

LIVING SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
JULY 26, 2026

*Living Saviour Lutheran Church is a faith community
striving to live and love as Jesus did, eagerly welcoming all
and bringing healing, help, and hope to the world.*

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

THE TIME AFTER PENTECOST is the longest stretch of the Christian year during which we do not observe any particular season or celebrate a major festival. Known by many Christians as "ordinary time" or "the time of the Church", this time is neither watchful nor celebrative. During these weeks we concentrate on learning and growing in our faith. The altar and lectern colors are green, representing growth, except for the first Sunday, the festival of the Holy Trinity, when the color is white.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Assisting Minister - **Cooper Thom**
Crucifer - **Jackson Thom**
Acolyte - **Charlie Parham**

INSTRUMENTALIST:

Trumpet - **Gordon Hann**

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are given by Dawn Gibson to the glory of God and in thanksgiving for Pastor Sara and Living Saviour Lutheran Church.

THIS WORSHIP FOLDER contains all elements of the worship service. It is designed to encourage your participation. Please read the words in bold print and join in the singing of all hymns. Italicized words are instructions.

RESTROOMS are located at the back of the sanctuary and down the short hallway.

WE WELCOME CHILDREN IN OUR WORSHIP SERVICES!

Parents, you are always welcome to bring your children to worship with you. If you are comfortable and prefer having them in supervised childcare, it is available and is under the very capable and loving supervision of Ms. Carla. The Childcare Room is down the steps as you enter the gathering area outside the sanctuary. Someone will be happy to direct you there.

- **CHILDREN'S WORSHIP BULLETINS** for readers and non-readers are available on the welcome table where the worship folders are located.
- **QUIET BAGS** for use by children during worship have been updated and arranged by age groups. They are located to the left as you enter the sanctuary. Please feel free to pick one up and replace it on the hooks when you leave.

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES are on page 22.

WE GATHER IN CHRIST'S NAME

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

GATHERING DIALOGUE

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

Amen.

In a cynical and despairing world, O God,
give us voices to proclaim your hope.

In a violent and angry world, O God,
give us voices to proclaim your peace.

In a dismissive and disinterested world, O God,
give us voices to proclaim your compassion.

In a lonely and inhospitable world, O God,
give us voices to proclaim your unconditional love.

In a grieving and weeping world, O God,
give us voices to proclaim your joy.

**May our voices and our lives be channels of your restoring grace,
eagerly welcoming all and bringing healing, help and hope to the world.
Amen.**

Please be seated.

PRELUDE "The Night You Gave Us, God, Has Ended" arr. Paul Fey

*Please stand at the direction of the Pastor and turn to face the processional cross.
As the cross passes your row, please turn to the altar.*

GATHERING HYMN

"The Night You Gave Us, God, Has Ended"

ACS 994

V2-Higher Voices V4-Lower Voices

1 The night you gave us, God, has end - ed,
 2 We thank you for each glo - rious sun - rise
 3 Bless those who work in hours of dark - ness,
 4 We pray for en - er - gy and pas - sion
 5 We praise you, God, for na - ture's rhy - thms,

the dark - ness hails the sun's bright rays;
 the that paints the earth a gold - en hue;
 who serve and our toil while each oth - ers sleep;
 to live and our lives each day stars for you;
 for dark and day - light, stars and sun;

as shad - ows flee and earth a - wak - ens,
 each day your grace grants new be - gin - nings,
 their lives of car - ing and pro - tect - ing,
 may all a - round us sense your pres - ence,
 your whole cre - a - tion sings your glo - ry,

we rise a - gain to sing your praise.
 the chance to gain start a - gain a - new.
 re - flect your love so strong and deep.
 in all we say and most all we do.
 O Trin - i - ty, Ho - ly One.

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.

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. **By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Please be seated.

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

PSALM: Psalm 119:129-136

Please read responsively.

¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.

¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.**

¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.**

READING: Romans 8:26-39

A reading from Romans.

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Celtic Alleluia"

ELW 174



GOSPEL: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls;

⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵² And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

Sara Ilderton

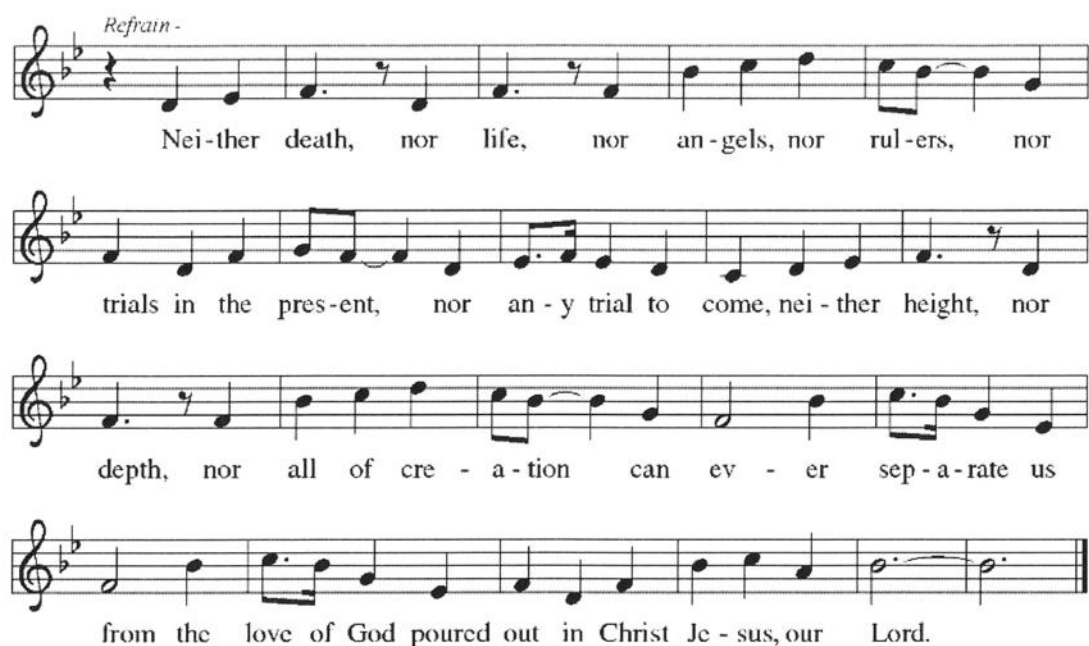
Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Neither Death nor Life"

ELW 622:1,2,5

Refrain -



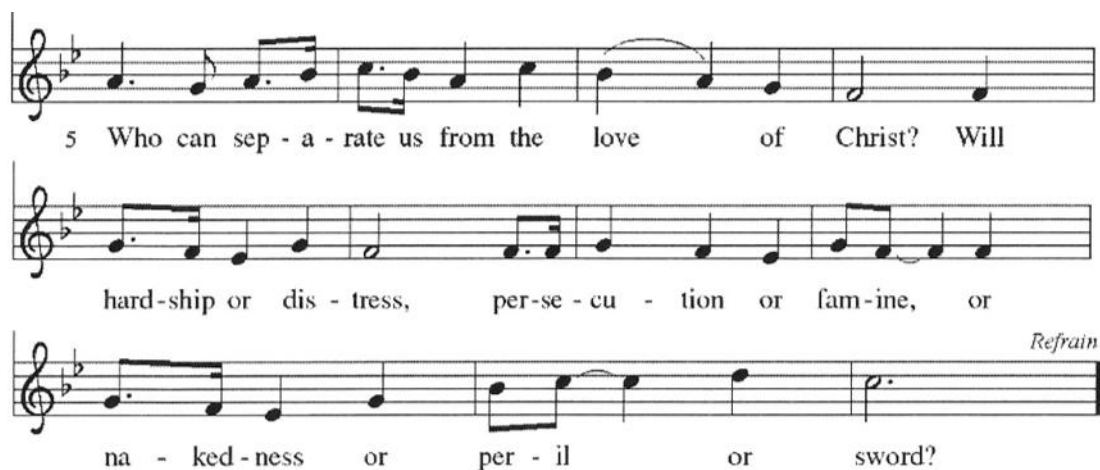
Nei-ther death, nor life, nor an-gels, nor rul-ers, nor
trials in the pres-ent, nor an - y trial to come, nei - ther height, nor
depth, nor all of cre - a - tion can ev - er sep - a - rate us
from the love of God poured out in Christ Je - sus, our Lord.

1 Dwell in the one who raised Christ from the dead; though your
bod-y shall die, in Christ you shall rise through the
Spir - it who brings you to life. *Refrain*

2 All who are led by the Spir-it shall live as
chil - dren of God, and heirs with Christ Je - sus, God's a -
dopt - ed and cho - sen and loved. *Refrain*

>>>Continued>>>

"Neither Death nor Life" continued



Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950, based on Romans 8

Music: NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE, Marty Haugen

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who seek to lead your disciples in any way.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our breath and our heartbeat, help us to recognize signs of your presence among us. Protect and support diverse ecosystems, from national parks to family farms, from ranches to wild places.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our peace and our guide, help civic leaders hear all their peoples' stories with compassion and curiosity, and remind us of your love from which we can never be separated.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Eternal God, whose steadfast love never ends, we ask that you look upon the nations now engaged in war and hasten the day of peace. Look in mercy on those exposed to peril, conflict, sickness, and death; and show compassion to the dying. Incline the hearts of all people to follow the path to peace and concord, that war may cease and the day of reconciliation may come quickly.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

>>>Continued>>>

God our intercessor, we remember and pray for all who live with chronic illness, mobility struggles, pain, and uncertainty. We pray especially for those we name silently or aloud...

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our redeemer, may we trust your love above and beyond all else that distracts, annoys, frightens, exhausts, or divides us.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

After exchanging the peace with those near you, please be seated.

MINISTRY MINUTE

Health & Wholeness

WE SHARE THE SUPPER OF THE LORD

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

*But do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,
for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Hebrews 13:15, 16*

The offering plate is passed. You may also give electronically using the QR code on the back cover.

MUSICAL OFFERING

"Order My Steps"
(From today's Psalm 119:133a)

Burleigh
arr. Larson

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERING HYMN

"We Place upon Your Table, Lord"
Verses 1 and 3

ELW 467

1 We place up - on your ta - ble, Lord, where you by
2 With - in these sim - ple things there lie the height and
3 Ac - cept them, Lord; they come from you; we take them

grace have bid us dine, these to - kens of our dai - ly
depth of hu - man life: our pain and tears, our thoughts and
hum - bly from your hand; put these your gifts to high - er

work, the food of life, the bread and wine.
toils, our hopes and fears, our joy and strife.
use: the ho - ly meal that you com - mand.

Text: M. F. C. Wilson, 1884–1944, alt.
Music: DISTRESS, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is sure.
Word and water, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. **Receive the gifts we bring and nourish us to proclaim your abiding love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. Amen.**

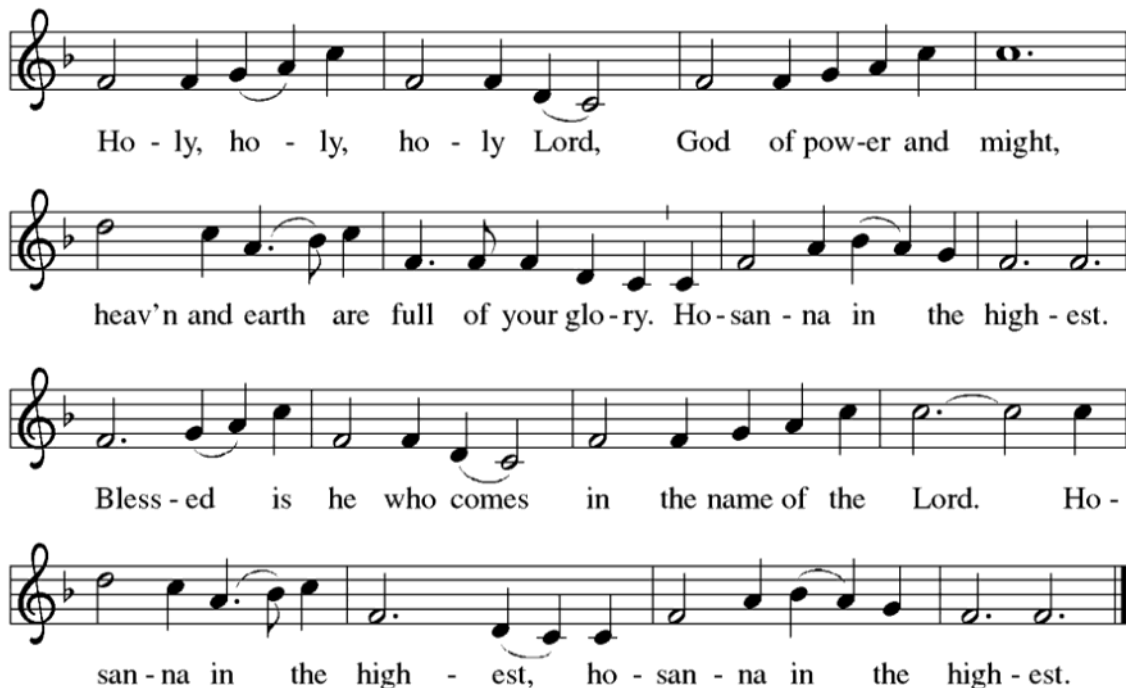
GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our privilege 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.
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:



The musical notation is written on four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "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 notation includes various musical symbols such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, with some notes beamed together. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for you are faithful to the covenant you have made
with a thousand generations.

You are the creator of all,
and in all things you work for good for all who love you.

Jesus showed us your love, coming among us, sowing your Word,
and from that tiny seed your kingdom has grown,
a kingdom of welcome and grace for all people.

Rulers and powers turned against him
and he was tortured and sentenced to a criminal's death,
but you raised him to new life
and now there is nothing in all creation
that can separate us from the love given us in Christ.

The celebrant continues with the Words of Institution.

We remember his love for us:

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 in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

ACCLAMATION AT THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The bread is raised and broken.

Alleluia! Remembering that Christ our Passover has been given for us,
let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

Please be seated.

An usher will direct you forward for Communion.

Communion is served at the altar rail. You may kneel or stand.

We use wheat wafers, white grape juice and wine. If you need a gluten free wafer, please make that known to the pastor.

For any who desire a blessing, please come forward with your arms crossed.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

The body of Christ given for you.

The blood of Christ shed for you.

HYMNS DURING DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please join in singing the hymns which follow.

"This Is Christ's Body"

ACS 967

This is Christ's bod - y, bro - ken and blest. Feed us with

mer - cy and love. We are Christ's bod - y,

with mer - cy and love.

bro - ken and blest. Heal us and make us one.

Text: Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960

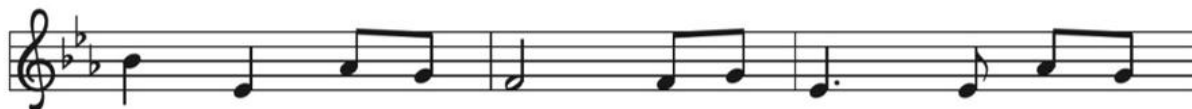
Music: BROKEN AND BLESSED, Anne Krentz Organ

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1 Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken by the
 2 Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken in a
 3 Loaves are bro - ken, words are spo - ken, as in
 4 By the loaves you break and give us, send us



Gal - i - le - an shore. Je - sus, Bread of life from
 qui - et room one night. In the bread and wine you
 faith we gath - er here. Je - sus speaks a - cross the
 in your name to share bread for which the mil - lions



heav - en, was their food for - ev - er - more.
 gave them, Christ, you came as Light from Light.
 a - ges: "I am with you; do not fear!"
 hun - ger, words that tell your love and care.



Refrain
 By your bod - y bro - ken for us, by your



wine of life out - poured, Je - sus, feed a - gain your



peo - ple. Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923–2007

Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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"Seek Ye First"

WOV 783

Descant

Al - le - lu - ia, al -

D F#m G D G

1 Seek ye . . . first the king - dom of God and its
2 Ask and it shall be giv - en un - to you; seek and
3 We do not live by bread . . . a - lone, but by

le - lu - ia, al - le -

D Em A⁷ D F#m

righ - teous - ness, and all these things shall be
you shall find; knock and the door shall be
ev - 'ry word that pro - ceeds from the

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

G D G D Em A D

add - ed un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.
o - pened un - to you. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.
mouth . . of . . . God. Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no quo - ni - am bo - nus.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho - ly.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no. Al - le - lu - ia!
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Psalm 136:1 (Latin); Taizé Community

Music: CONFITEMINI DOMINO, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994

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Please stand as you are able.

COMMUNION BLESSING

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood,
strengthen, keep and unite us now and forever.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

We thank you, God of heaven and earth,
that you fill our deepest need
with the very gift of Jesus Christ,
broken and poured out for us.

Pour us out into a broken world.

**Channel our common life
toward the common good,
following the way our Savior leads us
now and forever.**

Amen.

WE ARE SENT TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

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.

Leader

All

1 Guide my feet
2 Hold my hand
3 Stand by me
4 I'm your child
5 Search my heart

while I run this race.

Yes, my Lord!

Guide my feet
Hold my hand
Stand by me
I'm your child
Search my heart

while I run this race.

Yes, my Lord!

Guide my feet
Hold my hand
Stand by me
I'm your child
Search my heart

while I run this race,

for I don't want to run this race in vain.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: GUIDE MY FEET, African American spiritual; arr. *This Far by Faith*

Arr. © 1999 Augsburg Fortress

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DISMISSAL

Go out into the world. Share the good news. Strive for peace and justice.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

2026 HEALTH AND WHOLENESS

The July theme is building blocks for holistic health.

Tip#4: Restorative sleep, stress management, positive social interactions, mindfulness, and prayerful meditation all work together to maintain your spiritual health. A healthy spirit leads to mental and physical wellness. Spend time in nature without your phone. Be aware of the beauty around you. Volunteer and spend time with friends. Practice contemplative prayer in silent communion with God. Enjoy deep breathing and peace. Let that stress float away.

Psalm 46:10 Be still and know that I am God.

ONGOING EVENTS

Memory Care Ministry Workshop hosted by Atrium and our Health & Wholeness Ministry began on Wednesday, July 15 and will run each Wednesday for six weeks **through August 19** from 6-7:30pm and takes place in our Fellowship Hall. This **free** workshop will provide education and support for dementia caregivers. All materials and refreshments will be provided. Registration is requested and you can do so on our website or by contacting the church office. **You are not required to attend all sessions**, but encouraged to attend as many as you can. Please share this event with anyone you know that may benefit. Speak with Laura Michael if you have any questions.

Topics will include:

- the caregiving journey
- understanding the brain
- communication changes
- supporting independence
- responding to dementia related behaviors

Credits/Acknowledgements

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Gathering Dialogue written by John van de Laar and posted on Sacredise.com. Reposted on the re:worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/search/label/epiphany%202%20C>. Adapted.

Thanksgiving at the Table: ©2002 Nathan Nettleton LaughingBird.net. Adapted. Also from Augsburg Fortress.

“Celtic Alleluia”

Music: Fintan O’Carroll and Christopher Walker

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“The Night You Gave Us, God, Has Ended”

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: ST. CLEMENT, Clement C. Scholefield, 1839–1904

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“Seek Ye First”

CCLI #11242717

THIS WEEK AT LIVING SAVIOUR

Sunday: July 26

- 9:15 Choir Rehearsal
- 10:15 a.m. Hymn Sing!
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- 2:00 p.m. Worship at The Pines
- 6:00 p.m. Lutheroad Meet and Greet Dinner

Monday: July 27

- Lutheroad Day Camp

Tuesday: July 28

- Lutheroad Day Camp

Wednesday: July 29

- Lutheroad Day Camp
- 6:00p.m. Memory Care Ministry Workshop

Thursday: July 30

- Lutheroad Day Camp

Friday: July 31

- Lutheroad Day Camp

Saturday: August 1

- 10:00 a.m. Yoga 4 You

Sunday: August 2

- 9:15 Choir Rehearsal
- 10:30 a.m. Worship



LIVING SAVIOUR

Lutheran Church

Living Saviour Lutheran Church
6817 Carmel Road
Charlotte, North Carolina 28226
(704) 542-3626

The Reverend Sara Ilderton, Pastor
Don Huff, Director of Music Ministry
Nancy Mersereau, Assistant Musician
Laura Schwab, Office Administrator
Susan Hall, Treasurer
Elsie Davis, LS Preschool Director

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