Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year C



810 Fairfax Street Stephens City, VA Sunday Worship, 9:30AM (540) 869-4019 May 18, 2025



Zoom to Worship, 9:30AM Meeting ID: 893 4718 0792 Passcode: 173681 Dial 1-301-715-8592 US

Facebook Live: you must have internet, but you do not need to have a Facebook account https://www.facebook.com/trinitylutheranchurchstephenscityva/live/

This Weeks; Greeter: Martha Cooley. Lessons & Prayers Reader: Marcie Stern. Communion Assistant: Rev. Deanna Boynton.

Next Weeks; Greeters: David & Pam Reichert. Lessons & Prayers Reader: Pam Reichert. Communion Assistant: David Reichert.

The Chancel Flowers this week are given by Bernetta Jenkins on what would have been their 68th wedding anniversary.

From Sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. From sundaysandseasons.com license #SAS024465. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License # A-720634. All rights reserved. CCLI, copyright Lic. 11381030, Streaming Lic. 20167089 Psalmody refrain from Psalter for Worship Year A © 2008 Augsburg Fortress, tone from Psalter for Worship Year C ©2006 Augsburg Fortress. Prelude ©Public Domain. Offertory ©2013 Lorenz Pub. Co. Postlude ©1990 Oxford Univ. Press. PRELUDE

Trio

Please stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

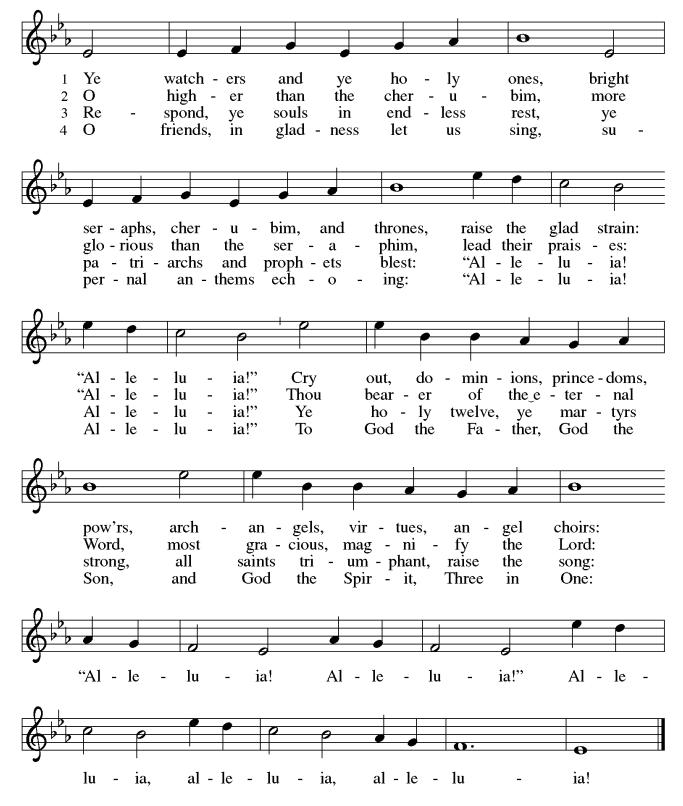
In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin. Silence is kept for reflection. Merciful God, you free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. Amen.

You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of + Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation. **Amen.** **GATHERING SONG**

Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

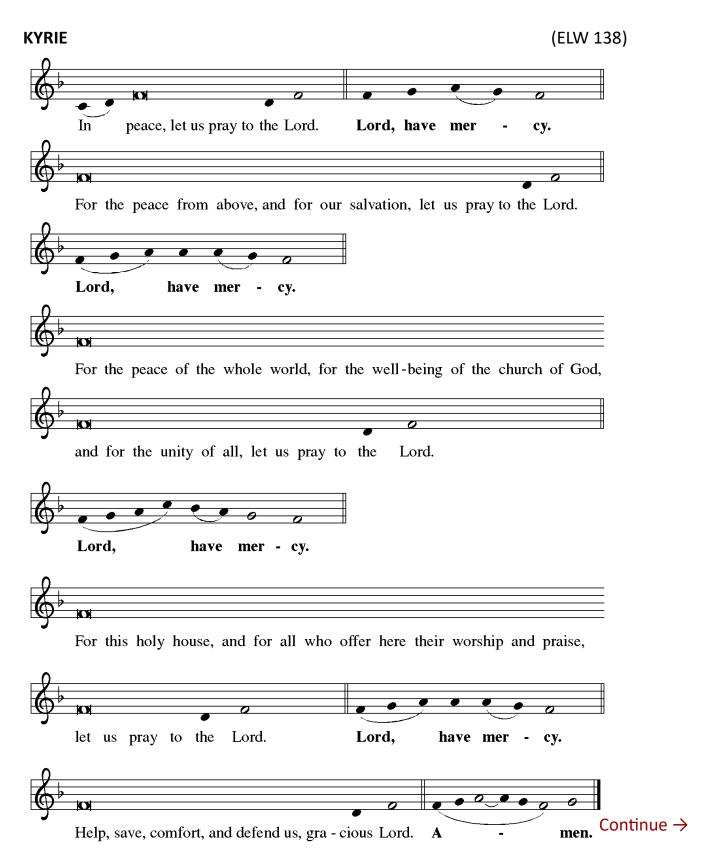
(ELW 424)



Text: J. Athelstan Riley, 1858–1945 Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623 Outside USA: Text from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

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.**







PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, 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

FIRST READING: ACTS 11:1-8

A reading from Acts.

¹ Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³ saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸ But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?'' ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.''

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 148



¹ Hallelujah! Praise the LORD [|] from the heavens; praise God [|] in the heights.

- ² Praise the LORD, ¹ all you angels; sing praise, all you ¹ hosts of heaven.
- ³ Praise the LORD, ¹ sun and moon; sing praise, all you ¹ shining stars.
- ⁴ Praise the LORD, heav-¹ en of heavens, and you waters a-¹ bove the heavens.
- ⁵ Let them praise the name ¹ of the LORD, who commanded, and they ¹ were created,
- ⁶ who made them stand fast forev-¹ er and ever, giving them a law that shall not ¹ pass away. R
- ⁷ Praise the LORD [|] from the earth, you sea monsters [|] and all deeps;

⁸ fire and hail, ¹ snow and fog, tempestuous wind, do- ¹ ing God's will;

⁹ mountains ¹ and all hills,

fruit trees [|] and all cedars;

¹⁰ wild beasts [|] and all cattle, creeping things and [|] flying birds;

¹¹ sovereigns of the earth ¹ and all peoples, princes and all rulers ¹ of the world;

¹² young [|] men and maidens, old and [|] young together. R

¹³ Let them praise the name ¹ of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over ¹ earth and heaven.

¹⁴ The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all ¹ faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. ¹ Hallelujah! R

SECOND READING: REVELATION 21:1-6

A reading from Revelation.

¹ I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away."

⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶ Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



GOSPEL: JOHN 13:31-35

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

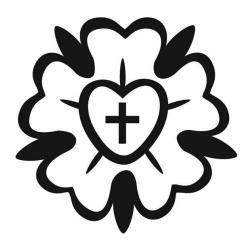
³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Phyllis Blair Milton Bishop of the Virginia Synod



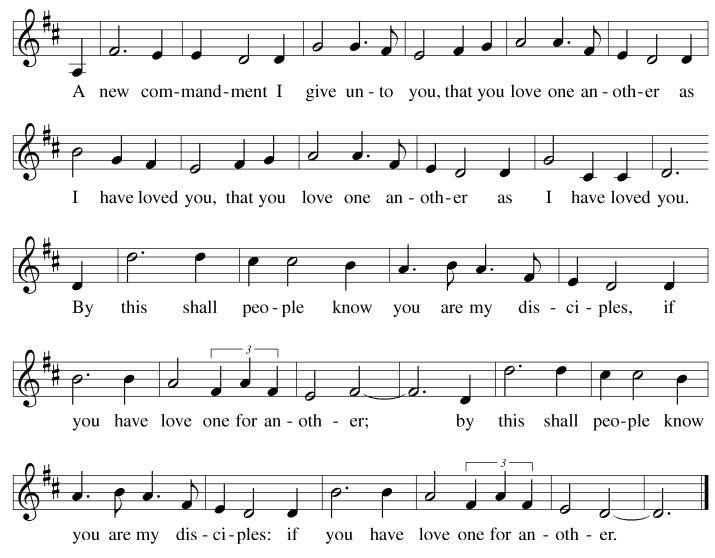


HYMN OF THE DAY

A New Commandment

(WOV 664)

Hymn to be sung twice, First time Choir, & Second time All.



Text: John 13:34–35 Music: NEW COMMANDMENT, anonymous

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

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.



Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.

Fill the church with the spirit of your redeeming love. Make us steadfast in our proclamation of your grace for all people without exceptions, especially those often overlooked in our communities. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Awaken joy in the beauty and abundance of your creation. Show us the wonder of your presence from the smallest flower to the tallest tree. Recommit us to preservation of wild places (*local or regional places may be named*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Instruct all world leaders to protect the most vulnerable among us. Guide those in power toward equitable and just economic policies, so that all might have sufficient resources to live safely and with dignity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pour out your love on all in need of care: those mourning losses, enduring trauma, experiencing broken relationships, yearning for companionship, or facing illness especially Barb, Shirley, Louise, Stephen, Paul, Hadley, Nikki, Michael, Jeff, Monica, (worshippers may add names silently or aloud). Wipe away every tear. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abide with all who are victims of racism, especially people who are doubly marginalized because of gender, sexuality, or ability. Destroy all forms of systemic oppression, and renew our commitment to healing the wounds of our collective body in this community and beyond. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give thanks for all the saints whose lives bear witness to your redeeming love (*especially Erik, King of Sweden*). Guide us by their example, until we join them in your eternal home. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

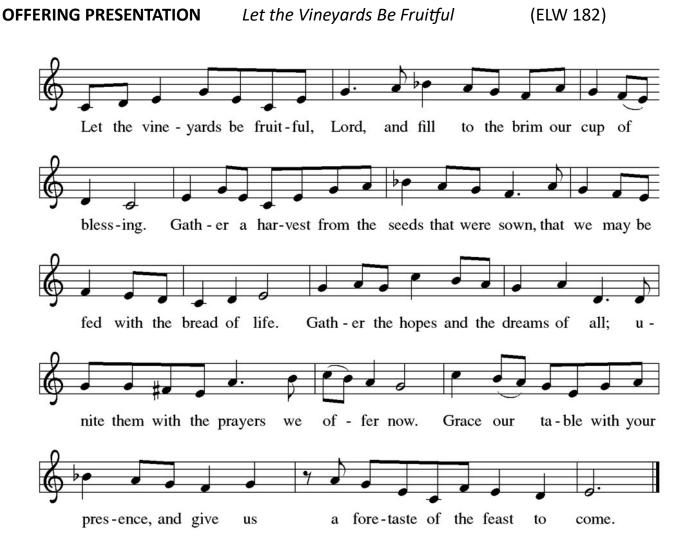
OFFERING *With Thanks and Praise* setting by Doulas Wagner Trinity Chime Choir **The Noisy offering** today will go to the benefit of **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**.



Offering is an act of worship that shows our gratitude to God for all that we are and have in our lives. The offering today will provide support for the ministries of Trinity both locally and in the world around us. You may provide your offering in person, scan the QR code adjacent or send it by mail. We thank you for sharing not only your

monetary gifts but also your gifts of time and talent to further our mission to share Jesus' love in worship, fellowship, hospitality, and community, doing God's work with our hands.

Please stand



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980 Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923 Text and music © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One, you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we bring. Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with this meal, that we may live as your risen body in the world. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,

the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;

who in dying has destroyed death,

and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,

with earth and sea and all their creatures,

and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath. **We praise you, O God.**

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future. **We bless you, O God.**

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now. **We thank you, O God.**

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 his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end. **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.

BLESSING OF THE ELEMENTS (for the sick and homebound)

Let us pray. O God of tender compassion, as you healed the sick and welcomed the stranger bless these elements with your divine grace and those who leave this assembly to share the gifts of this table with our sisters and brothers who are sick or homebound. May they be sustained by the love and prayers of this community, and by the Bread of life that satisfies all hunger, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

For those communing at home, have your package ready to open. The pastor will acknowledge your presence and request that you consume the elements at this time.

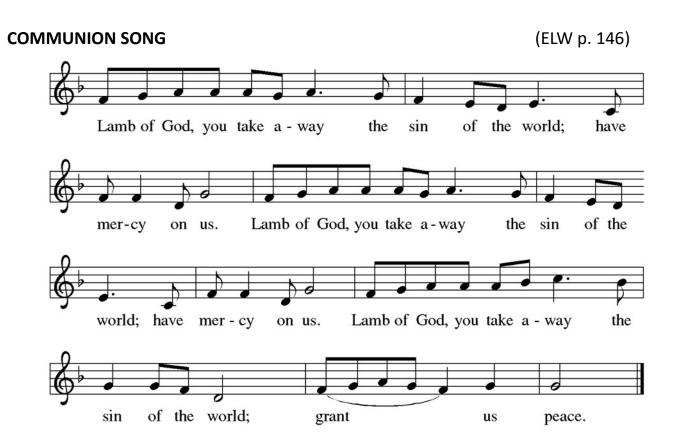
Please be seated

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

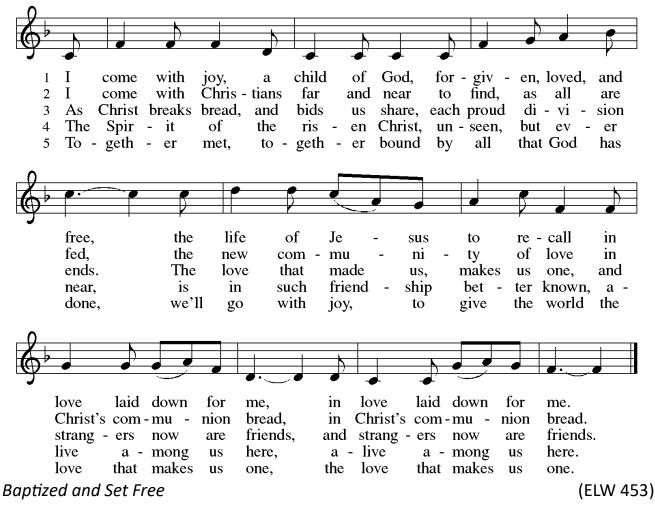
For those who prefer not to partake of the wine there are cups filled with grape juice in the center of the communion tray.



SONGS DURING COMMUNION

I Come with Joy

(ELW 482)



Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936 Music: DOVE OF PEACE, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

Text © 1971, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.





Text: Cathy Skogen-Soldner, b. 1956 Music: BAPTIZED AND SET FREE, Cathy Skogen-Soldner Text and music © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

Please stand

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Living One, in this feast you have made yourself known to us. Send us now to tell of your wonders, sing of your glory, and proclaim your risen life to a wounded and weary world. **Amen.**

Please be seated

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand

BLESSING

The triune God, who was, who is, and who is to come, Sovereign, 나 Savior, and Spirit, light your way with resurrection dawn, now and always.

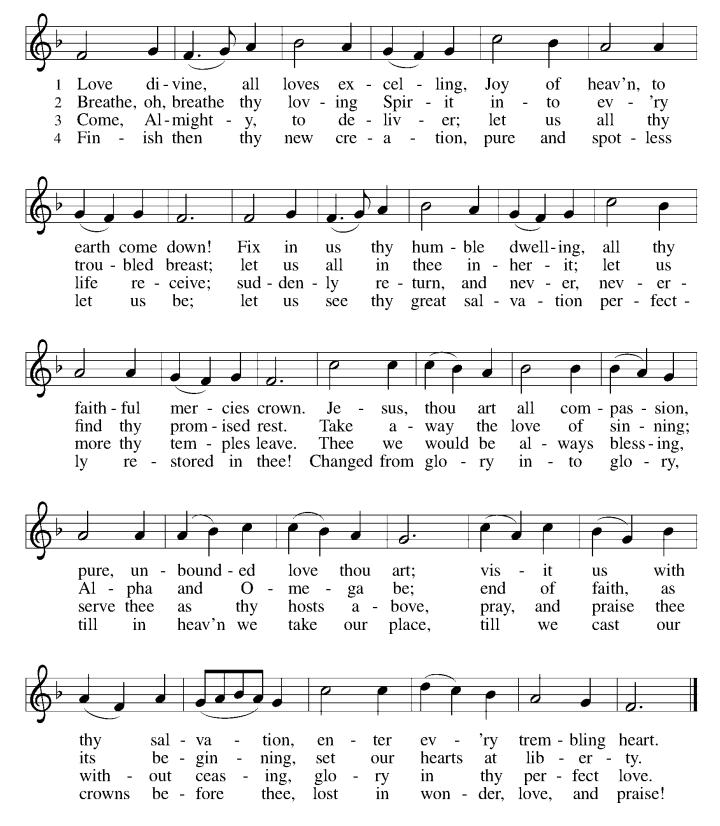
Amen.



SENDING SONG

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

(ELW 631)



Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788 Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887 DISMISSAL Alleluia! Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia! Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia! Alleluia! Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

Postludium

Flor Peeters (1903-1986)

Special Worship & Conversation – Sunday, May 18

We are honored to welcome **Bishop Phyllis Milton** of the Virginia Synod and extend our heartfelt thanks for her leadership in worship today. She is joined by **Guest Pastor Deanna Boynton**, who is graciously filling in for Pastor Closter during his time away. We are deeply grateful to her as well. Following the service, **all are invited** to enjoy coffee and light refreshments in the Parish Hall. During this time, Bishop Milton will speak with the congregation about the **call process for a new pastor** and the next steps for Trinity as we continue through this interim period. **Plan to attend—this is an important and informative conversation you won't want to miss!**

Reminders

Note from Trinity Treasurer | Mark Greene

trinitylctreasurer@gmail.com

Donating Stock to the Church

Did you know you can support Trinity's mission by donating appreciated stock? The church has a brokerage account that accepts stock transactions. Giving stock directly to the church can offer **significant tax benefits**, including avoiding capital gains taxes and receiving a charitable deduction for the full market value of the stock.

Interested? Contact Mark Greene by email or reach out through the church office at **540-869-4019** (Tuesday–Friday, 8 AM – 1 PM).

We're happy to guide you through the process.

Thank you for your faithful support!

~The Trinity Times~ Church & Community NEWS

This Week at Trinity

- Today After Service
 - Coffee Hour | Parish Hall All are welcome!
 - Conversation with Bishop Milton | Parish Hall
 - Chime Choir Practice | Contact: Ricky Gearhart, Music Director
- Thursday, May 15
 - Choir Rehearsal, 5:45 PM | Contact: Ricky Gearhart
- Friday, May 16
 - CMSP Music Private Lesson, 5-6 PM | Upstairs Classroom
- Saturday, May 17
 - CMSP Music Together (Spring Session Week 7) | Upstairs Classroom
 - **Veterans Memorial Service**, 8:00 AM | Old Stephens City School Memorial Site *Pastor Closter will deliver the Invocation and Prayer.*
 - Stephens City Fire & Rescue Chicken BBQ, 11 AM-1 PM

Summer Hymn Sing Returns in June!

Our joyful summer tradition begins again in June! Each Sunday service will begin with a **hymn sing** featuring your favorite selections.

Browse the **ELW**, **With One Voice**, and the **Worship & Praise Songbook**, then fill out a **suggestion slip** (located at the organ console) and drop it in the nearby basket.

Ricky will review all submissions and do his best to include every request.

Let's fill our summer mornings with the music that moves your spirit!

Ongoing Announcements

Prayer Team Table

Located just inside the sanctuary entrance. Submit a card with your prayer request, or contact **Mistie McPadalin** to add a name to the Prayers of Intercession.

Hospital Visitation Pastor Closter is registered with Valley Health for hospital visits. Due to HIPAA laws, the hospital cannot notify us when someone is admitted. To request a visit, contact the church office at 540-869-4019, or after hours, call Pastor Closter at 540-848-5325. You may also reach out to Mistie McPadalin or Martha Cooley.

- May Food Pantry Donation Request: Canned green beans
- Happy Birthday This Week!

🗩 May 20th – Sue Teal

(Did we miss your birthday? Please contact the church office to update your information.)

Save the Date

- May 23–24 33rd Annual Newtown Heritage Festival
 Veterans Memorial Service, 8:00 AM | Old Stephens City School Site Invocation and Prayer by Pastor Closter
 Chicken BBQ, 11 AM–1 PM | Stephens City Fire & Rescue
- May 26 Memorial Day
- May 27 Sewing for the Savior, 9:30 AM | Room 204 Contact: Martha Cooley
- May 28 Community Meal, 5:30 PM | Parish Hall Menu: Lasagna, Garlic Bread, Salad & Dessert
 We need your help! If you can contribute items, contact Martha Cooley or Susan Scheulen.

Stay in the Loop!

Want to receive our weekly Trinity Times Newsletter by email?

Fill out a welcome card (basket in the Narthex) with your name and email, and we'll add you to the list.

Prefer print? Pick up a copy **next to the name tag table in the Narthex**, or call the office to request a mailed version:

📞 540-869-4019 | 🕒 Tuesday–Friday, 8 AM–1 PM

The Noisy Offering

The Noisy offering today will go to the benefit of Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

Building More Than Beds: A Journey of Service and Growth

Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) is dedicated to ensuring that "No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town!" Beyond constructing beds, SHP fosters community building, personal growth, and skill development. Volunteers, regardless of experience, are welcomed and mentored in woodworking and teamwork, transforming service projects into empowering learning experiences. Notably, SHP has partnered with She Built This City to launch its first women-led chapter in Northeast Charlotte, NC, promoting women's involvement in trades. Additionally, a national partnership with Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity has enabled members to actively participate in building beds, making tangible impacts in their communities.

To read the full article, visit: <u>https://shpbeds.org/</u>



NO KID SLEEPS ON THE FLOOR IN OUR TOWN!.

