

**Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion ..... March 28, 2021**

**“Again and Again, We Draw on Courage”**

**Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! (Mark 11:9)**

*This week, the center of the church's year, is one of striking contrasts: Jesus rides into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory, only to be left alone to die on the cross, abandoned by even his closest friends. Mark's gospel presents Jesus in his complete human vulnerability: agitated, grieved, scared, forsaken. Though we lament Christ's suffering and all human suffering, we also expect God's salvation: in the wine and bread, Jesus promises that his death will mark a new covenant with all people. We enter this holy week thirsty for the completion of God's astonishing work.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 118:19-24)**

The Lord be with you!

**And also with you!**

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter, and give thanks to the Lord. **We will give You thanks, for You have answered us; You have become our salvation.**

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.  
**This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.**

This is the day that the Lord has made;

**We will rejoice and be glad in it.**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Holy God, you promise that your yoke is light, but we burden ourselves with so many things. We heap on ourselves expectations, anger, worries, distractions, reluctance, fear, and busyness. We place a yolk of difficulty around our necks, and we pull with all our might. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

**Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.**

Lord, you are the Prince of Peace, but we fill our hearts with so many other things. We take into ourselves division, anger, hostility, and mistrust. We stuff ourselves full with these things, and then they erupt out of us and into the lives of others. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

**Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.**

Lord Jesus, you taught us to worry about nothing, but we so easily are overwhelmed by worries, anxieties, and distractions. We hold tight to our worries, and they distract us by day, and keep us awake at night. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

**Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.**

Embracing God, you called us your children before we had done anything to earn it, and yet we so often expect ourselves to earn our place as your sons and daughters. We hold ourselves to expectations that are unrealistic and painful. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

**Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.**

God, Jesus taught us to be intentional with our time. He knew his mission and his calling, and he lived it out every day. We can so easily become reluctant, or hesitate to do what you have called us to do. We let fear, or even laziness, stand in the way of doing what is right. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

**Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.**

God of the universe, you created everything seen and unseen, and then you rested. You did this to set an example for us about the importance of rest and worship. We can so easily forget our priorities, or fall into the trap of believing that we must do all things at all times. You offer us the gift of rest, but we instead choose exhaustion and weariness. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

**Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.**

We lift these burdens off of our shoulders and place them at your feet. Receive them, O Lord, as we continue in silent confession.

*Silence for reflection*

We have placed our burdens at Jesus' feet, and we receive from him a burden that is easy, a table where we can sit together, hearts and minds filled with peace, the assurance that we are God's children, the discernment to do what is right when it is called for, and the rest and worship that restores our souls. We unburden ourselves here from what does not satisfy. We take up God's perfect forgiveness and peace.

**Here, now, in this place, we are set free and we are changed.**

### **BLESSING OF PALMS**

*Hold up your palms or other branches for the blessing.*

Let us pray.

We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

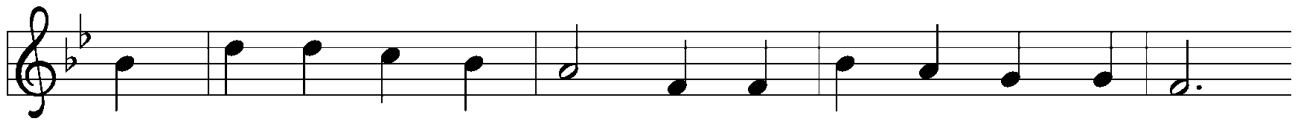
**Hosanna in the highest.**

**HYMN #344****“All Glory, Laud and Honor”***Refrain*

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



- 1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
- 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
- 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
- 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
- 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

*Refrain*

now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.  
 cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.  
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.  
 To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.  
 great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.  
 Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**GOSPEL: Mark 11:1-11**

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the eleventh chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, [Jesus] sent two of his disciples <sup>2</sup>and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’ ” <sup>4</sup>They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, <sup>5</sup>some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” <sup>6</sup>They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. <sup>7</sup>Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup>Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup>Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

<sup>10</sup>Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

<sup>11</sup>Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The Gospel of the Lord.

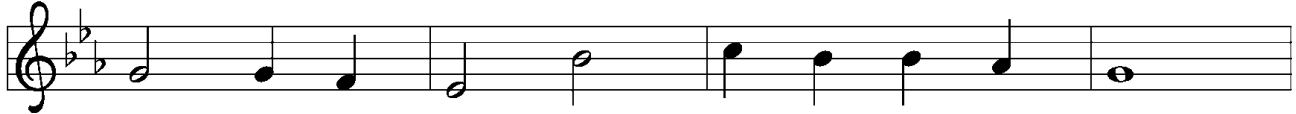
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON** .....

**The Rev. Christina Auch**

**HYMN OF THE DAY #629**

**“Abide with Me”**



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.  
2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;  
3 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;  
4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.  
earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;  
what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?  
ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.  
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,  
change and de - cay in all a - round I see;  
Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?  
heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me.  
O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.  
Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bide with me.  
I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me!  
in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793–1847  
Music: EVENTIDE, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

**NICENE CREED**

God has gathered his people into one Church through Christ. Together with sisters and brothers throughout the world, we confess our faith.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

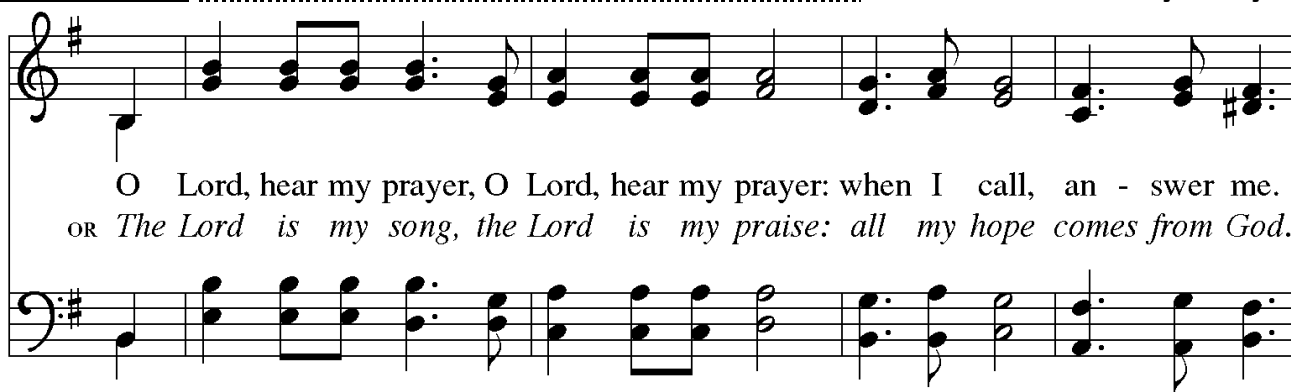
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

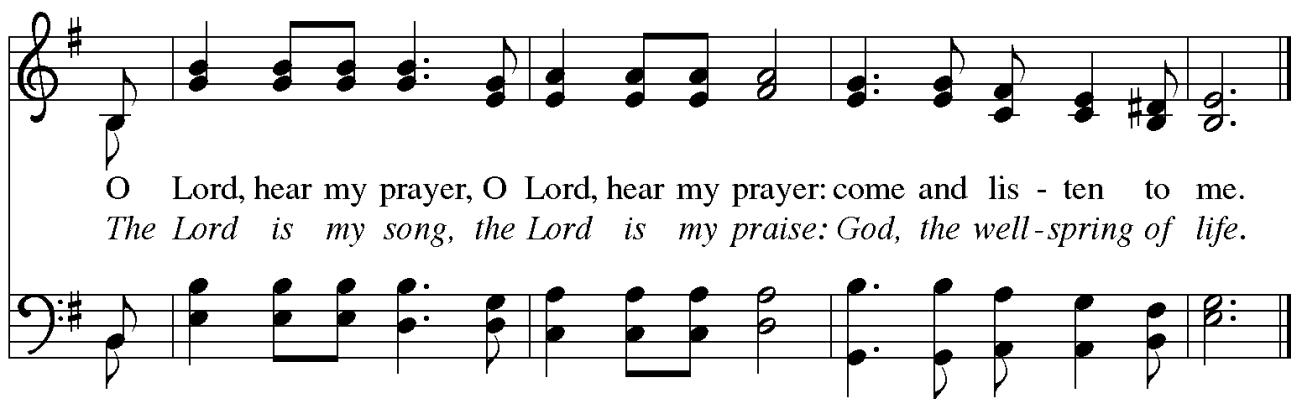
Amen.

**HYMN #751**

**“O Lord, Hear My Prayer”**



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, an - swer me.  
*OR The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: all my hope comes from God.*



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and lis - ten to me.  
*The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.*

Text: Psalm 102:1–2; Taizé Community, adapt.  
Music: HEAR MY PRAYER, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994  
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## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

In Jesus you came among us as a suffering servant. Give your church humility. Redeem your people from pride and the certainty that we always know your will. Heal us and empower us to confess Christ crucified. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In creation, life springs from death. Redeem your creation awaiting resurrection: restore lost habitats and endangered species. Create new possibilities for areas affected by climate change, grant relief from natural disasters, and nurture new growth. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Jesus was handed over to the powers of this world. In all nations, instruct the powerful, that they would not exploit their power but maintain justice. Sustain soldiers, and guide those who command them, that they serve those in greatest need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

On the cross Jesus joined all who feel forsaken. Abide with those who are condemned to death. Defend those who are falsely accused. Console and strengthen those who are mocked or bullied. Accompany all who suffer; grant respite and renewal. We pray especially for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts...

**Grant** Adcock (Bob and Vicki Jones' grandson), **Kathy** Backof (Donna Lilly's friend), **Martha** Beam (Eleanor Hendrick's friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Adam** Bridges & **Brittany** Smith (Libby Stone's cousin and his fiancé), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant's grandson), **Kathy** Callahan (Ludie Wilkie's friend), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges' friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges' aunt), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams' friends),



**Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long's friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman's friend), **Charles Duval** (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Barbara Duval** (Ludy Wilkie's friends), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie's friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White's friend), **Carol Ann** Forgas (Bill Bridges' friend), **Chris** Galloway (Vicky Galloway's husband), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Carl** Greenwald (DeBell's friend), **Richard** Hollifield (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne's friend), **Debbie** Irvin (Bill Bridges' friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Kay** Johnson (Eleanor Hendrick's cousin), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Shannon** Jones (Jennie Lambert's former co-worker), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William's niece), **Bryan** Legrand (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman's friend), **Pam** Lucas (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Maribeth** Norris Mies (Carol Berger's cousin), **Pat** Mullen (Johanna Gillespie's friend), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly's niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer (Carol Berger's sister), **Gerard** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's brother), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges' friends), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Shannon** Sellers (Libby Stone's cousin), **Jean and Jim** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck's friend's mother), **David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop's husband), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan's brother), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams' grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley (Sandra Waldrop's aunt)

**Members:** **Dean** Davis, **Lin** Washburn, **Dot** Paul, **Bob** Bryant, **William** Coyne, **Jim** Wilson, **Bobbie** Johnson, **Gerald** Washburn, **Ray** Valentine, **Lucinda** Wallen, **Lisa** Upton, **Sandy** Harman

**In Undergraduate College: Emma Auch, Brooke Buchanan, Samantha Hoffman, Jacob Stone, Catherine Mae Lilly**

**Ministry Partners:** Hospice Cleveland County staff, leaders and those they serve.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You called followers to tend Jesus' body in death. Sustain hospice workers and funeral directors. Bless this congregation's ministries at times of death: those who plan and lead funerals, those who prepare meals, all who offer support in grief. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You inspired the centurion to confess Jesus as your Son. We praise you for the faith you have given to people of all places and times. Give us also such faith to trust the promises of baptism and, with them, to look for the resurrection of the dead. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

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 on video or say: "Peace be with you" from wherever you are or type it in the chat or comments.*

### **OFFERING**

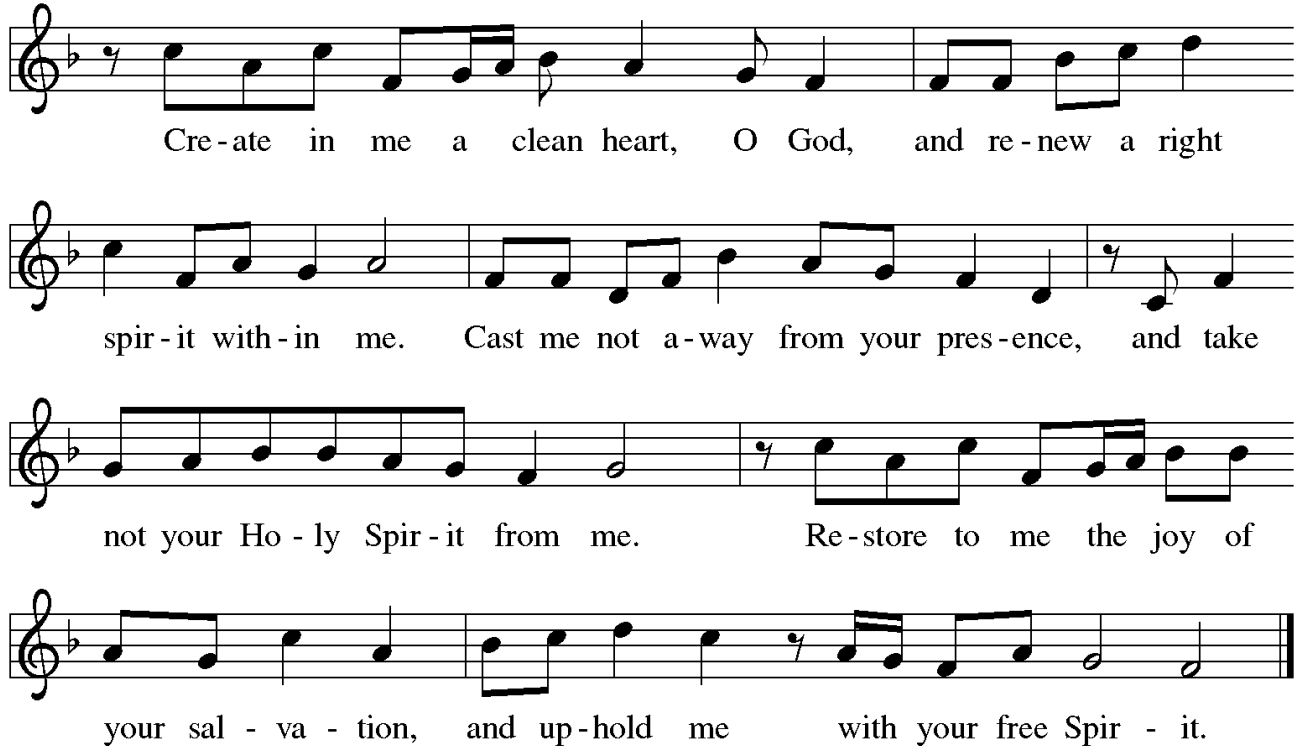
*Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.*

*Or mail your regular tithe or offering to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.*

## **OFFERTORY HYMN #186**

## **“Create In Me a Clean Heart”**



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of  
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

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

## **THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray...

Gracious God, we have heard your Word of Life today. While our sin is great, your determination to save has proven greater, again and again. Thank you for Jesus who leads us out of the wilderness and into the community declaring, “The kingdom of God has come near.” Embolden us with the gift of your Holy Spirit that we may share your love and salvation with all creation, through Jesus Christ in whose name we pray.

**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

### **SENDING OF HOME COMMUNION**

When our congregation gathered for Holy Communion with all the saints from every time and place, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and the love shown us in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The holy meal of the Lord's supper was shared. Now we share this Word of life, and this bread and cup of blessing, that we may share in these same gifts and be strengthened by the Christian community, even though we gather separately for a time.

Gathered at the Lord's table, our congregation remembered with thanksgiving that "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."

This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. This bread and cup, shared in our community of faith, are here given for you.

*Share the bread, saying, "The body of Christ, given for you." And share the wine or grape juice, saying, "The blood of Christ, shed for you."*

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

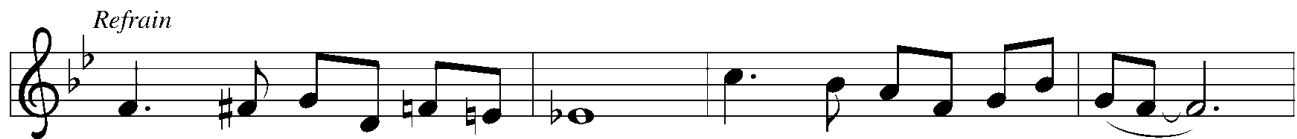
The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. Amen.

**HYMN #697**

**“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”**



Just a clos-er walk with thee, grant it, Je-sus, is my plea;



dai - ly walk-ing close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.



1 I am weak but thou art strong: Je - sus, keep me from all wrong;

2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I fal-ter, Lord, who cares?

3 When my fee-ble life is o'er, time for me will be no more;



I'll be sat - is - fied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee.  
Who with me my bur-den shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee.  
guide me gent-ly, safe-ly o'er to thy king - dom shore, to thy shore.

Text: North American traditional

Music: CLOSER WALK, North American traditional

**DISMISSAL**

Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Coronavirus Response:** Our sanctuary remains closed, but the fellowship hall is available for small groups (less than 10) with social distancing and masks required. Contact Debby in the church office for more information.

**Prayer Concerns:** Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

**Please continue your tithes and offerings.** Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.

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### **Ascension Lutheran Church**

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**Steve White and Cathy Hubbard, Organists**

**Rose Cook, Financial Secretary**

**Ludy Wilkie, Council President ..... 704-487-4269**