Apostles Lutheran Church

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN
7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061
(804) 693-9098 | apostles-elca.org | facebook.com/ApostlesELCA

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Baptismal image: the woman at the well (John 4:5-42)

SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2026 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal. **If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info**. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING *in* CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to racial equity, breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at j80j84@msn.com (preferred) or pastor.apostles@gmail.com. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. **We ask two things: 1) sit in the front pews near your children** and **2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon.** They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

Prelude and Silent Prayer

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to ***silence all cell phones.***

Welcome and Announcements

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen.

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

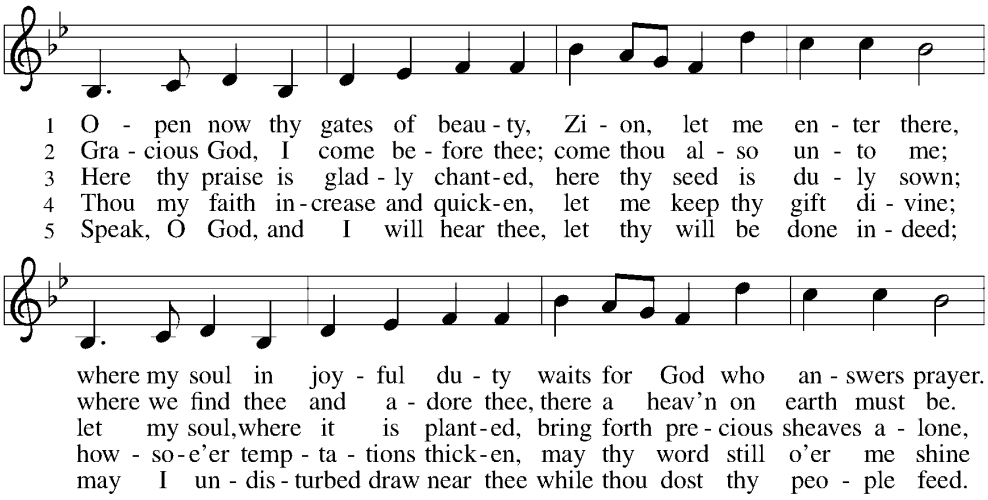
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

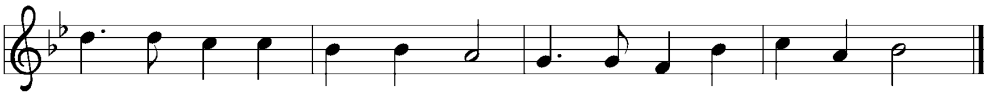
God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN — ELW #533

"Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"





Oh, how bless-ed is this place, filled with so-lace, light, and grace!
To my heart, oh, en-ter thou, let it be thy tem-ple now!
so that all I hear may be fruit-ful un-to life in me.
as my guid-ing star through life, as my com-fort in all strife.
Here of life the foun-tain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

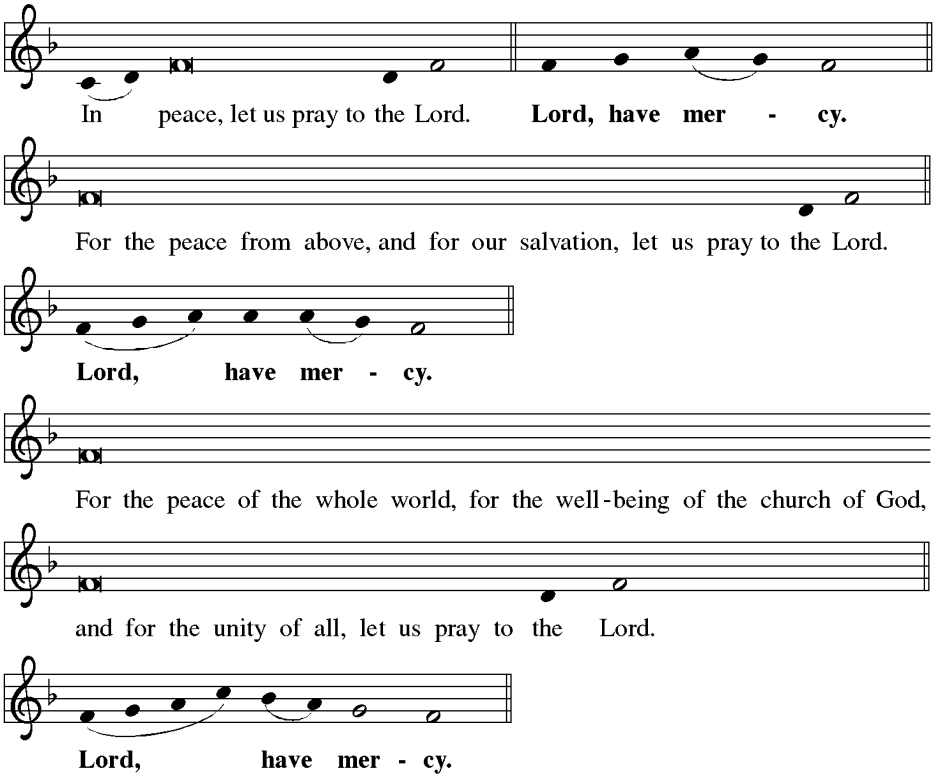
Text: Benjamin Schmolck, 1672–1737; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: UNSER HERRSCHER, Joachim Neander, 1650–1680

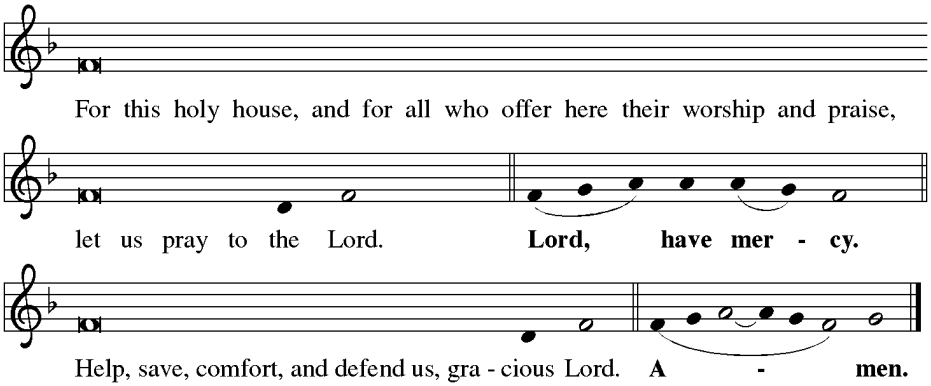
Apostolic Greeting

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





Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

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

Sit

First Reading — Exodus 17:1-7

Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question—"Is the Lord among us or not?"—received a very positive answer.

1 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as
the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to
drink. 2 The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to
them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" 3 But the people thirsted
there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us
out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to
the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone
me." 5 The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of

Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. [6] I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. [7] He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Response after the First Reading

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

PSALM 95

[1] Come, let us sing | to the LORD;
let us shout for joy to the rock of | our salvation.
[2] **Let us come before God's presence | with thanksgiving**
and raise a loud shout to the | LORD with psalms.
[3] For you, LORD, | are a great God,
and a great ruler a- | bove all gods.
[4] **In your hand are the caverns | of the earth;**
the heights of the hills are | also yours.
[5] The sea is yours, | for you made it,
and your hands have molded | the dry land.
[6] **Come, let us worship | and bow down,**
let us kneel before the | LORD our maker. R

[7] For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and
the sheep | of God's hand.
Oh, that today you would | hear God's voice!
[8] **"Harden | not your hearts,**
as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah | in the desert.
[9] There your ancestors | tested me,
they put me to the test, though they had | seen my works.
[10] **Forty years I loathed that gener- | ation, saying,**
'The heart of this people goes astray; they do not | know my ways.'
[11] Indeed I swore | in my anger,
'They shall never come | to my rest.'" **R**

Second Reading — Romans 5:1-11

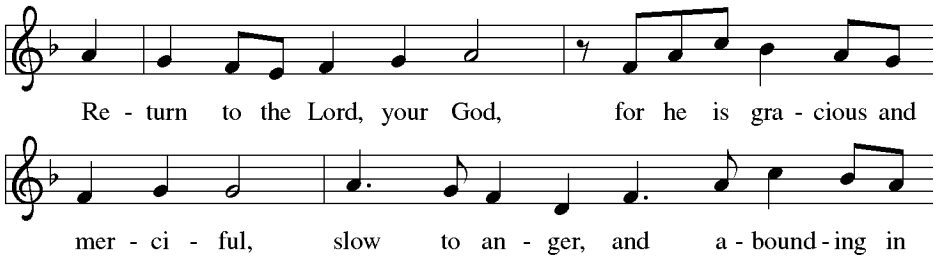
Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus' death God helps utterly helpless sinners. Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation.

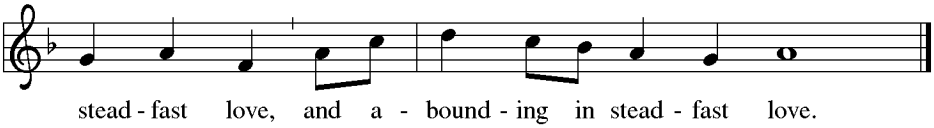
1 Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus
Christ, 2 through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we
boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our
afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character,
and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has
been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.
6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely
will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might
actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ
died for us. 9 Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood,
will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we
were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been
reconciled, will we be saved by his life. 11 But more than that, we even boast in God through
our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Response after the Second Reading
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Gospel Acclamation





The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the Fourth Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel — John 4:5-42

Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.

5 [Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given
to his son Joseph.6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by
the well. It was about noon.
7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." 8 (His
disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it
that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in
common with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is
that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given
you living water." 11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep.
Where do you get that living water? 12 Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us
the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" 13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who
drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but those who drink of the water that I will give
them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water
gushing up to eternal life." 15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may
never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."
16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." 17 The woman answered him,
"I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' 18 for you
have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said
is true!" 19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors
worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in
Jerusalem." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will
worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You worship what you do
not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming
and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the

Father seeks such as these to worship him. [24] God is spirit, and those who worship him must
worship in spirit and truth." [25] The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who
is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." [26] Jesus said to her, "I am
he, the one who is speaking to you."

[27] Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman,
but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" [28] Then the
woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, [29] "Come and see
a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" [30] They
left the city and were on their way to him.

[31] Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." [32] But he said to them,
"I have food to eat that you do not know about." [33] So the disciples said to one another,
"Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" [34] Jesus said to them, "My food is to do
the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. [35] Do you not say, 'Four months more,
then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for
harvesting. [36] The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so
that sower and reaper may rejoice together. [37] For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and
another reaps.' [38] I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored,
and you have entered into their labor."

[39] Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He
told me everything I have ever done." [40] So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked
him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. [41] And many more believed because of
his word. [42] They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we
believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the
world."

The gospel concludes:
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

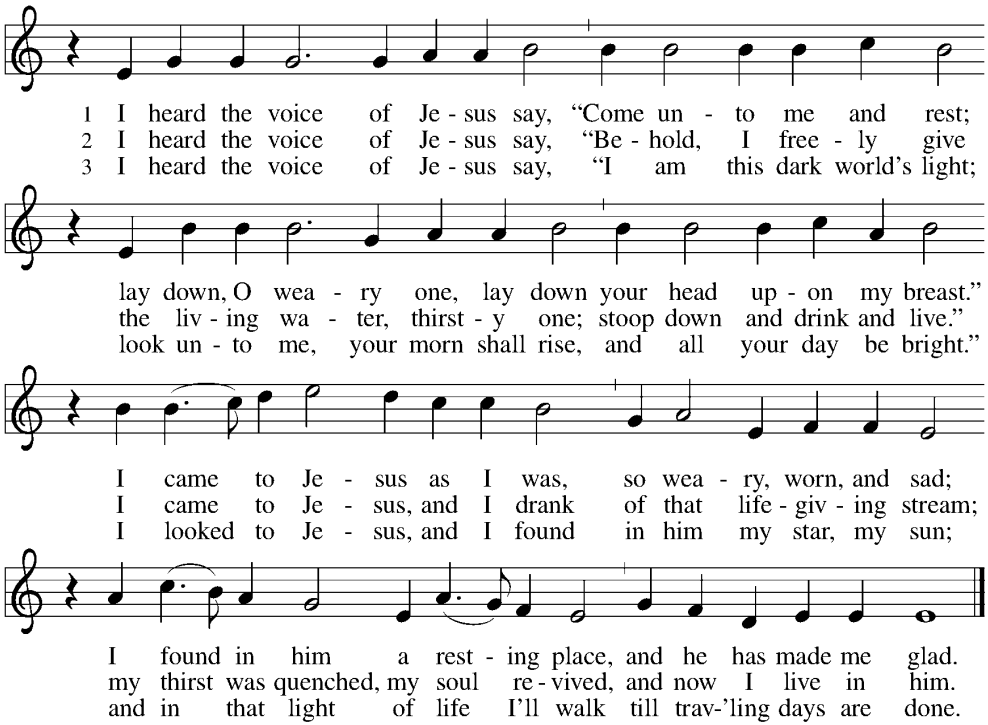
Sermon — Pastor Jay Serafin

Silence is kept after the reflection.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

Hymn of the Day — ELW #332

"I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"



Text: Horatius Bonar, 1808–1889
Music: THIRD MODE MELODY, Thomas Tallis, 1505–1585

Apostles Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith in the words of 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
power of 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

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:
Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.
Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

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

*We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**. Please know that it is fine if you do not want to shake hands but would rather just share a sign of peace.*

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

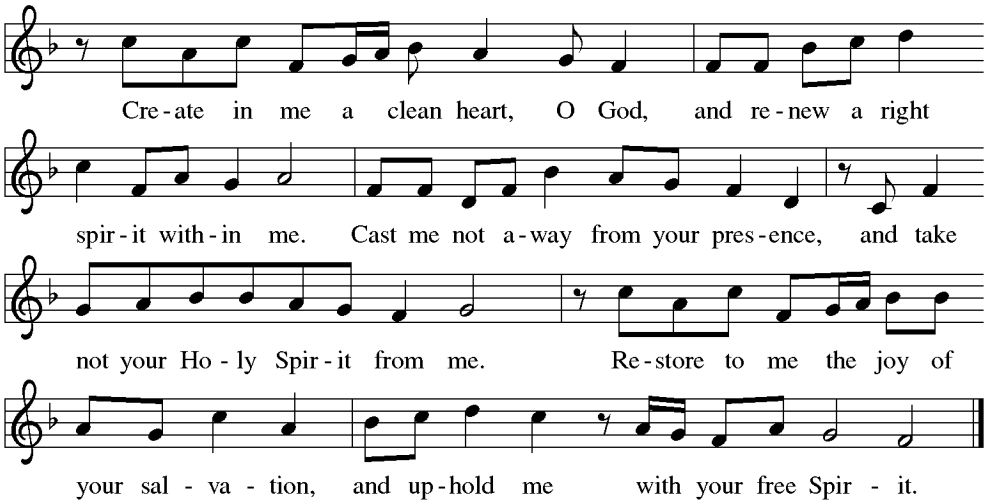
Sit

Offering

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.
To give online:

- **Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions**
- **From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453**

Offertory Hymn — ELW #186



Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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Please rise in body or in spirit

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

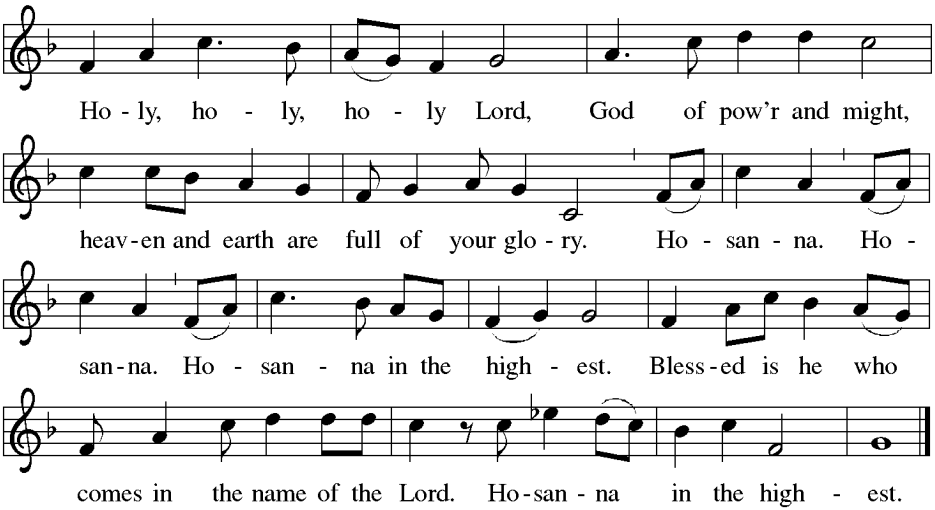
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The great thanksgiving continues.

... as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving concludes.

… we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

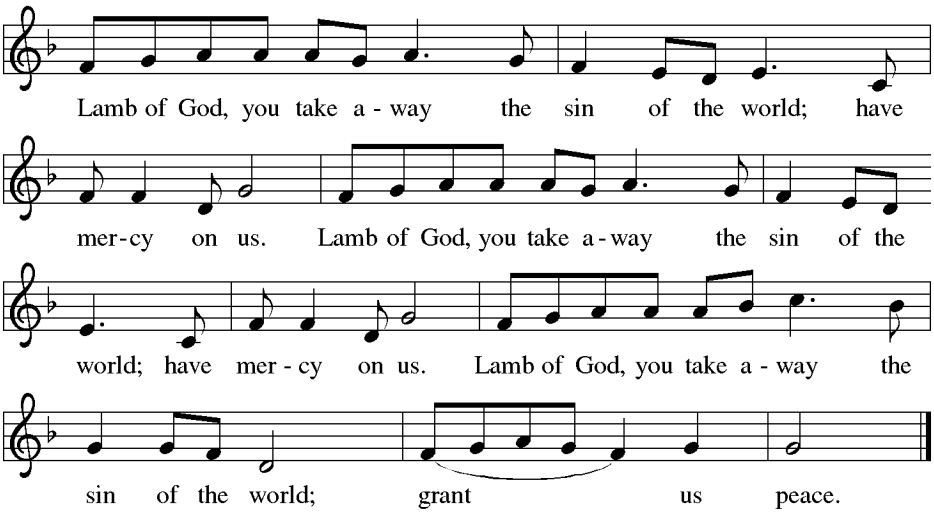
Sit

Communion

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

Lamb of God



After all have returned to their places, all rise in body or in spirit.

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

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

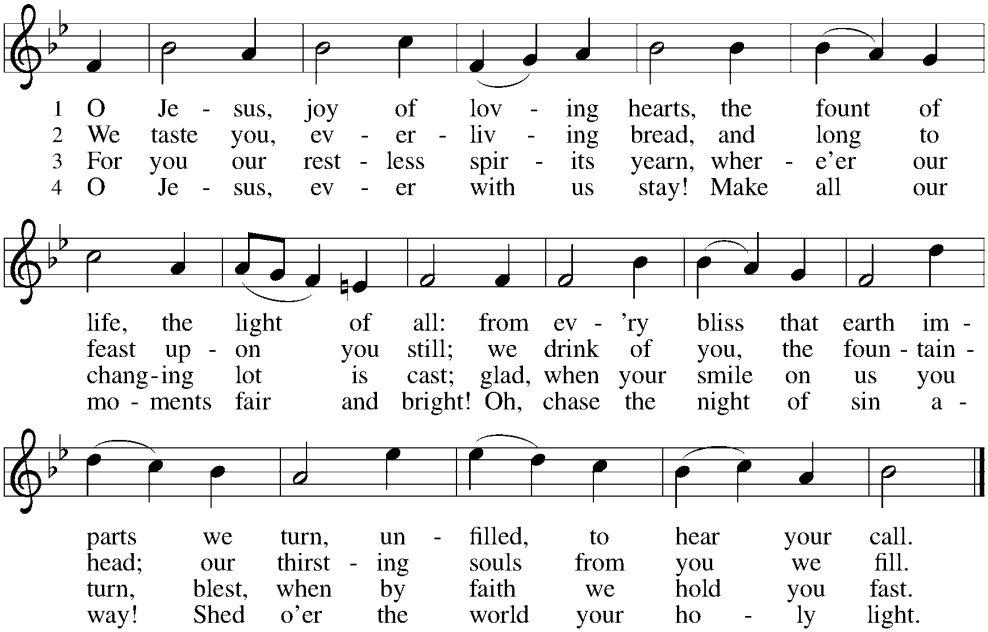
Blessing

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ☩ bless you now and always.

Amen.

Sending Hymn — ELW #658

"O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts"



Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091–1153; tr. Ray Palmer, 1808–1887, alt.
Music: WALTON, W. Gardiner, *Sacred Melodies*, 1815

Dismissal

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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Mid-Week Lenten Worship

This year, we will have representatives from the different organizations we support with us to talk about their organizations: February 25th, Michelle Wells, Executive Director of GUEST; March 4th, Rev. Ed Walker, Convener of Jubilee Churches; March 11th, Arlene Armentor, Executive Director of Gloucester Mathews Care Clinic; March 18th, Tracey Reed, Executive Director of Bread for Life Food Pantry; March 25th, Babs Zuhowski, Executive Director of Rural Housing Partnership.

Mid-Week Lenten Meal

We will be holding a mid-week Lenten meal (soup and bread) followed by a worship service on Wednesdays during Lent (February 25th – March 25th). The meal will be at 6:00 PM and the service will start at 7:00 PM. There is a signup sheet in the narthex to sign up to provide the soup and bread and also to set up and clean up. We hope you can join us!!

Worship Leaders

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader/Preacher	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Lay Assisting Minister	David Leunig	Doug Dalager
Lector	Karen Johnston	Sue Turner
Acolyte	Ray Scholz	Ray Scholz
Accompanist	Kathy Merithew	Janet Gomez
Altar Care	Betsy Liljeberg	Jamie Serafin
Communion Bread	Betsy Liljeberg	Janet Gomez
Greeter/Usher	Betsy Liljeberg	Karen Johnston
Technology	Doug Dalager	Chris Hawkins

Servants for the Week

	Serving This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Liljebergs	Ambrose/Scholz
Tellers	Nate Peterson/Betsy Liljeberg	Ray Scholz/Chris Hawkins
Fellowship Set Up	Ray Scholz	Jennie Hawkins
Fellowship Food	Alberts	Scholzs
Fellowship Clean Up	Alberts	Scholzs

Readings For Next Sunday

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13
David is chosen and anointed

Psalm 23
You anoint my head with oil.

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14
Awake from sleep, live as children of light

Gospel: John 9:1-41
Baptismal image: the man born blind

Please Keep in Your Prayers

Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Heidi Henderson, Ellen Kendzierski, Doug Leip, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Ben Slider (IV), Keith & Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, and Lena Woodlief

Our Family and Friends

Patricia Armentor, Paul Bauer, **Karen Bell** (Pam Moore's sister), **Bob & Dixie, Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Amanda Brown, David Brown, Dennis & Dorothy Brown, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, Kate Casper, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Ben Davis** (friend of Donna Ambrose), **Tommy & Kathie Davis, Jenny DeSha, Al DeWitt, Linda Edwards, Colton Elliot** (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), **Teresa Floersheim-Miller** (Ingrid Peterson's mother), **Suzanne and Frank Gibson, Steven Godwin** (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), **Jimmy & Fay Gray** (Chris Hawkins' family), **Carl Greene, Karen Guire, the family of Mike Hall, Melvin Hawkins** (Chris Hawkins' father), **Chaneice and Daniel Hayden, Rosie Heins, Carl & Kaleb Hess, Aris Hibbs** (friend of Ray Scholz), **Ray Hughes, Suzanne Kinkade** (friend of Ellen Quirk), **Marion Lucier,Wayne Mathews, Wayne McCormick, Sylvia Midgette** (Krystle McMahan's grandmother), **Debbie Minteins, Keith Morgan, Gary Mowery, Jamie Mullaney, Carol Pascale** (Lynn Jaeger's mother), **Chastity Perkins** (co-worker and friend of Donna Ambrose), **Brad Person** (Lilly Frost's uncle), **Dick Peterson & his brother, the Prusa Family, Joan Ritter, Glen Robertson, Pastor Wendy Roundy, Carol Schlemmer, Daniel Schmidt, Michael Scholz** (Ray Scholz's nephew), **Joseph Serafin** (Pastor Jay's father), **Kathy Shackleford, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Jean Sterling, Marier Upshrie, the family of Nancy Wagner**, **Keegan Walls, Williams Walters, Chuck Webb** (Tina Britt's father), **Makenzie Webb** (Tina Britt's niece), **Elizabeth & Steven White, Vicki Williams, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright** (Judy Wright's husband), **Logan & Shannon Wymer, Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

Our sponsored children in Guatemala

Amayra, **Hugolino, Manuela,** and **Pablo**

Prayer Requests

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

MARCH 8, 2026 – MARCH 15, 2026

TODAY	**10:00 AM**	**Worship Service**
	11:00 AM	Coffee Fellowship

GUATEMALA MEDICAL MISSION TEAM DEPARTS

MONDAY	**10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**	**Pastor Jay in the office**
	7:00 PM	AA
TUESDAY	7:00 PM	Al-Anon/AA
WEDNESDAY	**4:00 PM – 8:00 PM**	**Pastor Jay in the office**
	6:00 PM	Mid-Week Lent Meal/Worship
FRIDAY		Girls Scouts
SATURDAY	6:30 PM	Young and Sober
SUNDAY	**10:00 AM**	**Worship Service**
	11:00 AM	Coffee Fellowship

GUATEMALA MEDICAL MISSION TEAM RETURNS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ...

Tonia Fallin – Mar 8th | **Tina Britt** – Mar 11th |**Makayla Hess** – Mar 15th

Thank you to Kathy Merithew for playing for our worship service today!!

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