unites us with the Jesus of the past and the Christ of faith and with each other, even those whom physical distance and health concerns separate. Jesus Christ humbles himself to become fully present in his real body and blood, given to each of us, and all of us together. This Meal is for you. All are welcome here! Friend and stranger. All are welcome at the banquet of the Savior! Come up the center aisle to the Pastor or Assisting Minister and receive the bread into your open, flat palm/ hand, go left or right and receive/or take the cup of wine/ juice from the server at Table. If you desire only a blessing, please do come and receive the sign of the Cross and a word of blessing and prayer. Cross your arms to indicate you are not communing but wish a simple blessing. Everyone, young and old, is encouraged to share in this Holy Communion Meal. These are the gifts of God for you, the people of God.

## Prelude

## Welcome & Announcements

## Confession and Forgiveness Rite

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

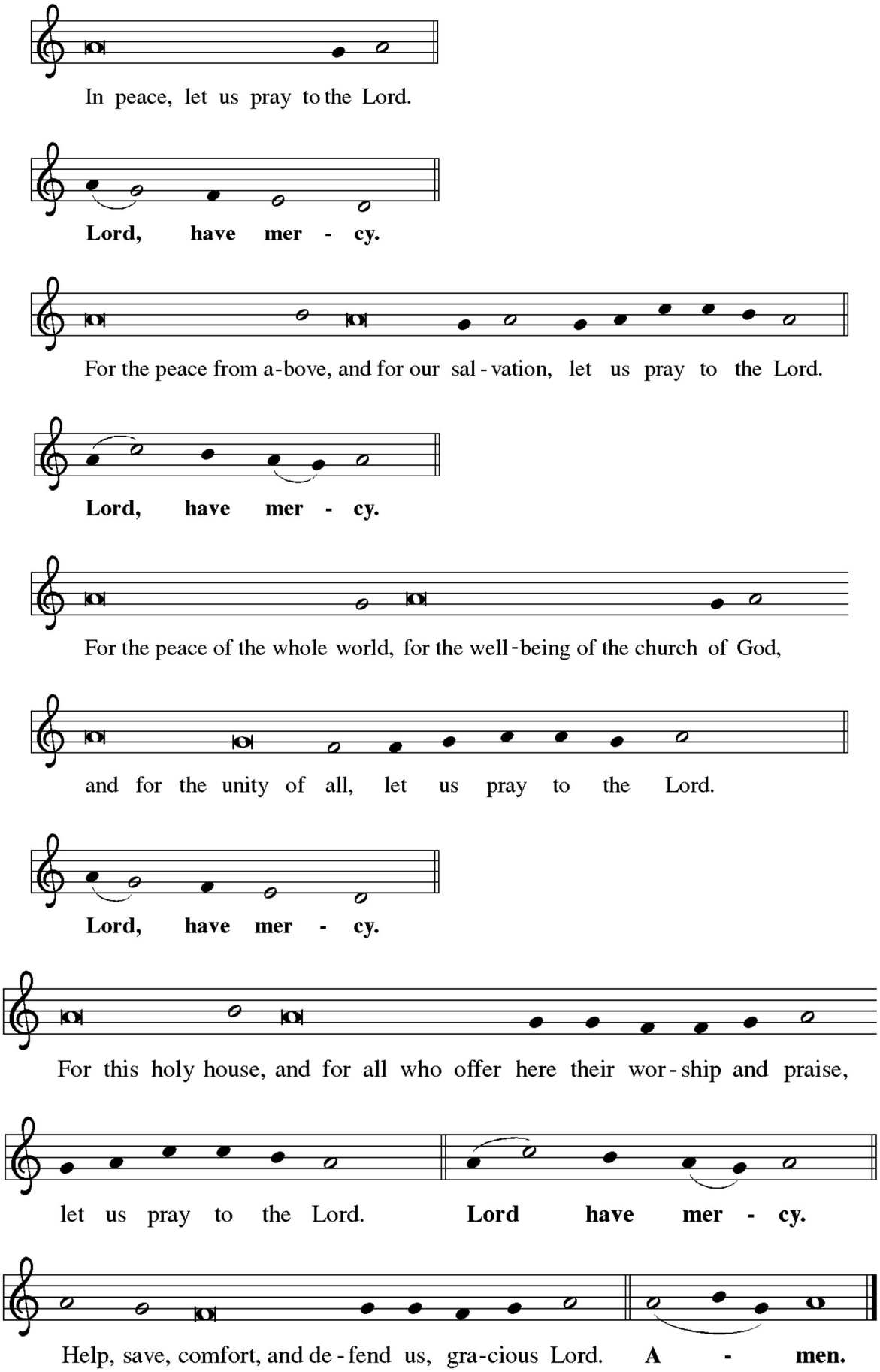
Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
our Maker (the Creator), our Helper (Jesus the Savior), and our Keeper (the life-giving Holy Spirit).
**Amen.**

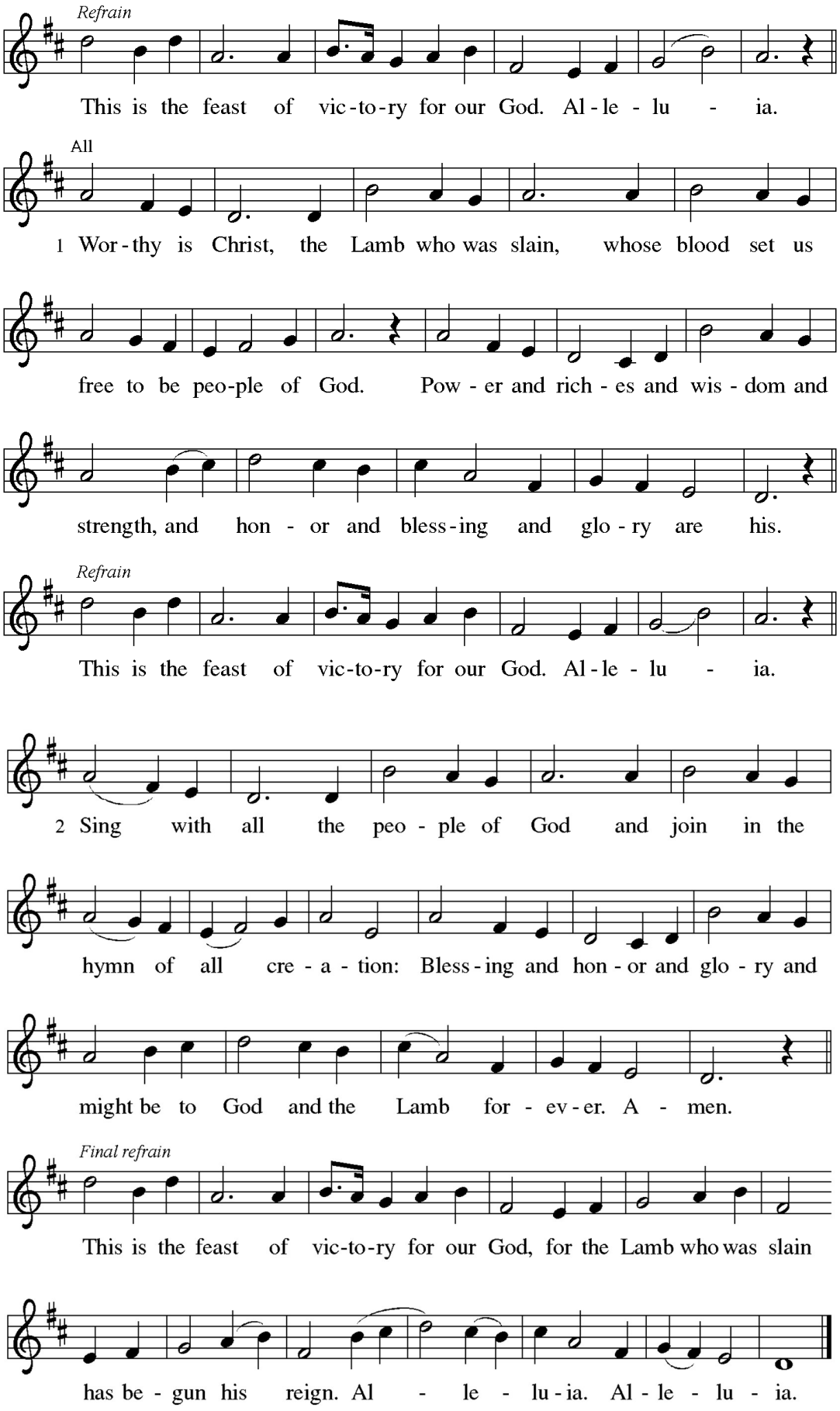
Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Merciful and loving God,
**we are your stiff-necked people.**
We trample on the needy.
**We grumble about your grace to others.**
**We turn away from the poor.**
Have mercy on us and forgive our sins.
**Rejoice over us as those who were lost**
**but have been found. Amen.**

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful.
Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.
I announce to you that God has forgiven you all your sins
through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ on the Cross.
You who were lost have been found. You who were once enslaved are now free to love and serve.
In the name of ✠ Jesus, let us live into the freedom of our forgiveness and new life!
**Amen.**


In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer - cy.
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-vation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer - cy.
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer - cy.
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.
Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.


Refrain
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu - ia.
All
1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us
free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and
strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.
Refrain
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu - ia.
2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the
hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and
might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.
Final refrain
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain
has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

## Pastoral Greeting

May 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!**

This is the day which the Lord has made:
**let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

### Prayer of the Day

O God our Father, whose heart overflows with mercy, love, and compassion, You lead back to you all who go astray and You find all who are lost and wayward. Preserve us with your loving care and gracious mercy so that we reject the false gods and lords we make that lead us away from you. **Help us to follow your Shepherd Savior Son in all that we do and say so that we find life in you. We ask this prayer, in and through your Holy Spirit, in the powerful name of Jesus our Lord Amen.**

# Word

## First Reading — Exodus 32:7-14

*While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the people grow restless and make a golden calf to worship. Today's reading shows Moses as the mediator between an angry God and a sinful people. Moses reminds God that the Israelites are God's own people, and boldly asks for mercy for them.*

7 The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the
land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 8 they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I
commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshiped it and
sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of
Egypt!' " 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. 10 Now let me
alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, but of you I will make a
great nation."
11 But Moses implored the LORD his God and said, "O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against
your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?
12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that their God brought them out to kill them in
the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change
your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. 13 Remember your children, Abraham, Isaac, and
Jacob, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your
descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your
descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' " 14

So the LORD changed mind (repented) about the disaster that the Lord planned to bring upon the people.

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

## Psalm — Psalm 51:1-4, 7-10

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)*

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
**in your great compassion blot out my offenses.**
2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
**and cleanse me from my sin.**
3 For I know my offenses,
**and my sin is ever before me.**
4 Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;
**so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**

7 Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
**wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.**
8 Let me hear of joy and gladness;
**that this body you have broken may rejoice.**
9 Hide your face from my sins,
**and blot out all my wickedness.**
10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
**and renew a right spirit within me.**

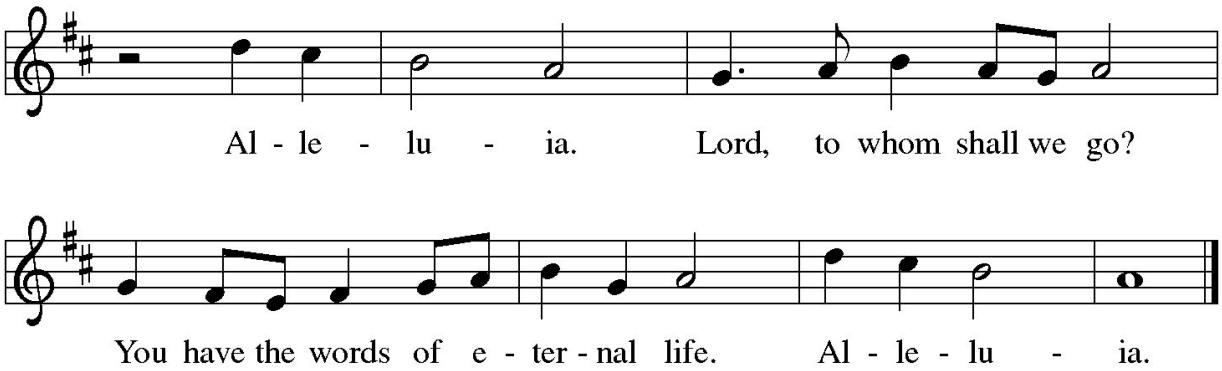
## Second Reading — A Letter from Paul to Timothy 1 Timothy 1:1, 12-17

*The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the pastoral epistles because they contain advice especially intended for leaders in the church. Here the mercy shown to Paul, who once persecuted the church, is cited as evidence that even the most unworthy may become witnesses to the grace of God.*

*1:1 (A Letter from) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, to Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Messiah Jesus our Lord. . . . 12 "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful and appointed me to his service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. 16 But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever."*

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

## Gospel Acclamation — ELW Setting 4




*(We invite our kids forward at this time to listen to the Gospel Story read for them from the Augsburg-Fortress Press Spark 2015 Kids' Bible. The AGC Message will follow the reading of the story from Luke 15.)*

## Gospel — Luke 15:1-10

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 15th chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus tells two stories that suggest a curious connection between the lost being found and sinners repenting. God takes the initiative to find sinners, each of whom is so precious to God that their recovery brings joy in heaven.*

[1] Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] [2] And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Telling stories was Jesus' favorite way to teach people about God. So Jesus told them these parables:

*"Once there was a shepherd who had 100 sheep," Jesus said. "He loved them all—the big ones and the little ones, the good ones and the naughty ones. They were his sheep and he loved them.*

*"Every day this shepherd counted his sheep to make sure they were all safe. One day he counted only 99 sheep! Oh no! One was missing! Right away, the shepherd left the 99 sheep together and went to look for the one that was lost. "The shepherd listened for the lost sheep to 'B-a-a.' He looked in all the places that sheep might get stuck or in trouble. It took a while, but the shepherd kept looking until he found the missing one! Then he called to all his friends and neighbors. 'Come on over!' he cried. 'I have found my sheep! Let's have a party!'"*

Jesus loved telling people stories like this about something being lost and then found.

*"I have another story," Jesus said. "Once there was a woman who had saved up 10 little silver coins. One day when she was counting them, she discovered that one was lost. What do you think she did? Did she think to herself 'Oh well—I've still got nine, so who cares if one is lost?' "No, she did not! She lit her lamp and swept the house from top to bottom. She looked under and over and around everything in her house until she found that lost coin! Oh, she was so happy she had a party to celebrate.*

"God is like this shepherd and this woman, you know," Jesus said. "God would never stop looking for someone who was lost."

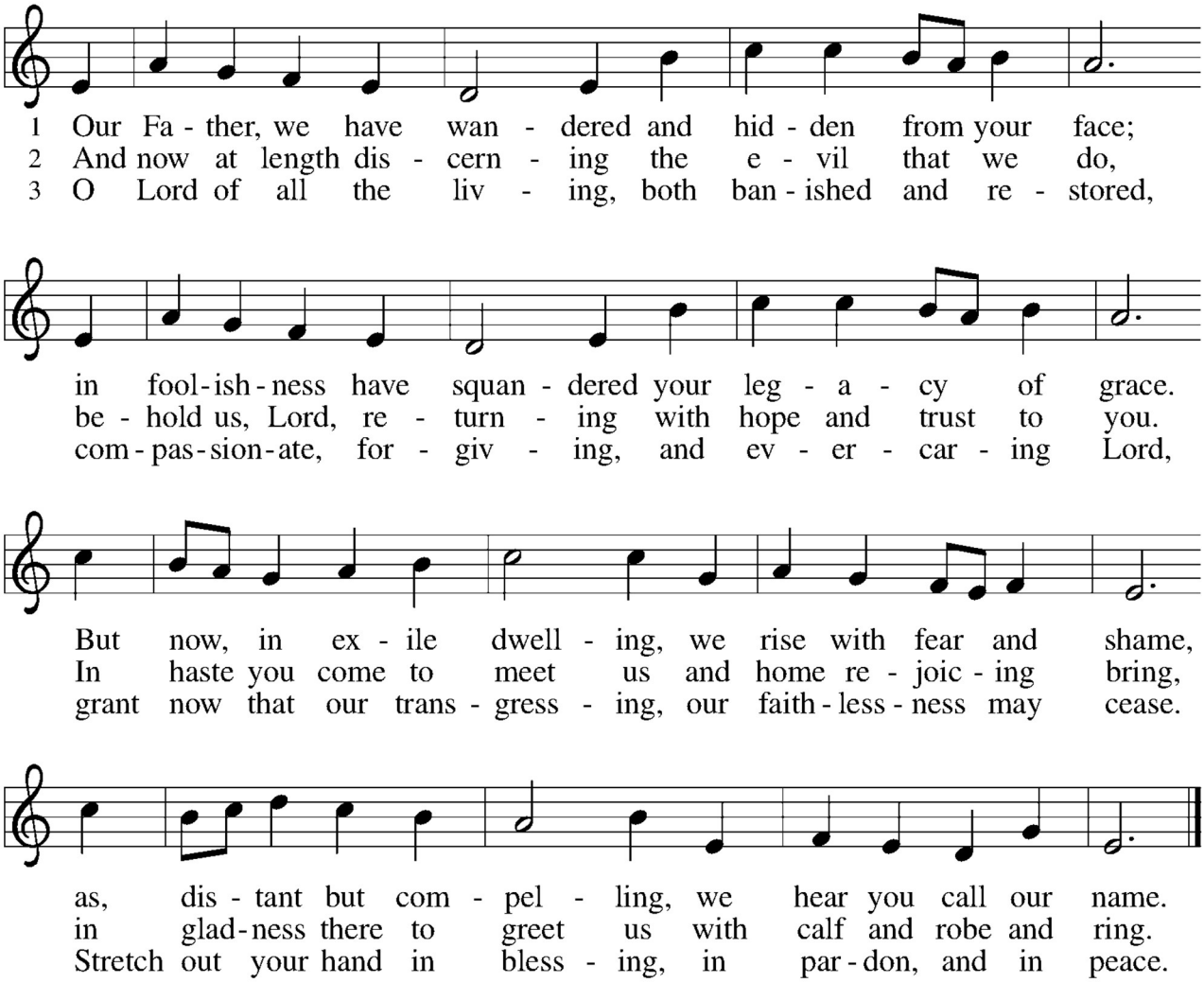
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**All God's Children Message** **Allie Brandt and AGC Message Team**

--"The Joy of God- (Part 1)" . . . A Message for Kids based on the Gospel story—

**Sermon** **Pastor Brad Brauer**

*"The Joy of God- (Part 2)"*




Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929–2006
Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612
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## Profession of Faith: The Apostles' 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 the People

Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.
*A brief silence. (Each prayer bid ends with . . . .* God of grace, **receive our prayer.**
Response after the final petition: **Amen.**

## Peace

*The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.*

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

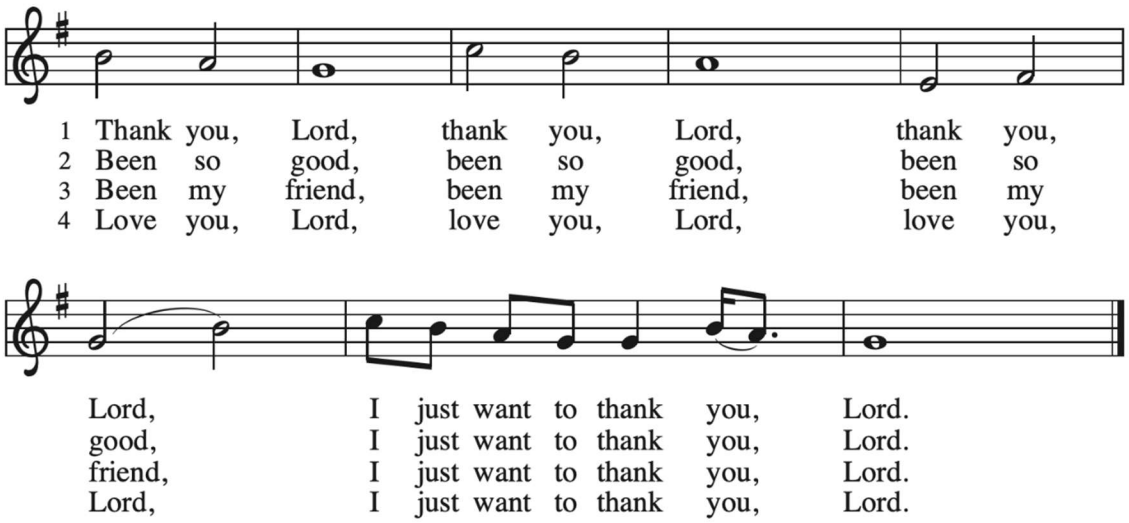
*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace. Then the assembly is seated.*

## Offerings are Received

We are invited to give joyfully our tithes and offerings to join in God's unceasing mission to and through the Church. Place your offerings in the basket in the aisle. You may also send gifts directly to St. Luke via mail or contribute via our online giving resources on our church website ***http://stlukeabq.org/***.

You are also invited to give, in addition, to our Bucket of Change recipient and its ministry. **The Bucket of Change recipient for September is ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR)** which shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. Website: www.elca.org (Choose "Our Work," then "Relief and Development," then, "Lutheran Disaster Response").

## Offertory Hymn ACS 1092 (8:15 AM) — Thank You, Lord




Text: Traditional
Music: THANK YOU, LORD, Traditional

## Offering Anthem (10:30 AM) — Amazing Grace

Arlen Clarke

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost but now am found,
was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed.

The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first began.

## Offering Prayer

Let us pray.
Lord of the harvest,
we return to you a portion of what you have first given to us.-
our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love.
Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches,
but on you, who richly provides for us.
Multiply what we have gathered here
to bless all who are suffering and in need,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
**Amen.**

## Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.*

The Lord be with you.
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.
**We lift them to the Lord.**

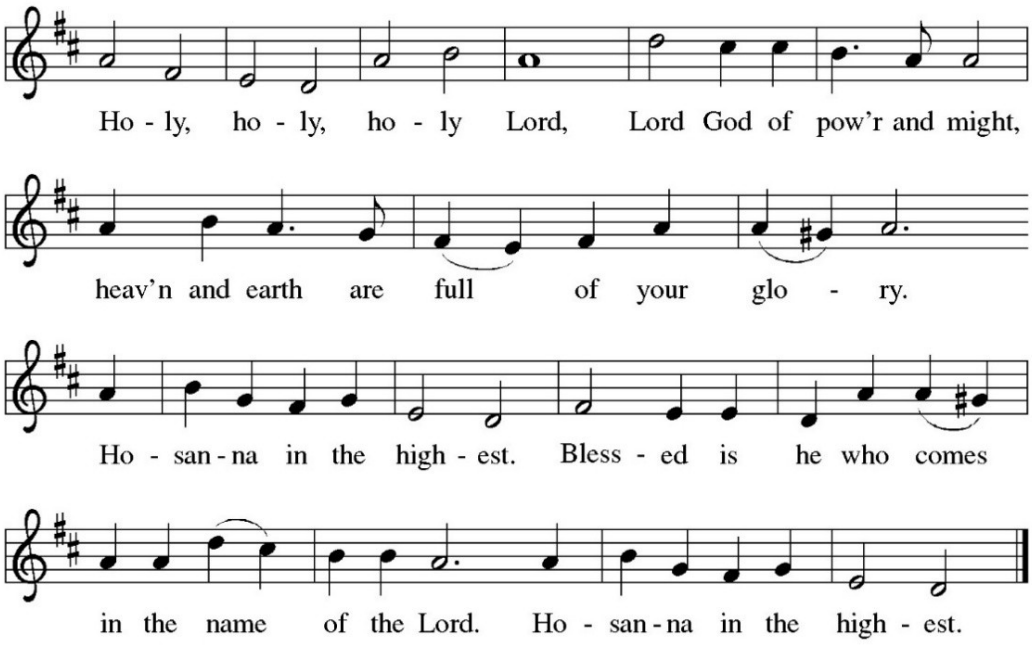
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy
that we should always sing of your glory,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
For you are the hope of the nations,
the builder of the city that is to come.
Your love made visible in Jesus Christ
finds and brings home the lost,
heals the broken,
restores the sinner with acceptance and welcome,
and gives dignity to the despised and outcast.

In Jesus' face your light shines out,
flooding lives with goodness and truth, mercy and love,
gathering into one in your Kingdom
a divided and broken humanity.

And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## Sanctus — ELW Setting 4



*Thanksgiving at the Table continues . . .*

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, God our Creator
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
We praise you for your world and for sending us a Savior.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

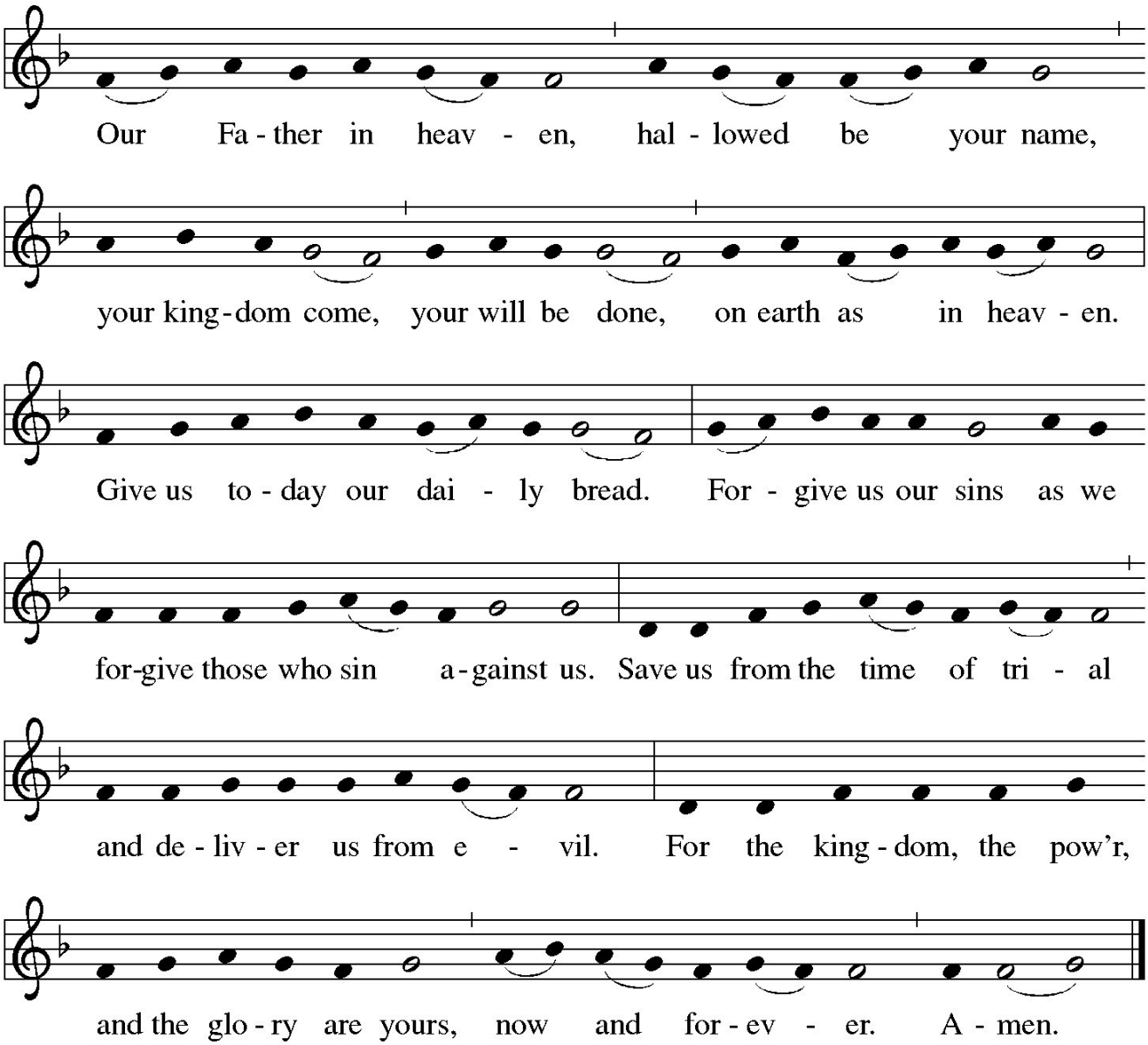
*We remember now at this table his Last Meal and Testament . . .*

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.
Pour out your Holy Spirit,
that by this Holy Communion we may know
the unity we share with all your people
in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.
**Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer** **ELW Setting 5**



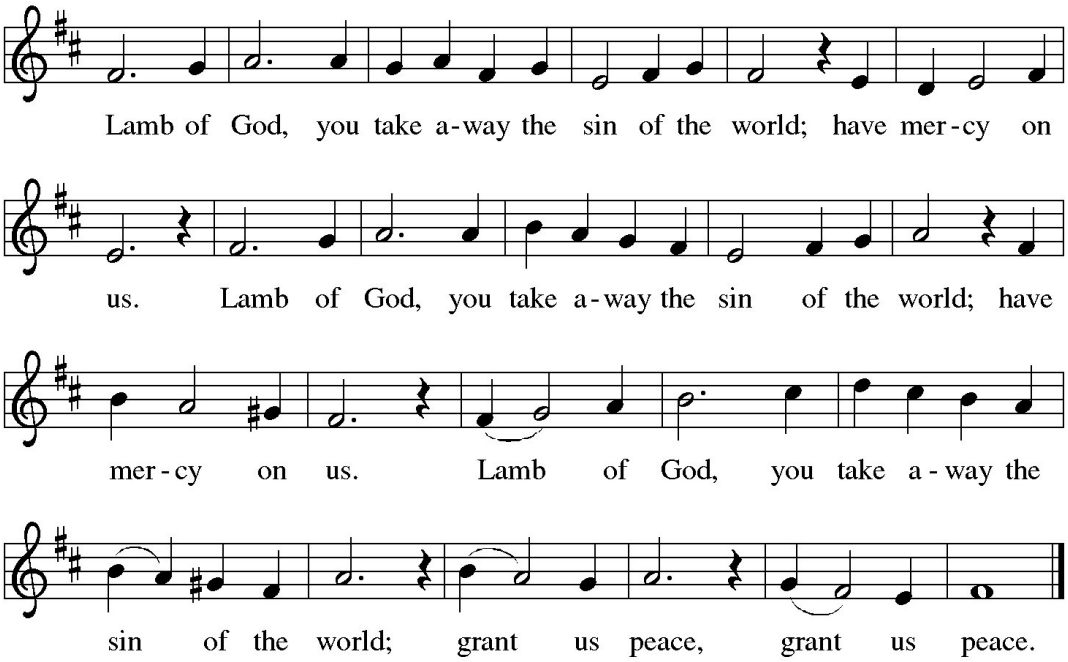

## Invitation to Communion

Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with us.
Come to His meal of Manna and Mercy.

*The assembly may be seated. The bread may be broken for the communion.*

*The ministers commune both after and before others commune.*

**Agnus Dei** **ELW Setting 4**




## Communion

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*and each person may respond*

## The Distribution of Communion

*You are invited to move up the center aisle and receive bread (gluten-free bread is also available) from the pastor or assistant. Go left or right. Take a cup of wine (red) or grape juice (white) from the tray held by the assistant. After receiving it, please walk back by the side aisle where you can place your empty disposable cup in the basket. All are welcome. If you desire only a blessing, please do come and stand before the Pastor or minister with crossed arms to receive a blessing prayer and sign of the Cross.*

## Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, and his blessing, strengthen you, keep us all in that One True Faith, and bring us all to everlasting life. Depart from the Lord's Table in peace and joy. **Amen.**

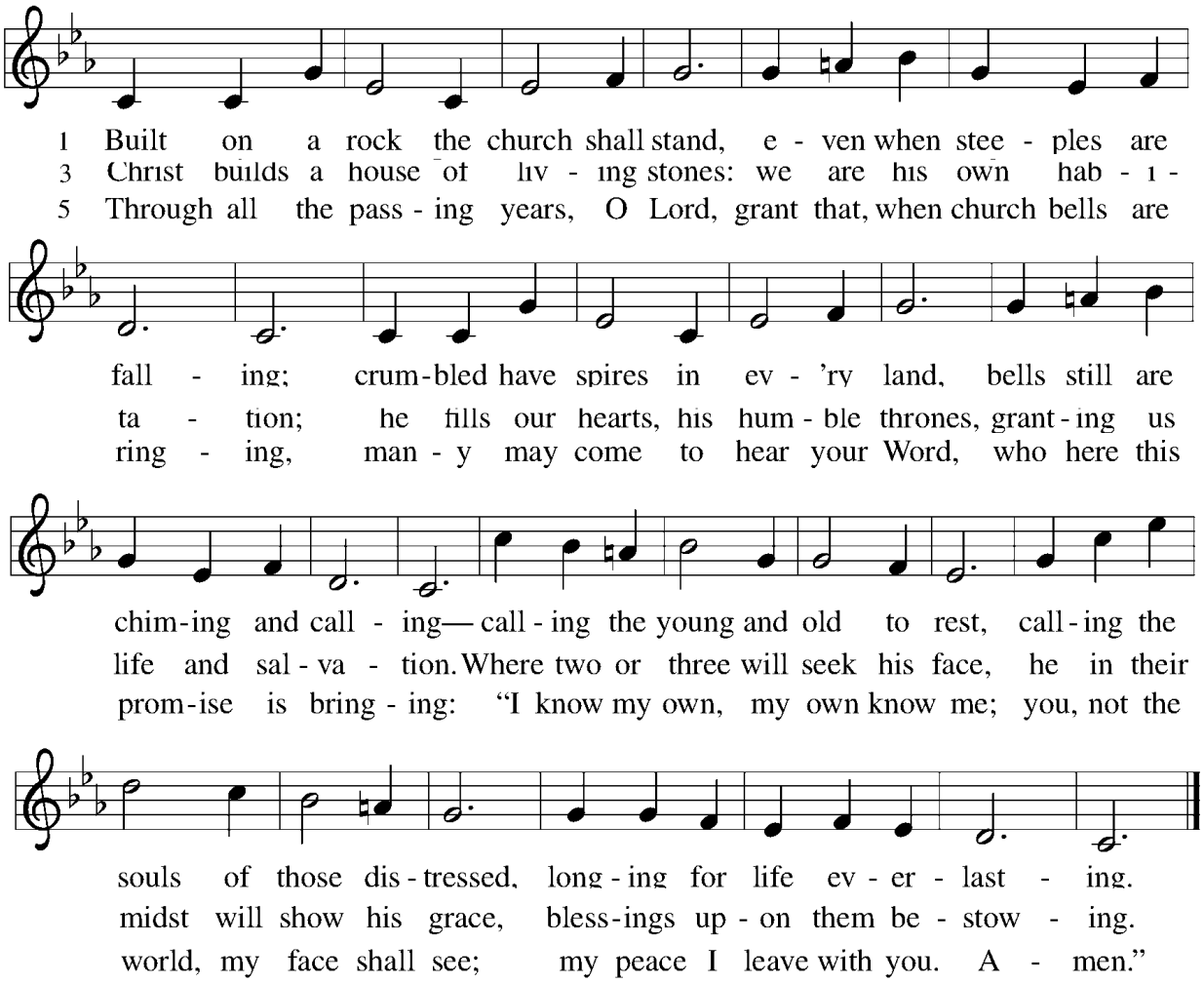
## Prayer after Communion

O God,
through this meal you have strengthened us
and appointed us to be your servants.
Send us out to do good and to share our possessions
with all who are in need. We ask this prayer in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

## Blessing

The God of righteousness,
who gives justice to the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry,
and who sets the prisoners free,
☩ bless you,
now and forever.
**Amen.**

## Sending Hymn ELW 652, verses 1,3,5 — Built on a Rock




Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Carl Doving, 1867–1937, adapt.
Music: KIRKEN DEN ER ET GAMMEL HUS, Ludvig M. Lindeman, 1812–1887
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## Dismissal

The Joy of the Lord is our strength!
Go in peace; love and serve the Lord.
**Thanks be to God!**

## Postlude

**Scripture readings for Fifteenth Weekend After Pentecost: September 20 & 21**
Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; **1 Timothy 2:1-7**; Luke 16:1-13

**Participating in Today's Worship**
Interim Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Brad Brauer
Sacristy Care: Gil & Sally Quintana
Pianist: Danielle Cordova
Nursery Care: Taylor Hollowwa

8:15 AM
Reader: Mary Sorenson
Vocalist: TBA
Sound: Andreas Hochstein
Ushers: Deanna Vendel, Cindy Callisto

10:30 AM
Reader: Barb Shirrod
Vocalists: St Luke Sanctuary Choir
Sound: Maribel Alvarez
Communion Assistants: Mary Voelz, Elaine Kovach
Ushers: Tom Berardinelli, Diane Follstaedt
Greeters: Barb & Terry Shirrod

Sacristy Candle for August: Given by Daleen Olson, in loving memory of Bruce MacDonald

Pastoral Care: call the church office

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✠ The Rev. Dr. Brad Brauer, Interim Pastor ✠
Danielle Cordova, Coordinator of Music Ministries ✠ Nancy Granert, Organist
Precious Goodhart Nursery Care (Saturday) ✠ Taylor Hollowwa, Nursery Care (Sunday)
Allie Brandt, Coordinator of Multi-Generational Ministries ✠ Pamela Franco, Media Ministry Assistant
Michelle Barba, Business Manager ✠ Angie Miller, Church Office Manager & Ministry Assistant

***Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. – Psalm 42:5***

**Let us offer our prayers for the wideness of God's mercy for the whole world —**

**For the church universal, its bishops, for the newly baptized and confirmands, and for all the faithful, its ministry, and the mission of the gospel**
† Missionary Carolyn Schneider in Guyana;

† Blessing upon Presiding Bishop-elect Yehiel Curry, Synod Bishop Meghan Aelabouni and the work of the Rockies Synod and its ministries, for the ministries of the ELCA in Jordan and the Holy Land and for her bishops and clergy seeking peace together with the Rabbis of Israel

**For the well-being of your creation; that we may be good stewards of all your gifts and share generously with all who are in need, for an increase of peace and justice in the world,**
† Especially in Gaza and the larger Middle East and in the Ukraine and for Oksana's family in Ukraine, for safety and an end to war and terror

† *Liam & Richard,* Marissa & Gene, Brandon & Chris & Peter (from Nancy Espy), Janie (from Daleen Olson), Thomas Young's medical work (from Cindy Callisto), Don, safety as he travels, Mark Mooty, Elisa, Felisa, Joshua Kiniaard (16 yrs), Andy, Nancy, Rob, Dave, Sam, Andrew, Scott & Beels, Emily, Seth, Nora & Logan, Kathy, Lisa Gail & Mary, Chele, Debra, Roseann Schneider, Sofia, Michael R, Joan & Dave, Kaela, Callie Coughenour, Kurt Coughenour, Russ Glauner, Magdalena Barba & family, Jean Klinke

**For the nations and those in authority, rulers, legislators, and judges,**
† *Children in Lebanon in the midst of tensions & closed schools,* Survivors of earthquake in Afghanistan; for children in war torn places and in the midst of hardships to experience Christ's hope

† For this community; for peace and security for all peoples, for this assembly here at St. Luke Church, for our growth in faith and service for the poor, oppressed

† For the starving children and families in Gaza and in Sudan

† For September Bucket of Change recipient ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response

**For the sick and infirm of body, mind, and spirit, those who live with incurable diseases, AIDS, malaria, last stage cancer, and polio**
† Lola, for mental health and care; Karin Duda, for health procedures

† For the hospitalized and recovering, especially those who will have surgery: *Tina, Felisa,* Karen Carlson, Pastor Brad's daughter Erinn Brauer Brown and his niece, Renae Brauer, Don, Steve Azar, Daleen Olson, Myra Lynch

† For the bereaved and sad: Family & friends of Betty Jewell, Lori Erven and family at the death of her mother; family of Stephen Smith, that they might have peace, and hope and receive your Presence and promises with faith

**For the hungry and homeless on our streets and neighborhoods, for the mentally ill especially, for the lonely**
† Amy, Juvanna, and Frankie, and others we pass by unable to help them sufficiently

**For the congregation and its needs, and for its special concerns,**
† The Call Committee and the Church Council
† For our St. Luke Preschool and the children and families at the beginning of a new school year

† For Interim Pastor Brad, church committees/ ministries, and staff

† *Betty Ann Arner,* Ellen & Roland Seylar (their move in September to assisted living facility near family, in Maryland), Nancy Granert, Forrest Blech, Sandy Bowers, Bob & Sherri Domres, Ray Prudhomme, Chrystal Vaughan, Karin Duda, Dorela Cole, Lorna Hill, Brenda Sanchez, Polly Brodbeck, Melda Burns, Leah Coughenour, Dottie Donohoe, Kay Dunbar, Lucille Few, Marie Lenard, Marv Plugge, Loretta Roe, Liz Wills (ride to church)

† *For aging parents, whose caregivers we become.*

**For blessings of our faithful and loving Lord, we give thanks**

**We remember the faithful departed who now are at rest and all the saints in our lives most dear to us who have lived out the faith and taught us by their great examples; we give thanks for our time with them, and, as we believe Jesus died and rose again, we look forward to uniting with them in eternal life with Jesus**
† Betty Jewell (from Cindy Callisto), Betty (Lori Erven's mother), Stephen Smith (friend of Betty Ann)

**Into your mercy we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting always in your mercy and love for us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Please submit your prayer requests to PrayerChain@StLukeABQ.org or contact the church office. Names will remain on the prayer list for one month.*

**Mission Minute . . .** "New life in Christ!" . . . That's today's theme. That is the message of and the offer of the gospel. We hear that offer, also, in and under the words of Paul's Letter. You may remember his story. Paul was once ignorant, sinful, violent, a persecutor, opposing Jesus and the Church. He acted ignorantly. He was a legalist, preoccupied with laws. Suddenly, he was disoriented, then reoriented, made new; changed, converted, transfigured, changed (think metamorphosis, geology), into a spokesperson for Jesus, an evangelist, changed from enemy to friend of Jesus, converted from law to grace, preoccupied not with rules, customs, excluding behavior, but with God's mercy in Jesus who forgives our sins and sets us free. Once a slave, *now* Paul is free. Once blinded by legalisms and rules, *now* he can see the power of the gospel of Jesus.

**Paul's response** of joyful thankfulness and gratitude is raised up for us, in his Letter to Timothy (1:1 ff.), as a great theme, pattern, or example for us, for our lives. Paul is not thanking Timothy for reading his letter. Paul is thanking his God. For this old character (!) Saint Paul, all of life had become gift and grace. Then came his commitment and response, a life lived out of thanksgiving and gratitude, out of joy and in response for the sheer gift of God's "amazing grace" that sets sinners free to respond with their lives and then offer all their gifts as just that: a response to grace. Do you hear today's theme? Do you hear how Paul moved from receiving the gift of grace to a joyful, thankful response, to becoming a gift for others, giving his life away, offering himself as gift to Jesus' mission? Do we hear in Saint Paul's story a pattern for the story of our lives, our stewardship of all our gifts?

**And here's stewardship connection** as we begin our planning for our annual Appeal" behind the scenes." 1) Stewardship always begins with what God has done in grace for us. God has blessed us with gifts and assets. 2) Changed, then we respond. Thus, stewards are thankful, joyful, and full of gratitude. And our God does not need our giving as much as we have a deep, personal need to give back to God. We cannot help but respond out of joy and thanksgiving for the grace that is ours. So, we will want to invest our every gift and our deeper giftedness, and our talents and abilities, our times and treasures, --even our possessions and money-- as offerings to and through the Church to "fund" Christ's mission and ministry here and beyond these 4 walls. We exist to extend Christ's mission and ministry, ("Missional Spending Plan") not simply to "meet a budget." Our faith takes shape in love and good deeds. Our offerings, --the "conversion of our pocketbooks' as Luther called it,-- together with the conversion of our minds and hearts, attitudes and thinking about life, all testify to the radical (metamorphosis) life change and transformation that we have undergone. Stewardship, after all, is "everything we do and say after we say: *'I believe.'* It is rooted in thanksgiving and joyful response to the God who saves sinners and finds the lost.

- The Rev. Dr. Brad Brauer, Interim Pastor