

St Stephen

a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, Pastor

Encouraging and strengthening faith in Jesus,
and sharing the joy of God's love.



March 22, 2020

Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:15am

Holy Communion

INTRODUCTION to the Fourth Sunday in Lent

We continue the 40 day Lenten journey. Purple is the color of our penitence. We reflect on Baptism. Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.



Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CHOIR PRELUDE

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands and turns to the font. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the **✝** Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The presiding minister leads the following prayer of preparation:

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Brothers and sisters, during these great forty days of Lent, let us prepare ourselves to receive Christ in word and sacrament by confessing our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

I confess
to God Almighty,
before the whole company of heaven,
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed
by my fault,
by my own fault,
by my own most grievous fault;
wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me,
forgive me all my sins,
and bring me to everlasting life.
Amen.

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, † forgiveness, and remission of all your sins.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG:

God, Whose Almighty Word

ELW 673



1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard
2 Christ, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,
3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,
4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,



and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the
heal - ing and sight; health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -
speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the
Wis - dom, Love, Might: bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in



gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.
lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man-kind let there be light.
lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.
full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.

Text: John Marriott, 1780–1825, alt.

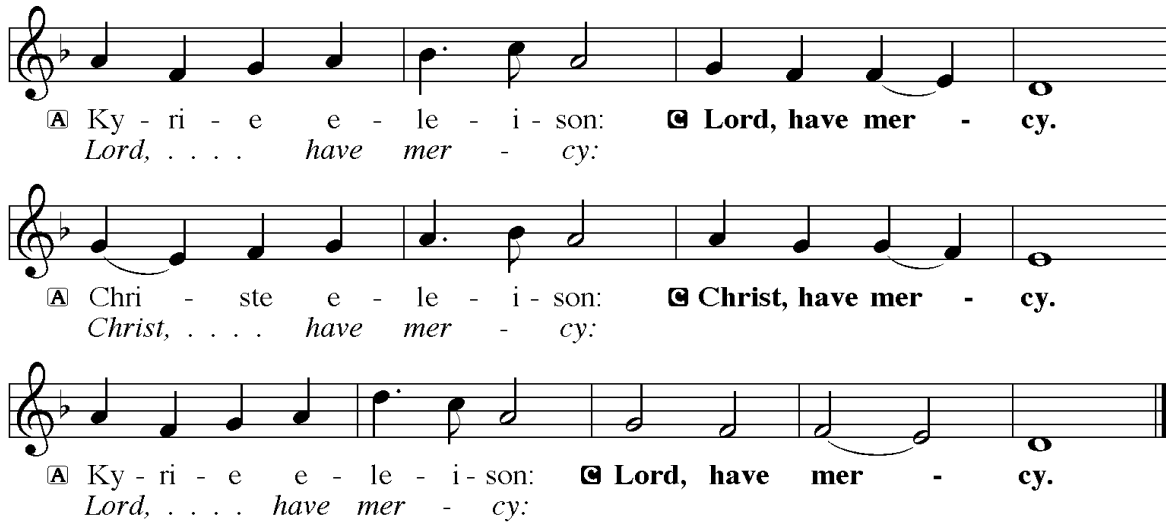
Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716–1796

APOSTOLIC GREETING

P: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all.

C: And also with you.

KYRIE



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

A Chri - ste e - le - i - son: **C** Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:

A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept, then the presiding minister leads the prayer.

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

The assembly sits.



Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

A reading from First Samuel.

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ²Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the

youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

L: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

³You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

A reading from Ephesians.

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

L: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

After a brief silence, the assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and



mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in



stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL: John 9:1-41

P: † The Holy Gospel, according John. **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸He said,

“Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lead Me, Guide Me

ELW 768



Lead me, guide me, a - long the way;
 for if you lead me, I can - not stray.
 Lord, let me walk each day with thee.
 Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

1 I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r
 2 Help me tread in the paths of righ - teous - ness,
 3 I am lost if you take your hand from me,

to help me o - ver my weak - est hour.
 be my aid when Sa - tan and sin op - press.
 I am blind with - out . . . thy light to see.

Help me through the dark - ness thy face to see.
 I am put - ting all . . . my trust in thee.
 Lord, just al - ways let me thy ser - vant be.

Refrain
 Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

Text: Doris Akers, 1922–1995
 Music: Doris Akers
 Text and music © 1953 Doris Akers, admin. Unichappell Music, Inc.

LEAD ME, GUIDE ME
 Irregular

NICENE CREED

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world,
and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

After each petition:

A: Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them
to you; through Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The assembly is seated.



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Anthem

The Table is set.

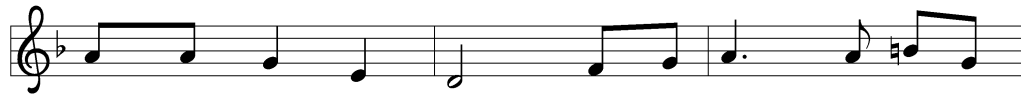
OFFERING SONG:

Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery (sts. 1-3, and Lent 4)

ELW 334



1 Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your
 2 We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed
 3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling



death we are re - born; though you die in all of
 on through act and word; ev - 'ry per - son lost and
 though our steps may be; one with you in joy and



his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you
 bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord, wears the
 sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the



rise with ev - 'ry morn.
 bod - y of our Lord.
 riv - er, you the sea.

One of the following may be sung as a final stanza at the appropriate time.

Lent 4

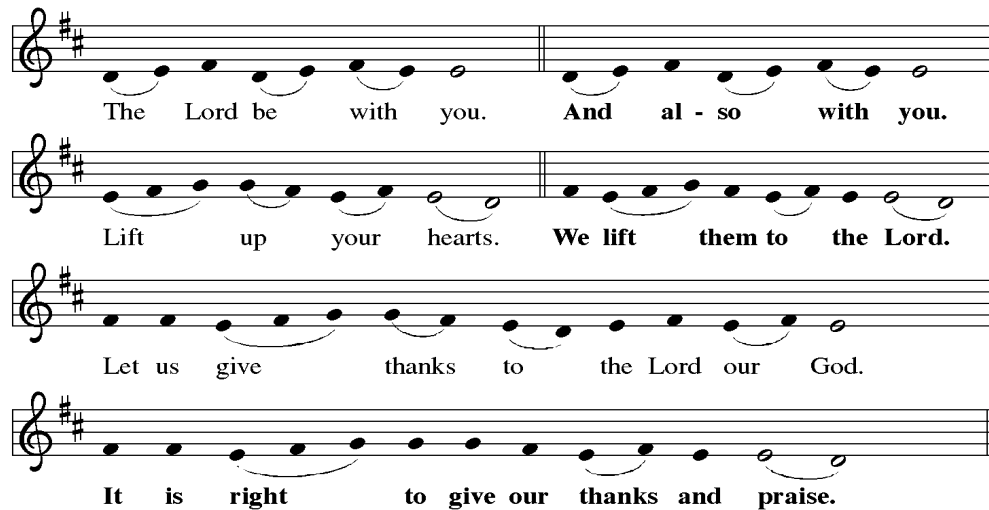
Give us eyes to see you clearly;
 make us children of your light.
 Give us hearts to live more nearly
 as your gospel shining bright.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

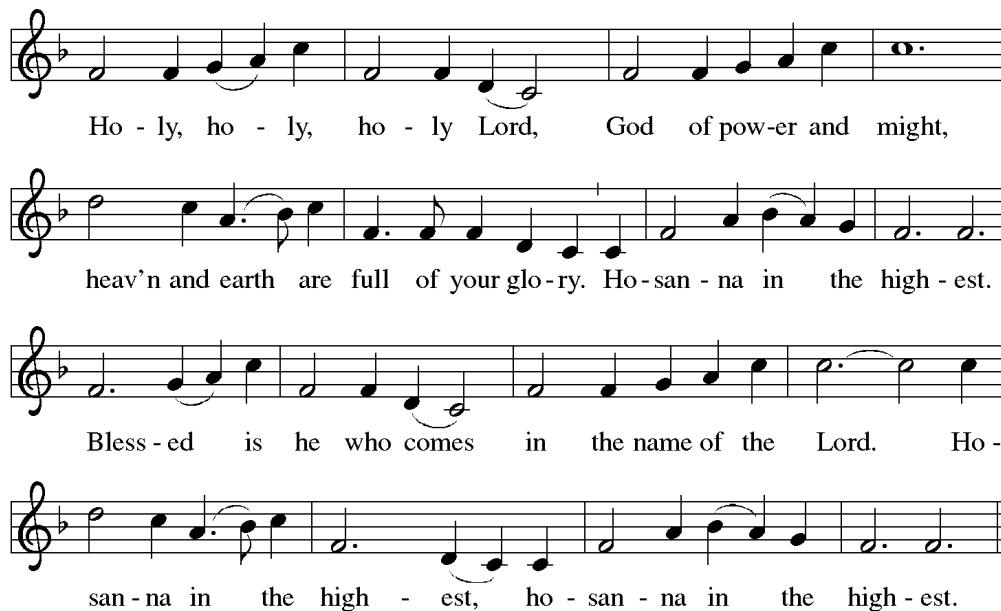
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks:

Blessed are you, O God of the universe....With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life...Bless this feast to be the body and blood of Christ. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.... Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

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

Amen

P: 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.

Communion

The bread is broken for the communion.

P: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Christ has prepared the feast.

Come to the table where all are welcomed home.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

The assembly is seated.

The body of Christ, given for you. *Response: Amen.*

The blood of Christ, shed for you. *Response: Amen.*

Lamb of God



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.

you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.

e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Communion Song:

You Are Mine

ELW 581



1 "I will come to you in the si - lence,

2 "I am hope for all who are hope - less,

3 "I am strength for all the de - spair - ing,

(4) am the Word that leads all to free - dom, I

I will lift you from all your fear.
 I am eyes for all who long to see. (2) In the
 heal-ing for the ones who dwell in shame.
 am the peace the world can - not give.

You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice. Be
 shad-ows of the night, I will be your light.
 All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and
 I will call your name, em - brac - ing all your pain. Stand

still and know I am here. *To stanza 2*
 Come and rest in me. *To refrain*
 all will know my name. *To refrain*
 up, now walk and live! *To refrain*

Refrain
 Do not be a-fraid, I am with you. I have called you each by

name. Come and fol-low me, I will bring you home; I

To stanzas 3 and 4
 love you and you are mine.”

4 “I

Text: David Haas, b. 1957
 Music: YOU ARE MINE, David Haas
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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray.

We thank you, living God, for the body and blood of your Son, which sustains us in the wilderness and the garden alike. As Christ has loved us in this feast, so send us to love Christ in our neighbors. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

Amen.



Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Announcements *(The assembly is seated)*

SOLEMN PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE AND BLESSING

The assembly stands as the presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

P: Look down in mercy, Lord, on your people who bow before you; and grant that those whom you have nourished by your word and sacraments may bring forth fruit worthy of repentance; through Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

P: Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit bless you, now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING SONG:

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death

ELW 452



1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.



so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984

Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829

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DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Remember the poor. **C: Thanks be to God.**

IN OUR PRAYERS...

In our prayers today are these members of our homebound and others of our parish family in need of healing: Jake Waldecki, Sera Butz, Harry Ambrose, George Arce, Laurel Blake, Dorothy Johnson, James Loggins, Don Schutt, Normagene Richardson, Mildred Grady, Carol Chmelynski, Jimmy Fennelli, Roy and Barbara Kaptain, Katie Paff, Bob Reinhold, and Shelley Amato.

Prayers for Friends of the Parish

✠ Tom, Kingston, Joe, Natalie, Aliya, Lem, Aiden, Becky, Chandler, Braemen, Cheryl, Robert, Craig, Jerry, Nettie, Amber, Mike, Leigh, Ann, Janet, Carol, Bill, Bud, Gary, Serena, Robin, Sadie, Melissa, Jim, Carlos, Elizabeth ✠ Family traveling next weekend, Jojo, Daphne B., Jean Claud, Adrienne, Susan T. ✠ Those afflicted with coronavirus and those caring for them, Dieter, Jay & Maureen, Frank, Gail, Susan, Pat, Doris.

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