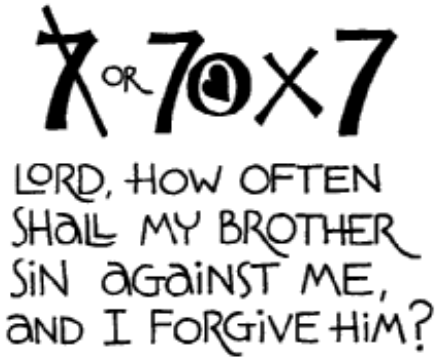
Sermon

September 13, 2026

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost:

Proper 19



The Holy Eucharist:

The Liturgy for the Proclamation
of the Word of God and
Celebration of the Holy Communion

Gloria Dei Episcopal Church
3393 Route 23A PO Box 298
Palenville, New York 12463

https://www.gloria-dei-episcopal-church-palenville-ny.org/

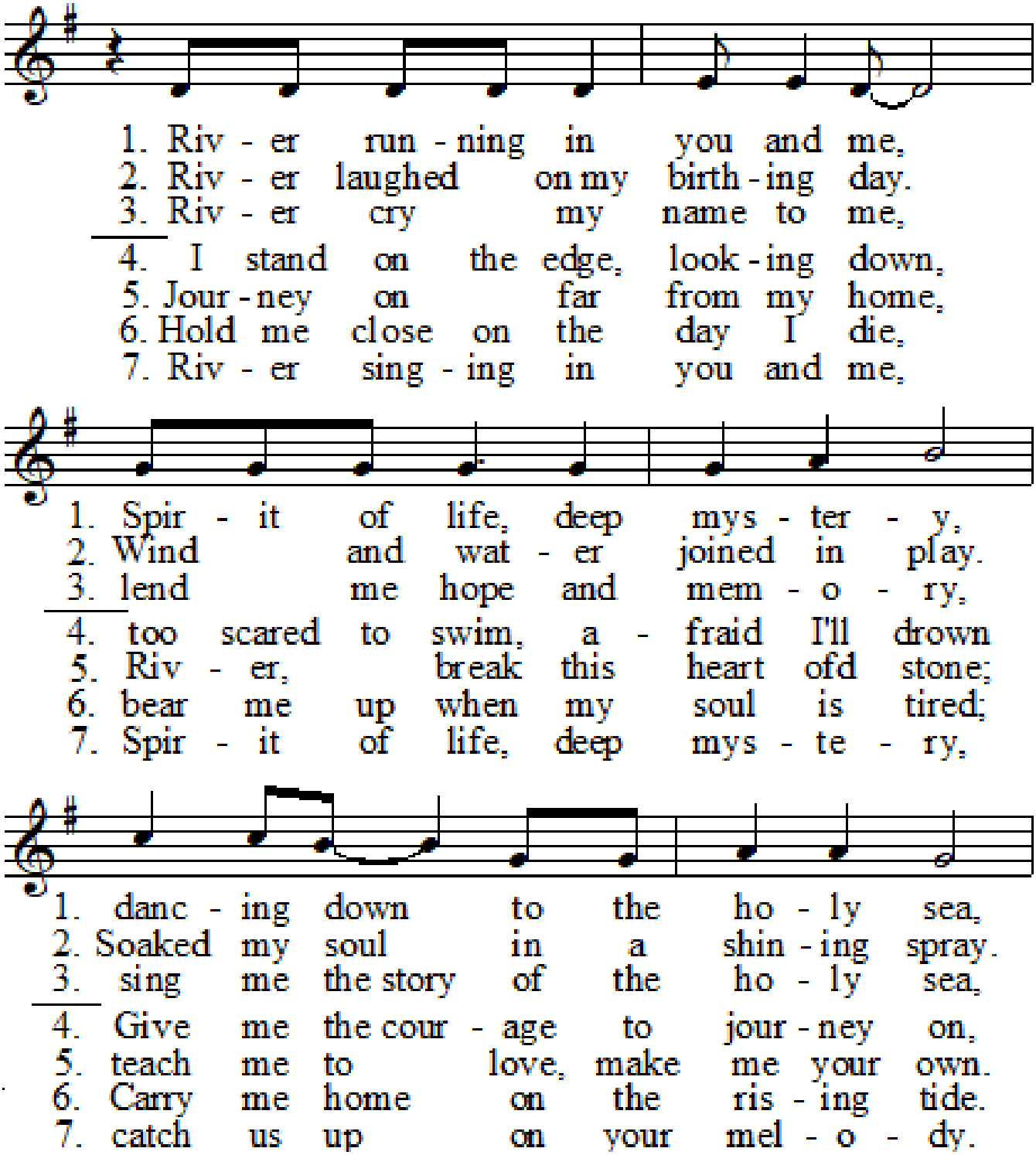
The Rev. John E. Miller. Priest-in-Charge
Kathie F. Miller, Organist
Phone (518) 329-4562
E-mail: johnplus74@outlook.com

The Liturgy of the Word

Blessed are you, holy and living One.
You come to your people and set them free.

Collect for Purity

Hymn of Praise:





Collect of the Day

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen*.

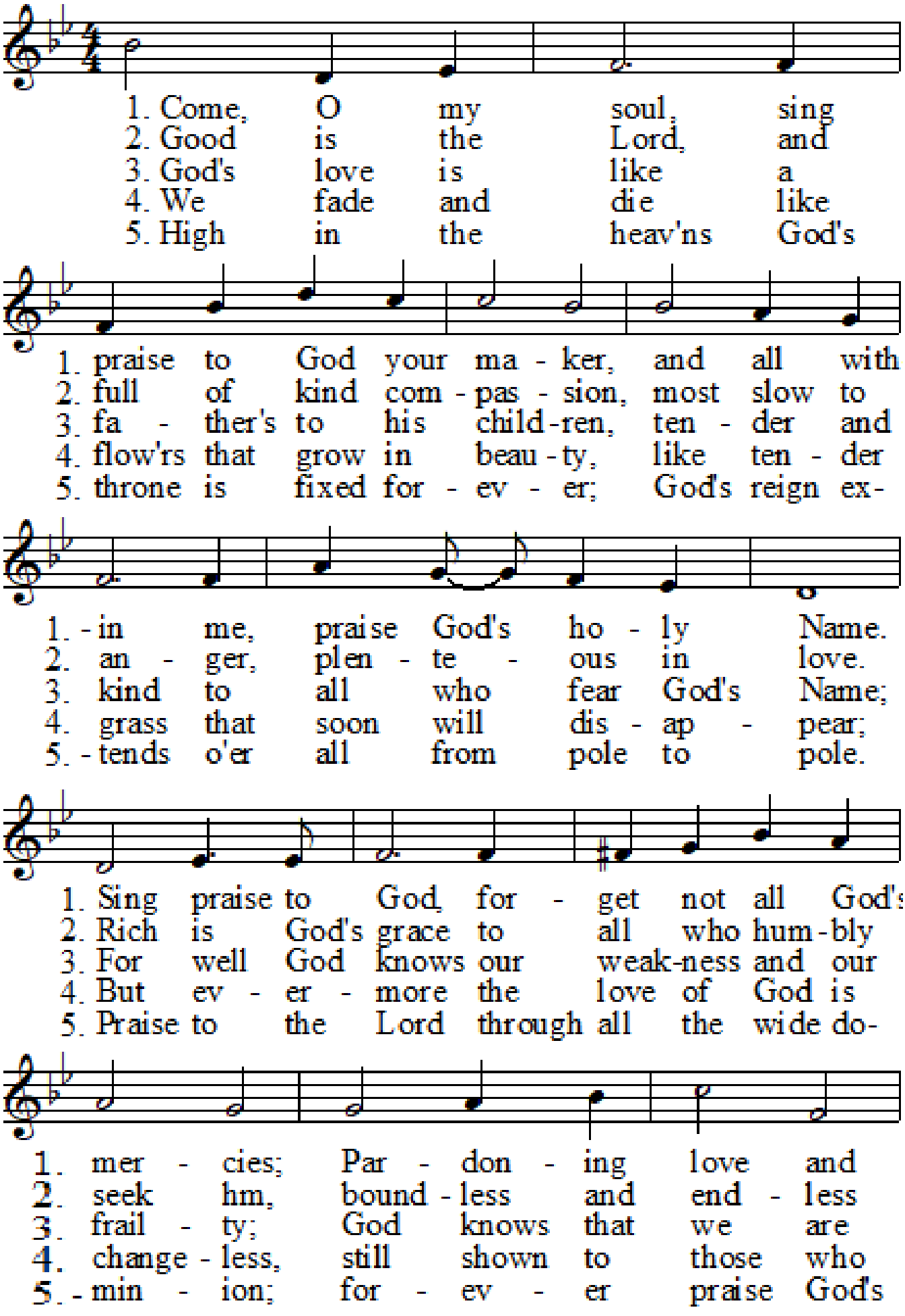
A reading from the Book of Genesis**:**

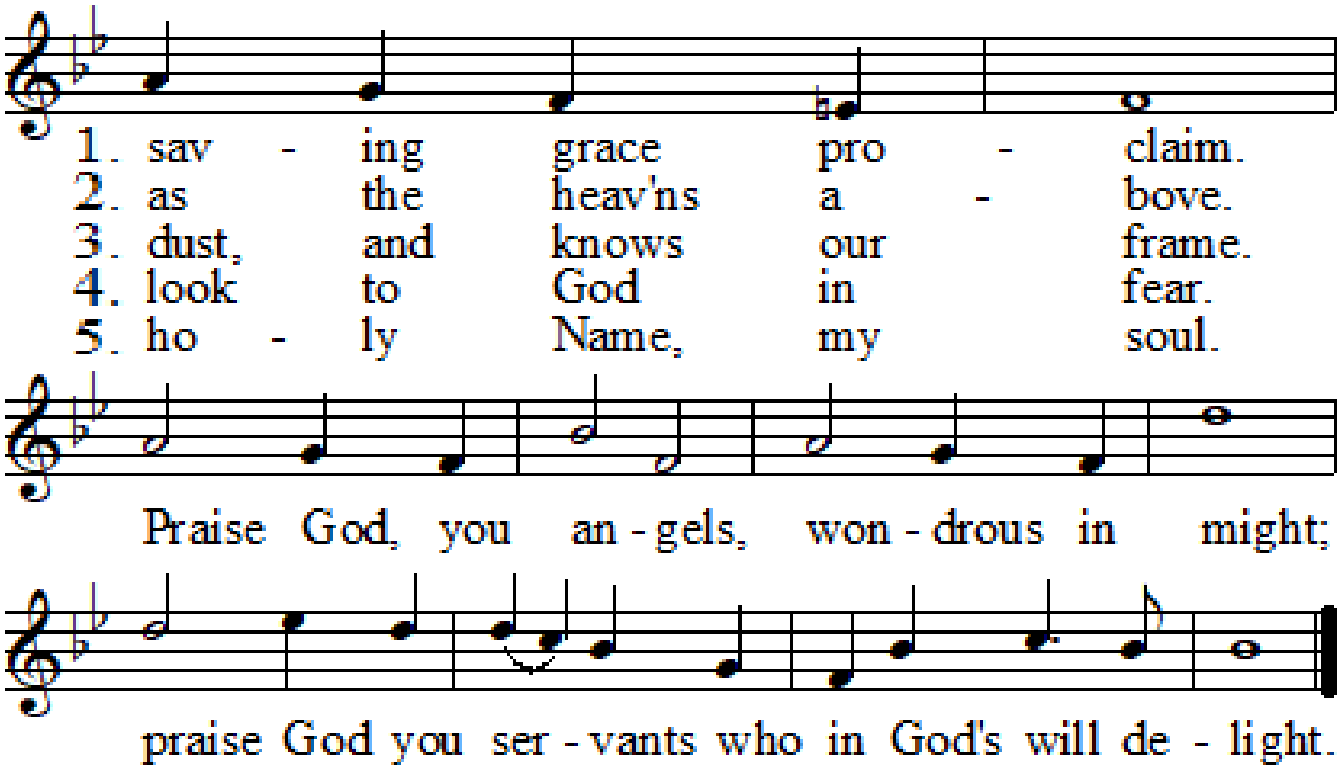
Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime 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. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 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. 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.***

Alternate OT Lessons & Psalm: Exodus 14:19-31
Exodus 15:1b,-11, 20-21 Psalm 114

Gradual Psalm 103: 1-13 (Only 4 vss in video)





A Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans:

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. 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. Who are you to pass judgment on servants 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. 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. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

(Over)

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. 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. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. *(Over)*

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. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Sequence Hymn: ***The Hymnal, 1982 # 674***

'Forgive our sins as we forgive,' you taught us, Lord, to pray,
but you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say.

How can your pardon reach and bless the unforgiving heart,
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bitterness depart?

In blazing light your cross reveals the truth we dimly knew:
what trivial debts are owed to us, how great our debt to you!

Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls,
and bid resentment cease;
then, bound to all in bonds of love,
our lives will spread your peace.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to St. Matthew:

Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.

When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The Sermon

Jesus has just finished giving the instructions regarding conflict resolution in the Church that we considered last week. One on one, then call in a handful of negotiators, then lay it before the whole Church. If the offender won't listen to the Church, there's not much more you can do.

Now Peter wants to hold up a yardstick against that. How often must I keep forgiving? Seven times?

We have seen before that the number seven in Scripture indicates wholeness. God created the entire world in seven days, giving us the week as the way we organize our days.. By resting on the seventh day, God established the Sabbath, instructing us to observe at seven-day intervals a day to stop and recharge and smell the roses. At seven Sabbath cycles, the land was to be given a year of rest, lying fallow while humans and their livestock subsisted on what it could produce naturally, without cultivation.

On the fiftieth year a trumpet announced the year of Jubilee, when all debts were to be cancelled, all indentured slaves freed, and all land transactions of the previous 49 years were to be reversed.

It was against this commonly-understood but no-longer fully observed backdrop that Jesus tells Peter that seven times is not enough. He must forgive seventy times seven. That number is based on a complicated Greek word that I won't try to pronounce, that can call for addition or multiplication, depending on the context. That's why our translations disagree over whether Jesus told Peter he must forgive 77 times or 490. Certainly by the time you have counted to 490, or even 77, you may well have forgotten what the offense was in the first place.

Let's begin with the example of God himself. Throughout the book of Judges the pattern developed. The people do what is evil in the sight of the Lord, and he sells them into the hands of this or that or the other neighboring people who oppressed them. Then he raises up a warrior to deliver them and the cycle starts all over again: sin, judgement, forgiveness, restoration. And when massive empires in the flow of history swept across Asia Minor, and absorbed first the northern Kingdom of Israel, and then the southern Kingdom of Judah, the latter prophets interpreted that as God's judgement of God's people, but always ended in a promise of restored relationship: "You will be my people, and I will be your God."

Today's lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures is the continuing story of Joseph. Most of us know the story of Joseph the favorite, with his coat of many colors, who delighted in reminding his brothers that he was the favorite. They attacked him and sold him as a slave to some travelling merchants, soaking the coat in animal blood and telling their father he'd been killed by a lion. Genesis tells how he ended up in Egypt and rose to power by correctly interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. When famine struck the homeland, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt seeking food, and the story ---- read to us this morning, a tale of redemption and forgiveness, took place.

After his resurrection, Jesus could have simply obliterated the signs of the torture and death that were visited upon him. But he chose not to. In his resurrected appearances he bears the wounds and the scars. He appeared to his disciples, pointed out his feet and his hands and his side and he said, "Look at this." He even invited Thomas to touch and feel.

And they all remembered his words from the cross: "Father forgive. Forgive them all; they don't know what they're doing. Forgive the Roman soldiers, following the orders of their superiors. Forgive the self-absorbed, self-righteous, self-interested religious authorities of my ancient people. Forgive these guys for running away, trying to disassociate themselves from me in that hour. Forgive the fickle crowds. Forgive them all."

In our daily lives, we forgive and are forgiven countless times, sometimes without even realizing it. Opportunities missed; opportunities refused. Promises forgotten or disregarded. Thoughtless or deliberately hurtful utterances. Any action or omission that indicates, or even suggests, that we do not respect the dignity of another.

Jesus told a parable to illustrate how forgiveness should work. A talent was what an ordinary worker might earn over the course of 20 years. And this guy owed ten thousand of them. When the King went over the books and ordered that he and his family be sold, and his entire estate liquidated, to recoup as much of the debt as possible, he begged for mercy, and the debt was forgiven in its entirety. But when the servant refused a fellow servant the grace that had been shown him, he found himself right back where he had started.

When Anselm first articulated the classic theory of Atonement, it was about a debt of obedience, in which humanity was seriously behind in our payments; not about punishment that we deserved for our transgressions; that unfortunate shift came later with the Reformers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The King James Version of the Bible had “debts” and “debtors” at Matthew 6:12 in the Lord’s Prayer, from the common Greek word for indebtedness, nuanced with a sense of moral obligation. .“Trespasses” followed an earlier Bible translation into the first Book of Common Prayer.

In 2014 Desmond Tutu and his daughter Mpho published a little book entitled The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World.[i] In it they state

> "Forgiveness is truly the grace by which we enable another person to get up, and get up with dignity, to begin anew."

To forgive is to search out and affirm the perpetrator's humanity, as the neighbor whom we are to love as we love ourselves.

Forgiveness does not abrogate justice. When Jesus promised a place in Paradise to the repentant thief, he did not deliver the man from the human consequences of his wrongdoing.

Forgiveness is not a sign of weakness. It does not always bring an end to anger and resentment; they can continue to fester. Sometimes it takes quite a large amount of strength and courage to realize that hanging on to that anger and resentment can take a great deal of energy, even manifesting itself in physical symptoms. Another book I could mention makes this point by its title: Forgive--And Get Your Life Back by Fr. Dennis Maynard[ii].

Forgiveness is not about forgetting, despite the tendency to utter both words in the same breath. It does not deny the real suffering caused by the hurt, or any lingering effects that may remain. Indeed, minimizing or denying the reality of the situation calling for forgiveness can undermine the healing that forgiveness should generate. It does not prohibit whatever steps we may find necessary to prevent the hurt from continuing or recurring.

Forgiveness is not always easy; we may even find that it is seldom easy. When the party being offered forgiveness has shown no remorse, or made no effort at reconciliation, or when the wrong continues, we are not inclined to forgive. Often circumstances render the possibility for reconciliation impossible. But when clinging to resentment is doing mental or even physical harm to yourself, and especially when reconciliation is impossible—then, as Fr. Maynard advises: forgive, and get your life back.

The Tutu's outline the path of forgiveness in four steps: Tell the Story; Name the Hurt; Grant Forgiveness; and Renew or Release the Relationship. If I try to explain these four steps we'll be here all day; I simply commend the book to you, along with Fr. Maynard's Forgive and Get Your Life Back.

Forgiveness is a choice, rooted in the recognition of our common humanity. Every one of us has things we need to forgive, and every one of us has things for which we need to be forgiven. We may not even be aware of some of these things; they may be hidden deep inside, manifesting themselves in harmful ways. God's gifts of healing extend beyond the physical to reach deep into the depths of our souls, revealing the forgivenesses we need to give and those we need to receive, to make us whole.

The 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:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
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.
With the Father and the Son e is worshiped and glorified.
He 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 the People

Each of us is finally accountable to God.
So let us pray, saying, "Lord, we are in need of your mercy;
have patience with us."

Lord, we acknowledge that we all sin
against our brothers and sisters in Christ
Forgive us even as we forgive each other.
Help us to be merciful to each other in the Church.

Lord, we are in need of your mercy; ***have patience with us.***

Lord, we acknowledge that we desire
to repay violence with violence.
Open our hearts to forgive even those
who commit evil acts towards us and chose we love.
Help us to live mercifully in our world.

Lord, we are in need of your mercy; ***have patience with us.***

Lord, we acknowledge we do not always appreciate
the diversity of your creation.
Teach us to live in peace with each other
and with your creation.
Help us to live mercifully with our world.

Lord, we are in need of your mercy; ***have patience with us.***

Lord, we acknowledge that we do nor love our neighbors
as you love us.
Forgive us for placing ourselves as judge over others
when judgment belongs to you alone.
Help ns ro accept the great mercy you choose to show others.

Lord, we are in need of your mercy; ***have patience with us.***

Lord, we pray for those whose lives are broken by evil.
Because of your mercy we believe that whatever befalls them,
they belong co you; you care for the brokenhearted.
Help us ro share your love with all those who are hurting.

Lord, we are in need of your mercy; ***have patience with us.***

Lord, we remember those who died in violence.
We remember those men andwomen of the armed services,
innocent bystanders, first responders,
and even those we have called enemies.
The dead belong to you, O Lord.
Even *as* we seek your mercy for ourselves,
judge all chose who have died with mercy.

Lord, we are in need of your mercy; ***have patience with us.***

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Officiant and People together

Most merciful God,
we confess that 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.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Absolution

The Peace



The Liturgy for the
Celebration of Holy Communion

The Offertory

The Celebrant begins the Offertory with a sentence of Scripture. Offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, are presented and placed on the Altar.

Offertory Hymn:



The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer E

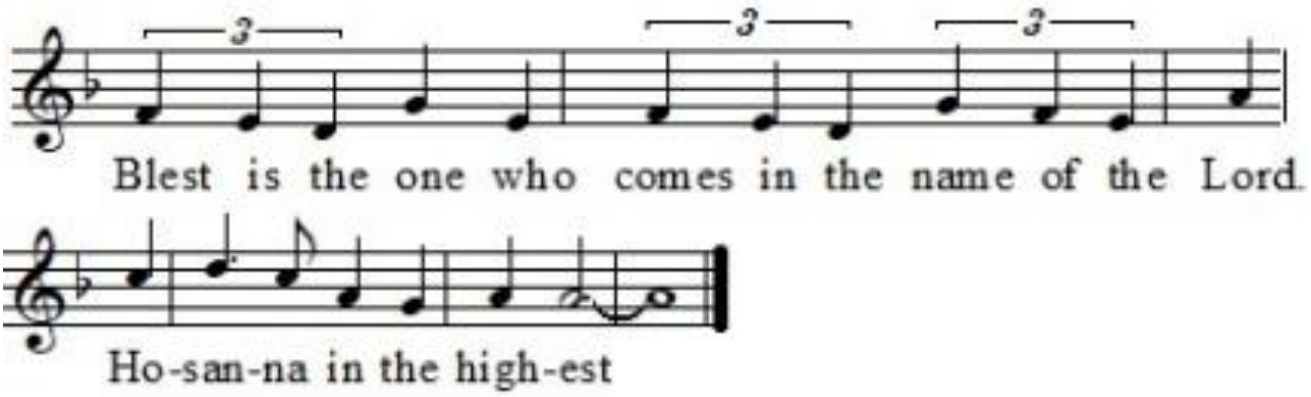
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing
and fed us with your constant love;
you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ
and knit us into one body.
Through your Spirit you replenish us
and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:





The Celebrant continues

Blessed are you, gracious God,creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love.

Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation.

Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said:

"Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said:

"Drink this, all of you:
This is my Blood of the new Covenant,
which is poured out for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

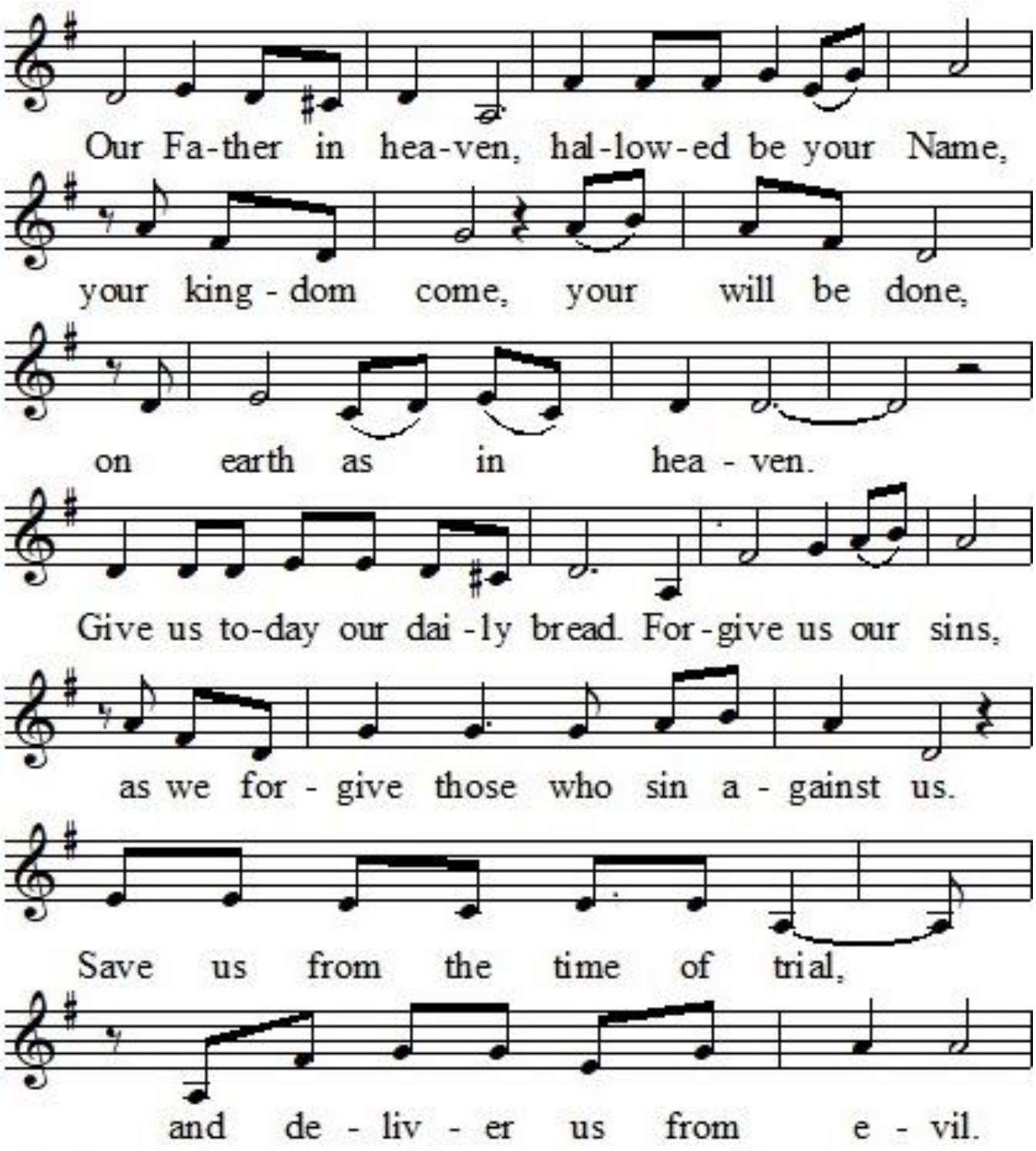
The Celebrant continues
Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ.

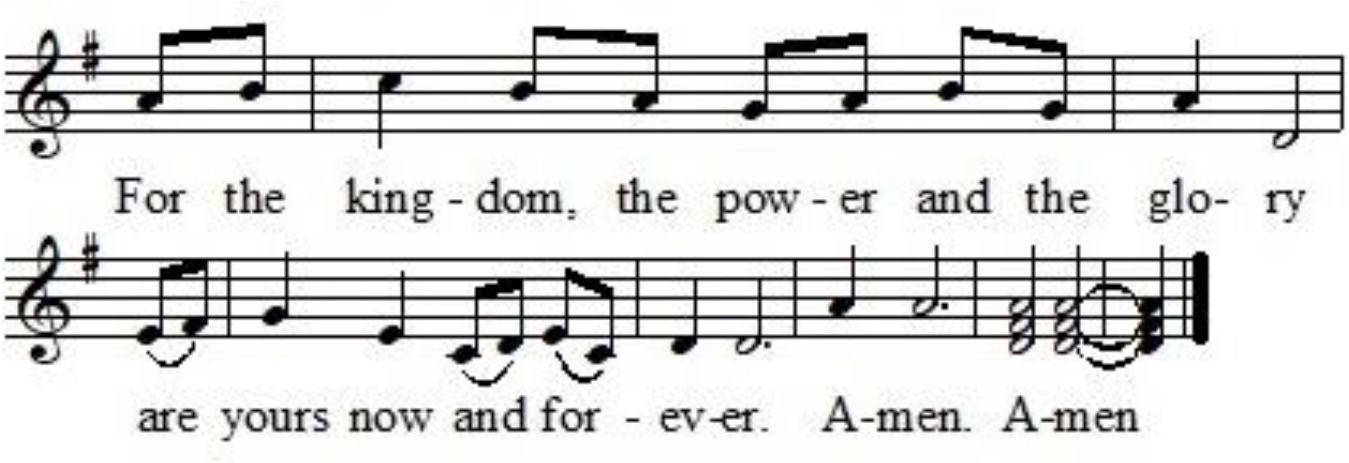
Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world.

Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. *AMEN.*

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,,





The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Alleluia! ***Alleluia***!

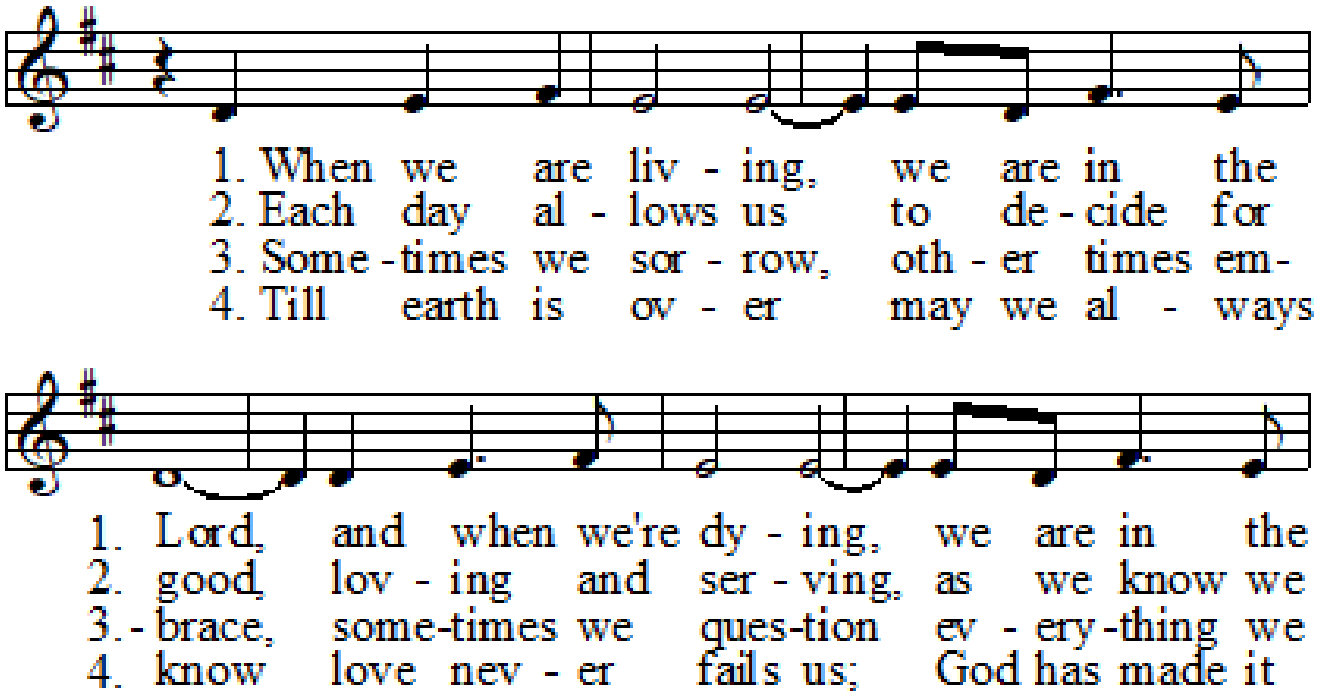
We break this bread
to share in the Body of Christ.
We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

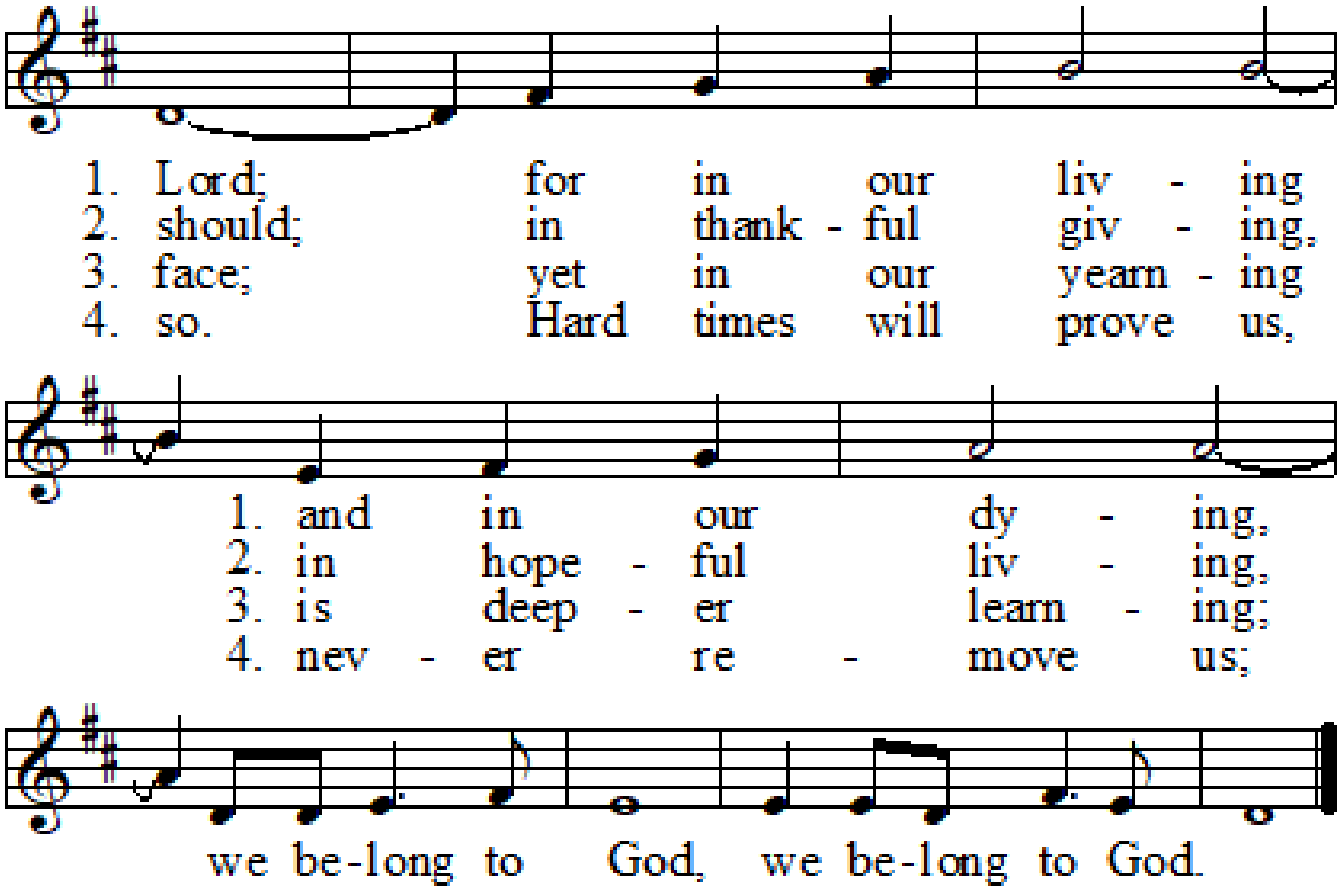
Alleluia! ***Alleluia***!

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Communion Hymn: ***(Over, then back here)***





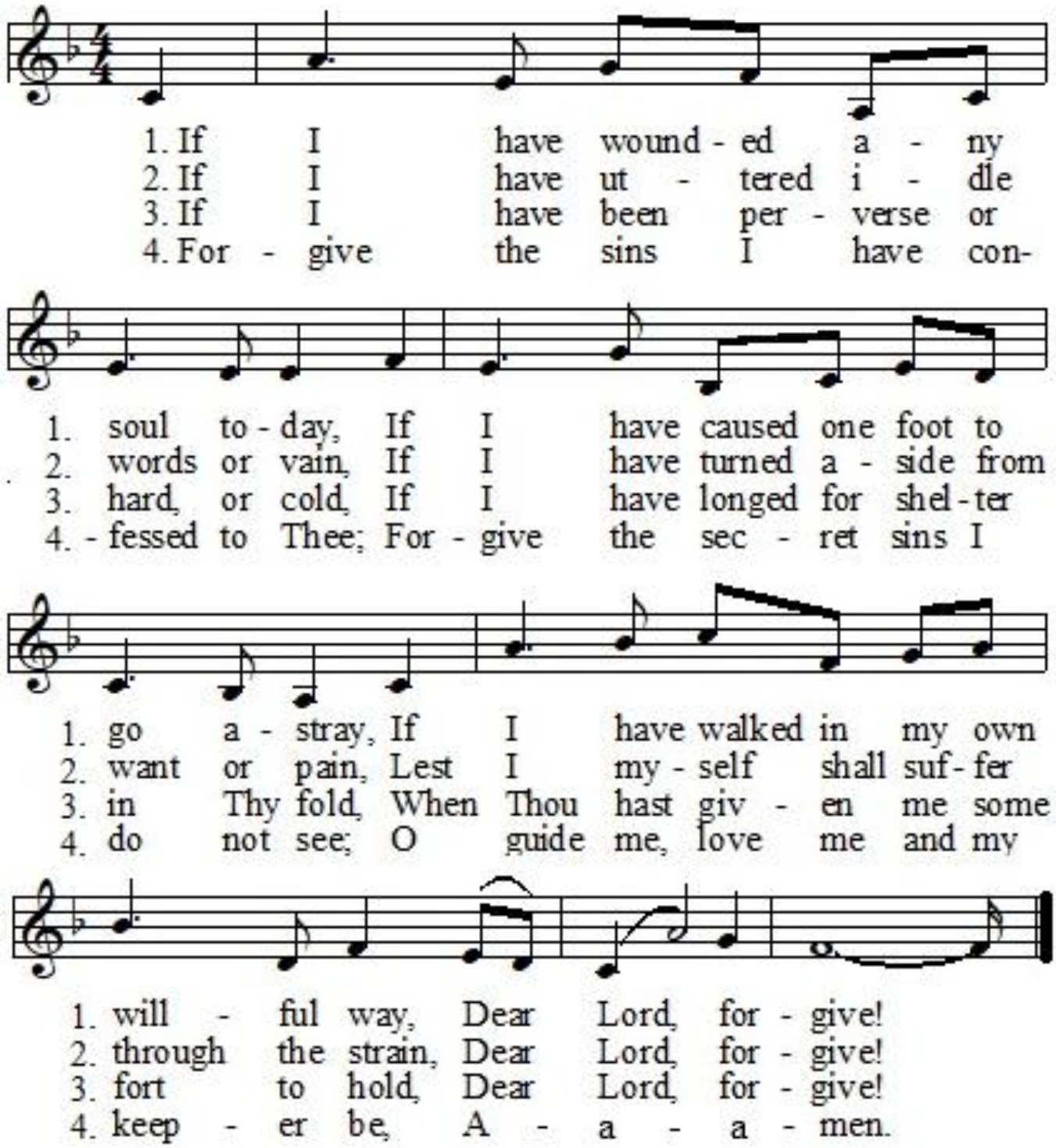
Post-communion Prayer

God of abundance,
you have fed us
with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
you have united us
with Christ and one another;
and with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue for ever
in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

Blessing & Dismissal

May the God of hope
fill you with every joy in believing. ***Amen***.
May the peace of Christ abound in your hearts. ***Amen***
May you be enriched by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. ***Amen***
…and the blessing…

Parting Hymn:



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Psalm 119:33-40: "Come, O my soul, sing praise to God your Maker" (P.D.)
Words: *The Psalter*; United Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1912
Music: *Tidings*; James Walch (1837-1901)

Offertory Hymn: "Women and men as God intended"
Words: John L. Bell (b. 1949) & Graham Maule (1958-2019)
Music: ***Kom nu met zang*** Valerius' *Gededkklank,* 1629. Arr. Hhn L. Bell
Words & arr. Copyright © 1989 Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community,
GIA Publications, agent

Communion Hymn: "When we are living"
Words: V. 1 Anon; vss 2-4 (Spanish) Roberto Escamilla (1931-);
Spanish text Vss 2-4 © Abingdon Press; admin Music Service, Inc
Eng. tr, John L. Bell (1949-) © 2002 WGRG, Iona Community,
Glasgow, UK (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)
Music:.*Somos del senor* Spanish trad melody; arr. Michael Capon (1963-)

Parting Hymn: "If I have wounded any soul today" (Public domain)
Words: C. Maude Battersby (1956-1932)
Music Charles Gabriel (1856-1932)



[i] [i] Desmond M. Tutu and Mpho A. Tutu; The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World. (Harper-Collins, 2014)
[ii] Maynard, Dennis; Forgive—And Get Your :Life Back (LaJolla, CA: 2001)