



WELCOMING OF GUESTS AND VISITORS

** Indicates a time to stand in body or in spirit*

The Holy Spirit Calls Us Together as the People of God

THE GATHERING

PRELUDE

INTRODUCTION

L Lent has traditionally been a time of repentance and renewal. In the early church, this was a time of preparation and instruction for those to be baptized at the Great Vigil of Easter on Holy Saturday.

Later, this idea of preparation and instruction was applied to baptized Christians as well.

In our Lenten observance on these Wednesday evenings, we will focus on five of the six great themes of Luther's Small Catechism in our homilies.

They are: The Ten Commandments (God's Law), The Apostles' Creed (Faith), The Lord's Prayer (Prayer), The Sacrament of Holy Baptism (Grace), The Sacrament of the Altar (Holy Communion). This year, we are just leaving out Confession and Absolution (Forgiveness).

Tonight, our service order will center on the Sacrament of Holy Baptism as a way to unify our faith and in loving response to the Gospel of our Lord.

[Please stand if you are able.]

*CALL TO GATHER

P We gather in the name of God: Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen!

*INVITATORY

P Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*

C Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.
(Psalm 67:4-5)

***Gathering Hymn**

God Loved the World

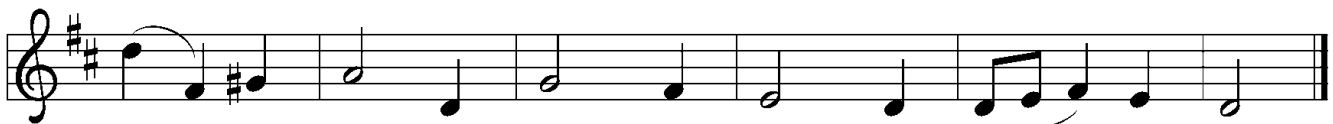
ELW 323



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made
3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives all
5 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly



Son the lost to save, that all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in
trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues
sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by
Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.
Trin - i - ty, be praise now and e - ter - nal - ly!

[Please, remain standing.]

We Are Called to Confess and Repent of Our Sins.

***A BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Psalm 51:1-17

P Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love,
according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.

C Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

P For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

C Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

P Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

C You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

P Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

C Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

P Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

C Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

P Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

C Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

P Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

C Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

P O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

C For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

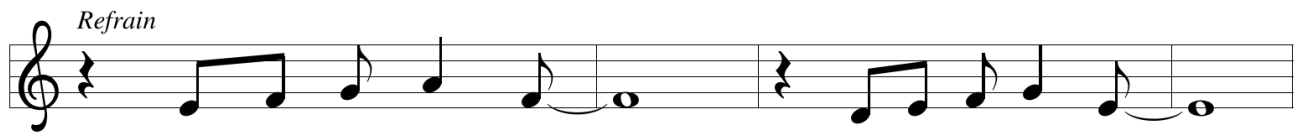
- P** Through faith, the gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of **✝** Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.
- C** **Amen.**

[Please, remain standing.]

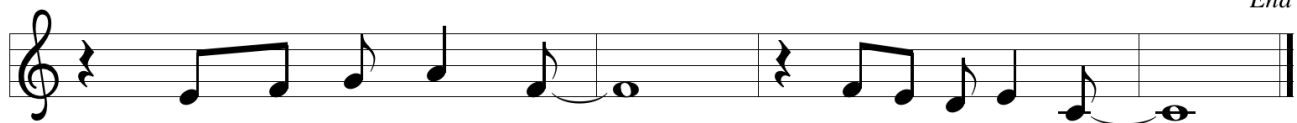
***Hymn of Repentance**

Change My Heart

ELW 801



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

[Please, remain standing if you are able.]

In Gratitude We Build the Church of Christ

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S GRACE

***THE GREETING**

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

C **And also with you.**

- P** Please give each other the sign of Peace saying, "the Peace of Christ be with you."

*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Together we pray,

C Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

[Please, be seated.]

THE OFFERTORY

P Let us bring our offerings of Love to the Lord.

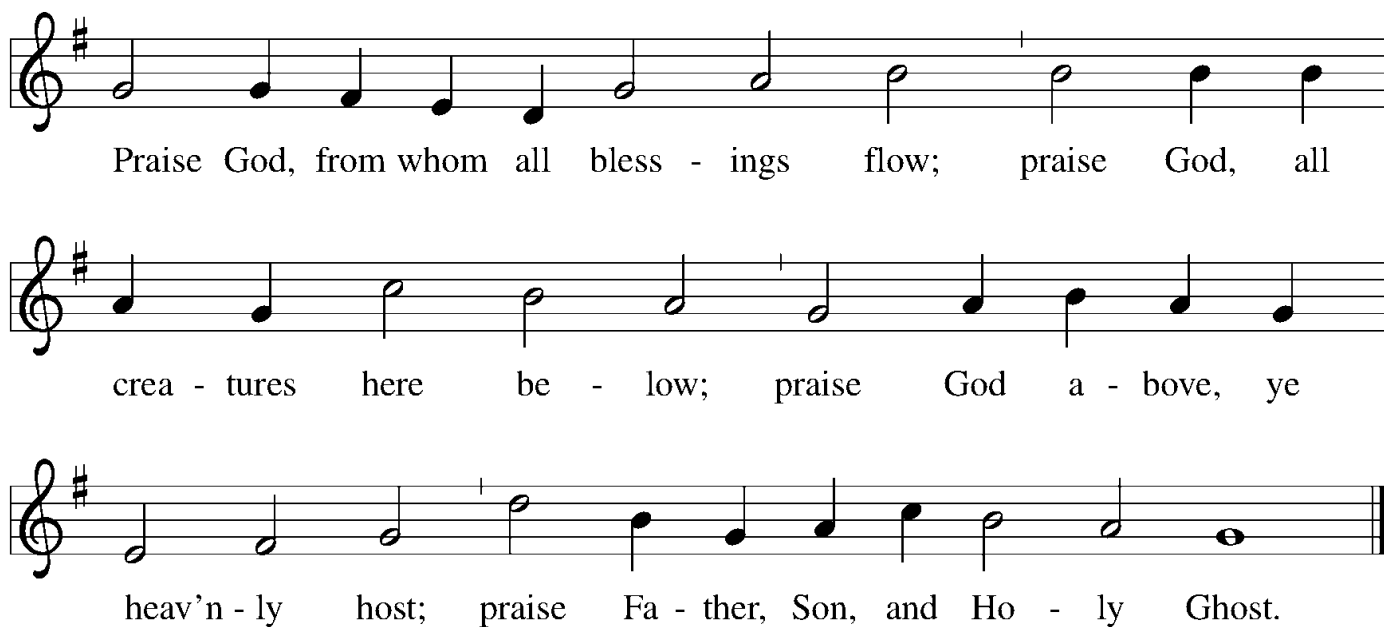
OFFERTORY INTERLUDE

[After collection is taken, please, stand if you are able.]

*The Doxology

*Praise God, From Whom All
Blessings Flow*

ELW 885



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav' n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

*OFFERING PRAYER

P Together we pray.

C Gracious God, accept these gifts, and with them our lives, to be used in your service; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[Please, be seated.]

We Thank God for God's Precious Words and Commandments

THE WORD IS READ, PROCLAIMED, AND SUNG

EXHORTATION

L Brothers and sisters: Our Lord Jesus Christ has given the Church the Sacrament of Holy Baptism as a gracious gift and promise. In Baptism, God acts through water and the Word to bring new life to sinners.

C What human hands pour, God joins to the divine promise.

L Through this means of grace, sin is washed away, death is defeated, and a new creation begins. Baptism is not our work offered to God, but God's saving work given to us—uniting us with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and bringing us into the communion of the holy Church.

C Let us therefore remember the promise given in Holy Baptism and return to the grace that God freely gives.

L For in Baptism, the Triune God claims people as beloved children. The Father creates and calls the Son, who redeems through the cross and empty tomb, and the Holy Spirit gives faith and new birth. Through this sacrament, God joins believers to Christ, grants forgiveness of sins, rescues them from death and the power of the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who trust the promise declared in the Word.

C This promise stands not on human worthiness, but on the faithfulness of God.

L Therefore, baptism is not only a moment in the past but a living reality for every day. The old sinful self is drowned through daily repentance, and a new person rises to live before God in righteousness and purity forever. Strengthened by this promise, the

baptized are called to walk in faith, to resist evil, and to serve neighbors in love, trusting that the grace given in Baptism endures throughout this life and into the life to come.

C Thanks be to God for the washing of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. May the life begun in Baptism be strengthened in faith, nourished by the Word, and lived to the glory of God. Amen.

[Please, stand if you are able.]

***Hymn for Illumination** *Open Your Ears, O Faithful People* **ELW 519**



1 O - pen your ears, O faith-ful peo-ple, o - pen your ears and hear God's word.
2 They who have ears to hear the mes-sage, they who have ears, now let them hear;



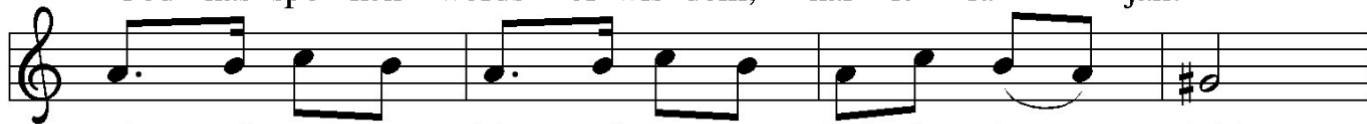
O - pen your hearts, O roy - al priest-hood, God has come to you.
they who would learn the way of wis - dom, let them hear God's word.



Refrain
To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!
God has spo - ken to the peo - ple, hal - le - lu - jah!
Hal-le-lu-jah!



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!
God has spo - ken words of wis - dom, hal - le - lu - jah!



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!
God has spo - ken to the peo - ple, hal - le - lu - jah!



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!
God has spo - ken words of wis - dom, hal - le - lu - jah!

[Please, be seated.]

[Please, stand if you are able.]

***PRAYER OF RESPONSE**

P Together we pray.

C Gracious Lord, through water and the Spirit, you have made us your own. You forgave us all our sins and brought us to newness of life. Continue to strengthen us with the Holy Spirit, and daily increase in us your gifts of grace: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

God Blesses Us and Sends Us On a Mission to the World.

THE SENDING

***THE BENEDICTION**

P May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise, ✝ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

Bless Now, O God, the Journey

ELW 326



1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,
2 Bless so - journ-ers and pil - grims who share this wind-ing way;
3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.
your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus-tains the day.
We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,



The trail is found in des - ert and wīnds the moun-tain round,
We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;
but wait-ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.



then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.
to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.
Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

*THE DISMISSAL

P Go in peace and always remember to pray the prayer our Lord taught us.

C We will, with God's help.

POSTLUDE