



**St. James Evangelical
Lutheran Church
September 13, 2026
16th Sunday after
Pentecost
Communion**

**Worship every Sunday
10:45 AM**

Welcome

***We welcome all visitors who come to worship with us today.
We are delighted that you have come to share in the prayer
and praise of our Lord and invite you to return and add your
voice to ours in holy celebration. If you have a special need or
prayer write it on the prayer card in the pew rack and place it
in the offering plate. Before you leave us today, we ask that
you please sign our guest book.***

**Pulpit Supply: Rev. Scott Custead
Church Organist/Choir Director: Patricia McConnell
Administrative Assistant: Tim Surkovich**

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St. James Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament by the Holy Spirit.

Announcements: If you cannot read the hymns, you can turn to the hymn in the red ELW hymnal in the pew racks.

Prelude: Tantum ergo sacramentum arr. Richard Peek
(We take this time to silently prepare our hearts and minds for worship)

PLEASE STAND

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

An extended silence may be kept.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

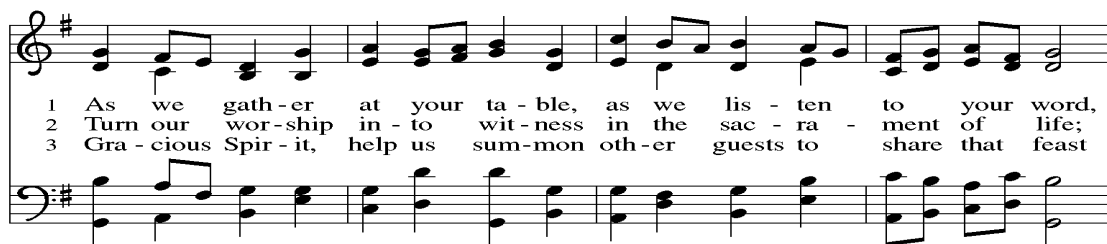
We Gather

*GATHERING SONG: As We Gather at Your Table

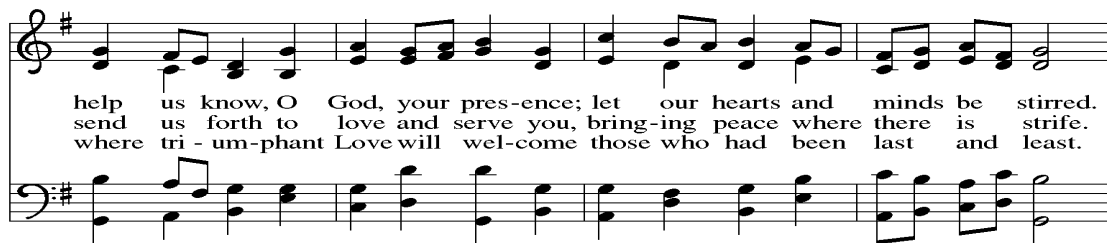
ELW 522

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As We Gather at Your Table



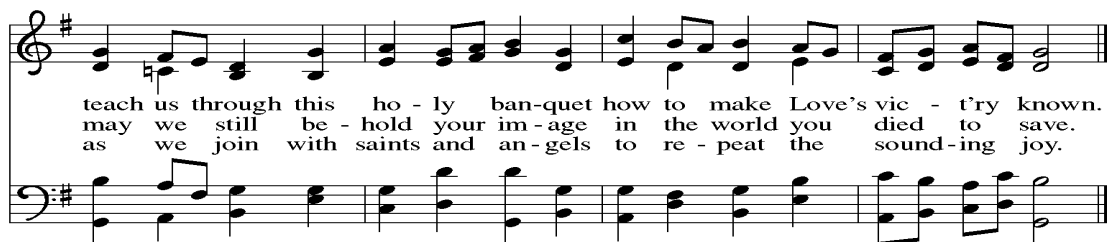
1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,
2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;
3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
where tri - um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;
There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.
may we still be - hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
as we join with saints and an-gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen, 1855–1932

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***GREETING:**

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

C: And also with you.

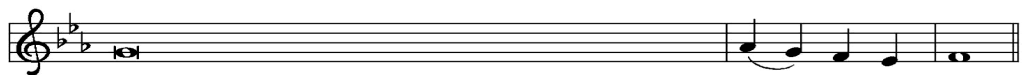
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



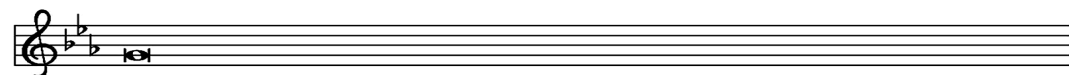
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



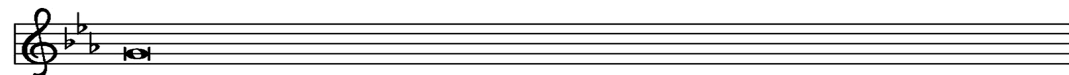
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb



who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and



strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of



God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,

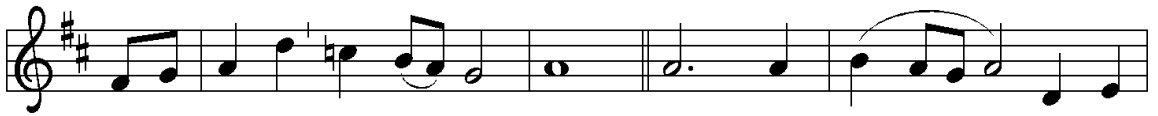


glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

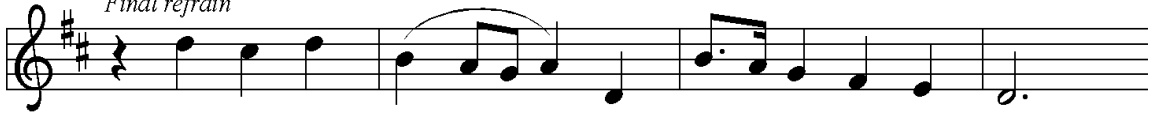


al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was



slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

We Listen to the Word

First Reading:

Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from Genesis.

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm:

Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

[¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

² **Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits—**

³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

⁴ **who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**

⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶ **O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.**

⁷ You made known your ways to Moses and your works to the children of Israel.]

⁸ **LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

⁹ you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.

¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹² **As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

¹³ As a father has compassion for his children, so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

Second Reading:

Romans 14:1-12

A reading from Romans.

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

* Please stand if you are able

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

***GOSPEL:**

Matthew 18:21-35

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

We Respond to the Word

*Hymn of the Day:

ELW 544

Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing



1 Praise the Lord, rise up re - joic - ing, wor - ship, thanks, de -
2 Scat - tered flock, one shep - herd shar - ing, lost and lone - ly,
3 Sins for - giv - en, wrongs for - giv - ing, we go forth a -



vo - tion voic - ing: glo - ry be to God on high!
one voice hear - ing, ears at - ten - tive to your word;
lert and liv - ing in your Spir - it, strong and free.



Christ, your cross and pas - sion shar - ing, by this eu - cha -
by your blood new life re - ceiv - ing, in your bod - y,
Part - ners in your new cre - a - tion, seek - ing peace in



rist de - clar - ing yours the fi - nal vic - to - ry.
firm be - liev - ing, we are yours, and you the Lord.
ev - 'ry na - tion, may we faith - ful fol - l'wers be.

Text: Howard C. A. Gaunt, 1902–1983, alt.
Music: ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN, Johann Löhner, 1645–1705, adapt.
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***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

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise up leaders (*like John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we remember today*) to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember (*name/s, and*) all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

***Sharing of the Peace**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

We Offer Our Gifts

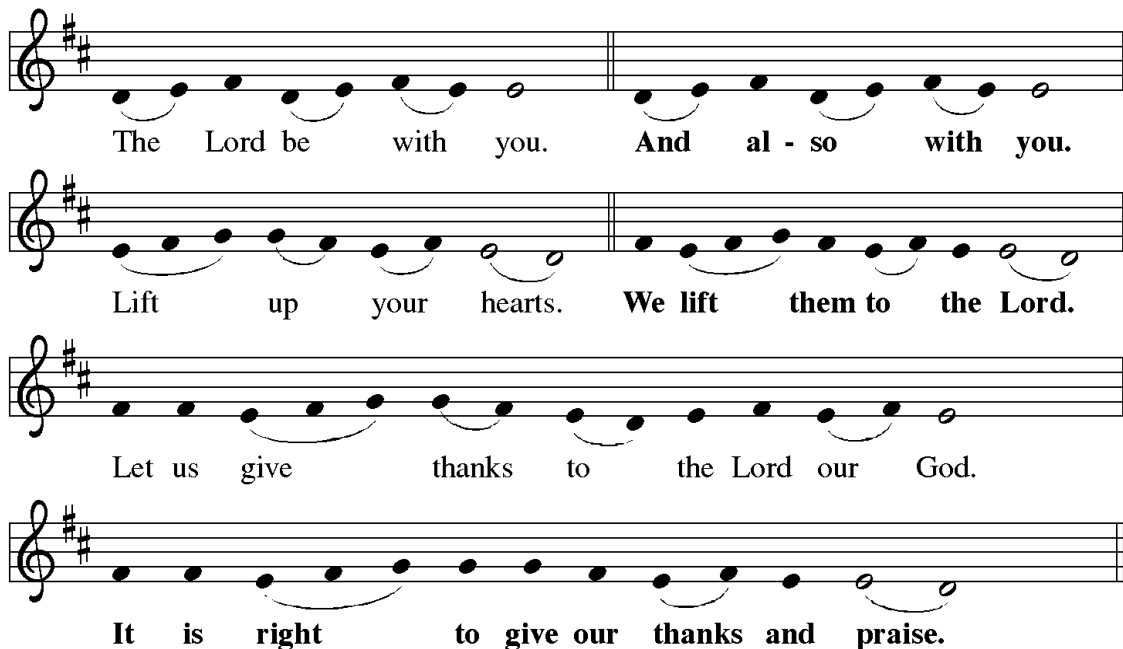
***Offering Prayer:**

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the One who gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

We Share the Feast

***Holy Communion**

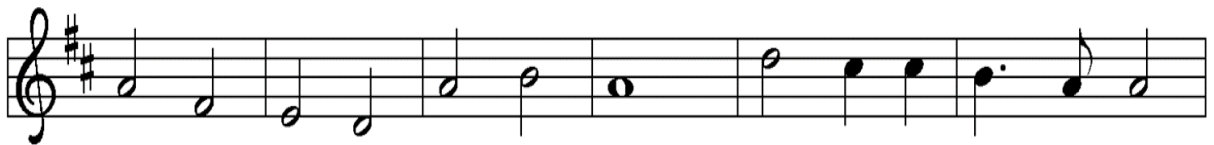


The musical notation consists of four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1: The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
- Staff 2: Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
- Staff 3: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- Staff 4: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: 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, through our Savior Jesus Christ, who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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.

*Thanksgiving at the Table

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we might receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

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 the 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."

For as often as we eat this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

*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

P: Reveal yourself to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, as you once revealed yourself to your disciples.

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion Distribution — please come to the step before altar as led by the Spirit to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Post-Communion Blessing

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

C: Amen

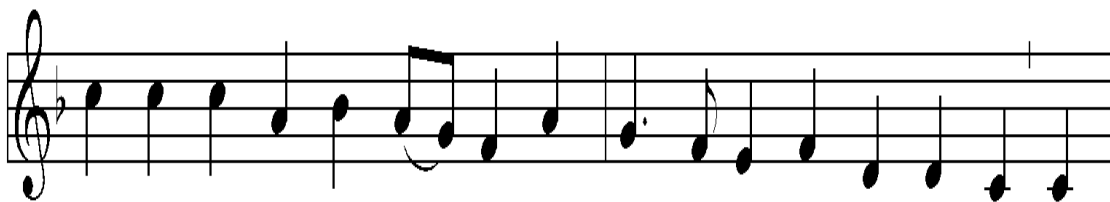
*Song after Communion:



☐ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***Prayer after Communion**

P: Let us pray.

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

.

C: Amen.

We Are Sent

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

***Sending Song:** All Creatures, Worship God Most High! ELW 835
NEXT PAGE

***Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Recessional: All The Glory, Never Ending! Alleluia! Arr. Anna Krentz

All Creatures, Worship God Most High!



- 1 All crea-tures, wor-ship God most high! Sound ev-'ry voice in earth and
- 2 Sing, broth-er wind; with clouds and rain you grow the gifts of fruit and
- 3 Sing, broth-er fire, so mirth-ful, strong; drive far the shad-ows, join the
- 4 All who for love of God for-give, all who in pain or sor-row



sky: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Sing, broth-er sun, in splen-dor
 grain: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Dear sis - ter wa - ter, use - ful,
 throng: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Dear moth - er earth, so rich in
 grieve: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Christ bears your bur-dens and your



bright; sing, sis - ter moon and stars of night:
 clear, make mu - sic for your Lord to hear: Al-le - lu - ia, al-le -
 care, praise God in col - ors bright and rare:
 fears; still make your song a - mid the tears:



lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia!

- 5 And you, most gentle sister death,
 waiting to hush our final breath:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
 fair is the night that leads us home.
 Alleluia.

- 6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
 and worship God with humble heart:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
 Alleluia.

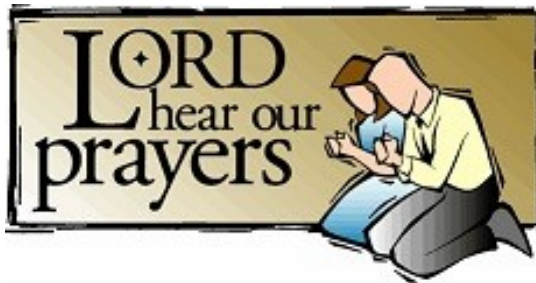
Text: Francis of Assisi, 1182–1226; tr. composite
 Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623
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CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN THE CASE OF A PASTORAL EMERGENCY,
In the event of a Pastoral Emergency, please contact Pastor Eli Hess
Work: 814-943-3972

The church office email is stjamesaltoona@gmail.com The church's
website is www.stjamesaltoona.org
On Facebook—St. James Lutheran Church—Altoona, PA



Our Prayer List:

Tim Surkovich

Jeff Bickel

Bill Wilt

Bob Holsinger Sr

Staff Sgt John Hiles

Donna Foster

Donna Wilt

Carolyn Feather

Bill Dambeck

Judy Dambeck

The soul and family of Debbie Thomas

The soul and family of Debra Morgan

The soul of Marian "Toots" Holsinger

The soul of Deborah Manbeck

The soul of Sylvia Malsatzki

The soul of Carol Weaver

(Names for inclusion on our parish prayer list can be submitted to the church office. The name will remain on the list for one month. At the end of that period please advise the church office, if you would like the name to be continue for another month.)

Those serving in our military.



UPCOMING MEETINGS, EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES:

Sweets and Treats

Oct 4 10 AM

Council Meeting

Oct 15 4 PM

Octoberfest

Oct 18 12 PM

Annual Congregational Meeting

Nov 8 12 PM

Decorate Church for Christmas

Dec 5 10 AM

**** Pizza will be provided afterwards***

Allegheny Chorale Concert

Dec 6 3 PM

**** Refreshments following the performance***



SWEETS AND TREATS
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF
EACH MONTH.

OUR NEXT SWEETS AND TREATS WILL BE: Oct 4, 2026
Provided By: Tina Miller

* We are always looking for volunteers to sponsor Sweets and Treats. If you're interested there is a sign up sheet in the Sunday School Room. Your support is appreciated!



NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL
MEETING
October 15, 2026
4 PM

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Sunday Worship Service will return to the Sanctuary on October 4, 2026 and remain in the Sanctuary until Palm Sunday.



October 18, 2026

**Dinner will be served following the Worship Service.
Dinner to include Sauerkraut, Pork, Mashed Potatoes, Kneadles
(German Bread Dumplings) with Gravy, Hot German Potato
Salad, Hot Dogs & Rolls, applesauce and drinks.**

We are asking members to bring a side dish, vegetable or dessert.

Hosted By: Robin and John Kessler





The **Annual Congregational** meeting
will be held:

NOVEMBER 8, 2026

after the service. There will be nominations for council members and then the election for council. The budget will be discussed and then anything else that the congregation may bring to our attention.



The Allegheny Chorale presents their 42nd Season Christmas Concert



St. James Lutheran Church

December 6, 2026

3PM



We ask the congregation to please contribute cookies for the social after the concert. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.

COMMUNITY LUNCH



ST LUKES COMMUNITY LUNCH

October 14th 12 PM

- **Hosted by St James Lutheran Held 2nd Wednesday of each month in the St James Social Hall**

Dear Lord

Bless my church family.
Strengthen leaders, encourage
members, and let us grow in unity.



St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church

— + —
is a
*Blessed
Community*
♡



May God's love
and blessings
be with you
and remain
with you always.

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.