Sermon

October 4, 2026

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost:

Proper 22

St. Francis of Assisi



The Holy Eucharist:

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

Gloria Dei Episcopal Church

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Blessed be the One who creates all things.
The Holy One's love is new every morning.

A Penitential Order for Creation

Because we view our lives in Christ through the forgiveness we receive from God, let us confess our sins against God, our neighbors, and all Creation.

Silence may be kept.

We have forgotten who we are.
We have alienated ourselves
from the unfolding of the cosmos.
We have become estranged
from the movements of the earth.
We have turned our backs on the cycles of life.

We have forgotten who we are.
We have sought only our own security.
We have exploited simply for our own ends.
We have distorted our knowledge.
We have abused our power.

We have forgotten who we are.
Now the land is barren.
And the waters are poisoned.
And the air is polluted.

We have forgotten who we are.
Now the forests are dying.
And the creatures are disappearing.
And humans are despairing.

We have forgotten who we are.
We ask forgiveness.
We ask for the gift of remembering.
We ask for the strength to change.
Help us to remember who we are.

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.

The Absolution

Hymn of Praise: ***The Hymnal, 1982 # 400 (Vss 1, 4, 5, 7)***

1 All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voices, let us sing: Alleluia, alleluia!
Bright burning sun with golden beams,
pale silver moon that gently gleams,
O praise him, O praise him, Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2 Great rushing winds and breezes soft,
you clouds that ride the heavens aloft, O praise him,
Alleluia!
Fair rising morn, with praise rejoice,
stars nightly shining, find a voice: [Refrain]

3 Swift flowing water, pure and clear,
make music for your Lord to hear, Alleluia, alleluia!
Fire, so intense and fiercely bright,
you give to us both warmth and light, [Refrain]

4 Dear mother earth, you day by day
unfold your blessings on our way, O praise him, Alleluia!
All flowers and fruits that in you grow,
let them his glory also show: [Refrain]

5 All you with mercy in your heart,
forgiving others, take your part, O sing now: Alleluia!
All you that pain and sorrow bear,
praise God, and cast on him your care: [Refrain]

6 And even you, most gentle death,
waiting to hush our final breath, O praise him, Alleluia!
You lead back home the child of God,
for Christ our Lord that way has trod: [Refrain]

7 Let all things their creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness, O praise him, Alleluia!
Praise God the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One: [Refrain]

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Collect for St. Francis

O God, you ever delight to reveal yourself
to the childlike and lowly of heart:
grant that, following the example of the blessed Francis,
we may count the wisdom of this world as foolishness
and know only Jesus Christ and him crucified,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

Let me sing for my beloved
my love-song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.
He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.
What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?
And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.
I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briers and thorns;

I will also command the clouds
  that they rain no rain upon it.

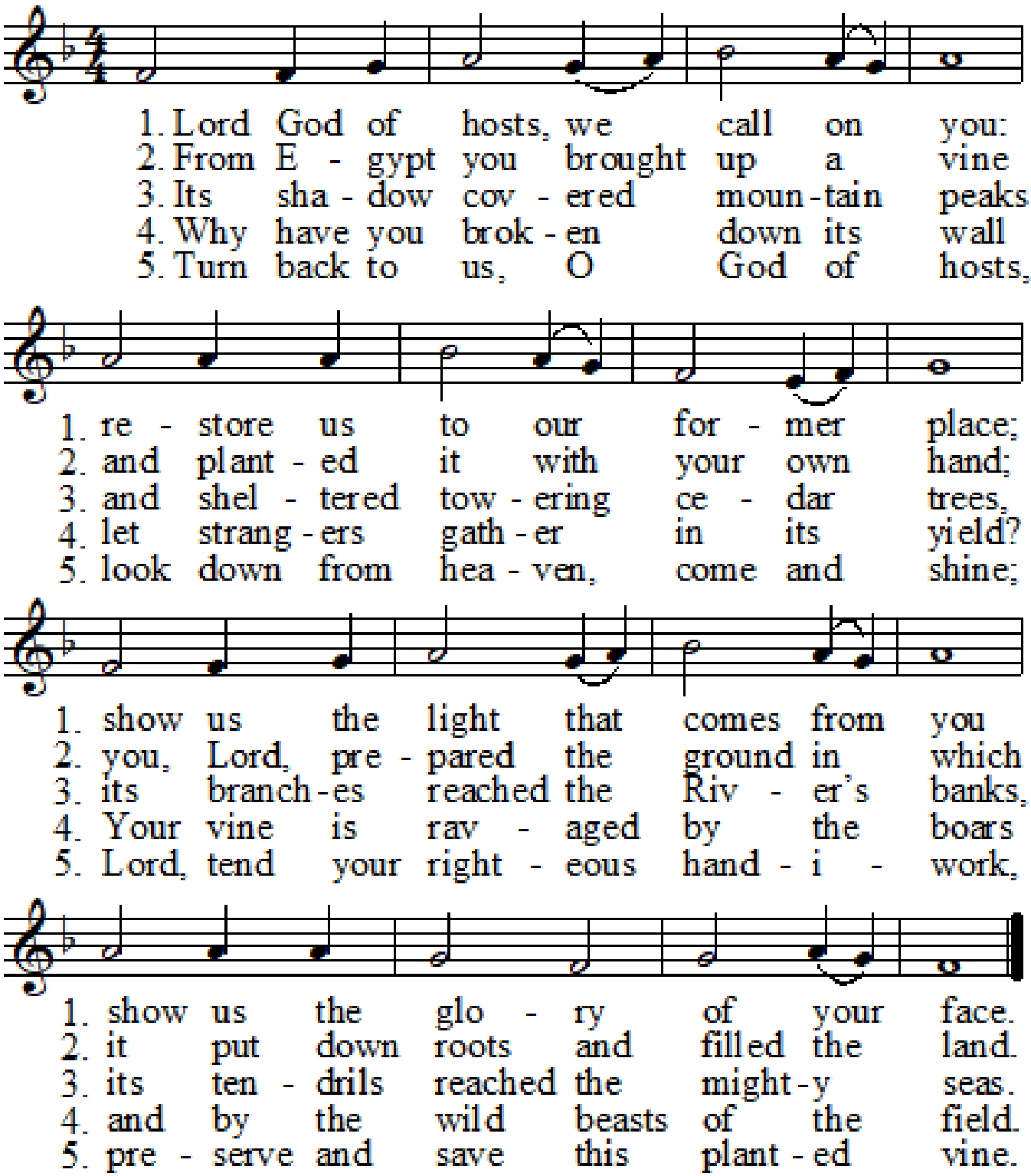
For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
  is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
  are his pleasant planting;
he expected justice,
  but saw bloodshed;
righteousness,
  but heard a cry!

The word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Alternate OT Lesson and Psalm: ***Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20***
Psalm 19



Gradual Psalm 80:7-14 (Not available)

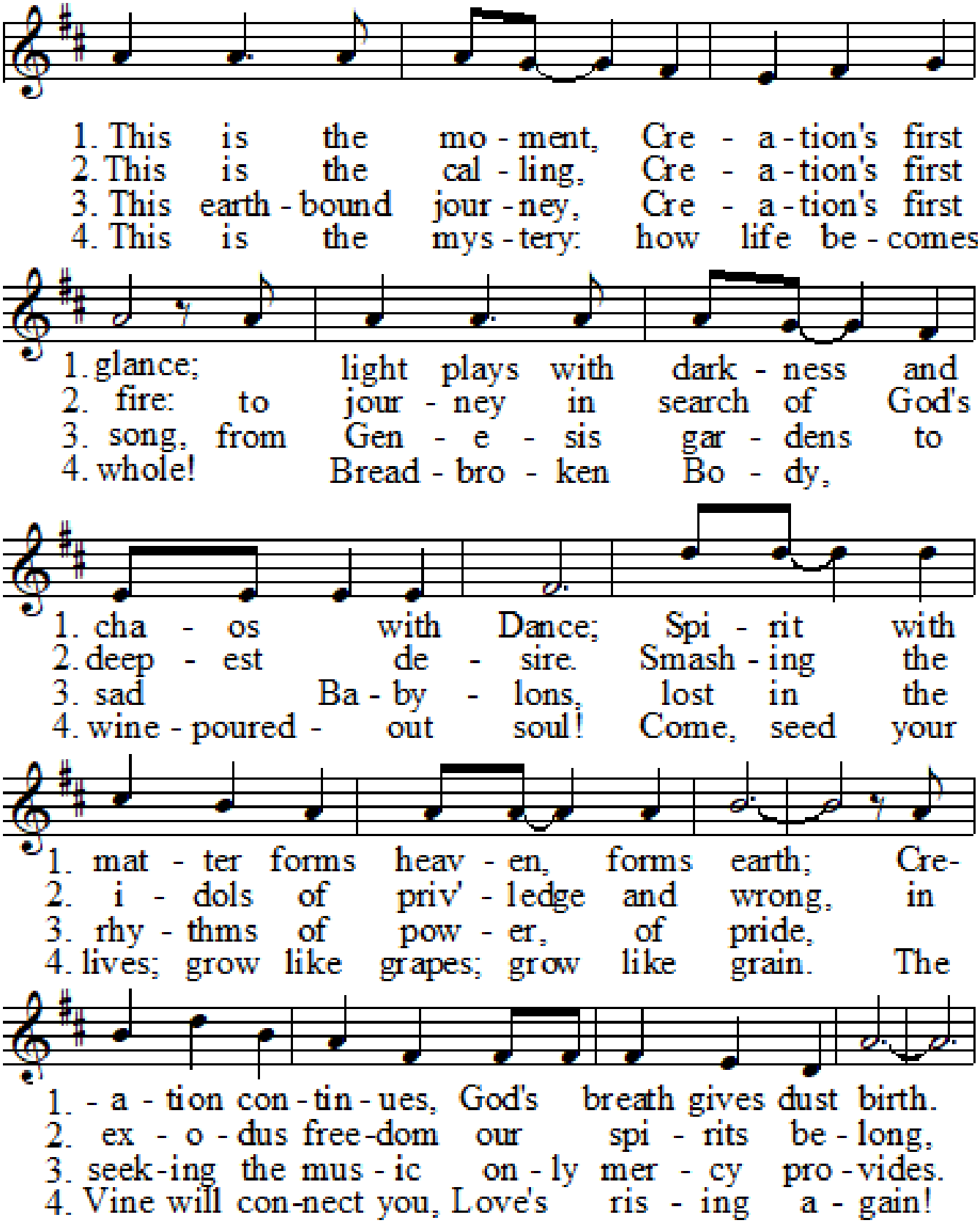


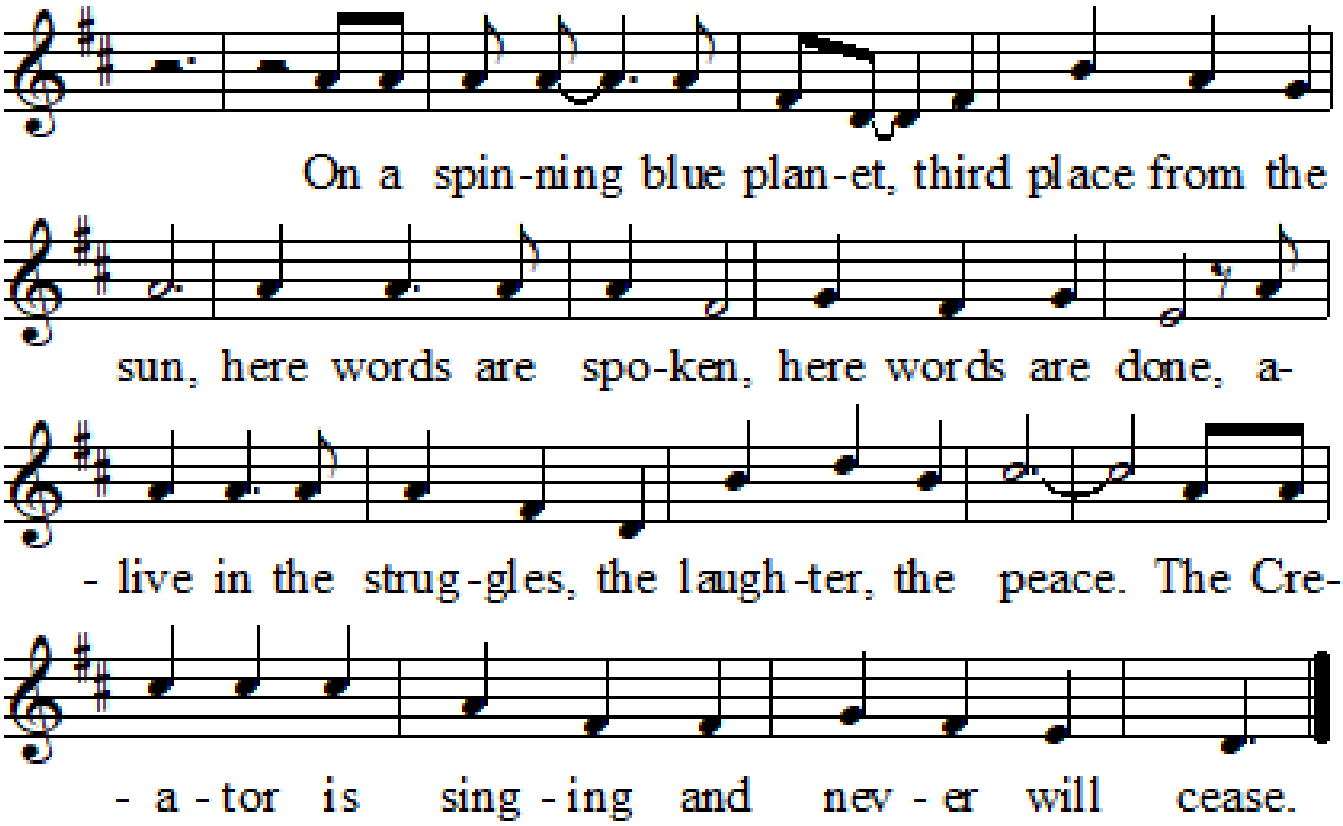
A reading from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians:

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

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

Sequence Hymn: Not available


1. This is the mo - ment, Cre - a - tion's first
2. This is the cal - ling, Cre - a - tion's first
3. This earth - bound jour - ney, Cre - a - tion's first
4. This is the mys - tery: how life be - comes
1. glance; light plays with dark - ness and
2. fire: to jour - ney in search of God's
3. song, from Gen - e - sis gar - dens to
4. whole! Bread - bro - ken Bo - dy,
1. cha - os with Dance; Spi - rit with
2. deep - est de - sire. Smash - ing the
3. sad Ba - by - lons, lost in the
4. wine - poured - out soul! Come, seed your
1. mat - ter forms heav - en, forms earth; Cre-
2. i - dols of priv' - ledge and wrong, in
3. rhy - thms of pow - er, of pride,
4. lives; grow like grapes; grow like grain. The
1. - a - tion con - tin - ues, God's breath gives dust birth.
2. ex - o - dus free-dom our spi - rits be - long,
3. seek-ing the mus - ic on - ly mer - cy pro - vides.
4. Vine will con-nect you, Love's ris - ing a - gain!



The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ
according to St. Matthew: ***Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

"Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.

Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.

>>>>>>>>

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

(Over)

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes'?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom." The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The Gospel of the Lord. ***Praise to you, Lord Christ.***

The Sermon

God of Wisdom, pour out your Spirit upon us. Tend us and nourish us, that we may bear the fruit of discipleship. +

“You have brought a vine out of Egypt,” declares the Psalmist. “You cast out the nations and planted it.”

“My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.” Echoes Isaiah. “He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines.”

Vineyards were essential to the agrarian economy of the ancient Near East—so much so that from earliest times the relationship between God and the people of Israel was likened to a cultivated vineyard. God was the owner who cared for the vineyard, and the people were the vines, expected to produce fruits of love and justice, of righteousness and equity.

Both Psalm 80 and Isaiah 5 come from times when Israel was threatened with foreign domination, understood by the Prophets as God’s judgement upon the people for their failure to produce the fruits God looked for. He expected it to yield grapes, but it produced wild grapes—some translations say sour grapes and the original Hebrew word could actually be rendered as rotten grapes. He expected justice but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard an outcry. Those two last word pairs in Isaiah are actually a play on words in the original Hebrew. So the vineyard is a total loss. By Isaiah’s time the northern kingdom of Israel is no more; all its citizens have been deported and replaced with deportees from other parts of the Assyrian Empire.

Judah would remain for another hundred years, though from Isaiah’s perspective that might not have seemed likely. The protective hedge will be torn down; the cultivation of the vineyard will be abandoned, leaving it at the mercy of wild animals, weeds, and thorns.

Isaiah *will* have words of restoration and comfort, but not here. The passage before us is a bleak oracle of judgement and doom. The Psalmist is not quite so harsh. Addressing God as the "Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock" he acknowledges the judgement that he can plainly observe in current events, using vineyard imagery of broken-down walls, similar to Isaiah's. But Psalm 80 also sounds a note of hope, or at least dares to pray—"Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven; behold and tend this vine." The Psalm's refrain: "Restore us, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved."

Matthew's audience would have been very familiar with both Isaiah's Song of the Vineyard and Psalm 80. The difference is that in the Parable of the Wicked Tenants, the guilty party is not the vineyard itself but the sharecroppers who operate it on behalf of an absentee landlord. As with the Laborers in the Vineyard that we considered a couple of weeks ago, it is very possible that these tenants were former owners, who had worked the vineyards as family operations for generations, but had lost them as excessive imperial taxation, unjust administrative practices, and civil unrest were driving families from their ancestral lands. Gone were the Mosaic Sabbath laws of Jubilee that reversed all land transactions every half-century, restoring title to original owners and thus protecting the common people the greed of the wealthy and powerful, and from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

And I suspect that everyone in both Jesus' audience and Matthew's would have been able to read on in Isaiah to verse 8, which the Lectionary Elves have conveniently omitted:

> "Doom to those who acquire house after house, who annex field to field until there is no space left and only you live alone in the land.[EQ]"

God's ways are not our ways, and under God's reign, might seldom makes right. Amos and Micah are even more harsh in their condemnation of those who amass and wield power at the expense of the vulnerable.

The Parable of the Tenants is an allegory, with God as the owner, God's people—especially the least, the last and the lost—who throughout the Hebrew Scriptures are claimed as God's special possession, as the vineyard, the prophets as the messengers sent to collect the landlord's share of the produce, and of course, Jesus as the son. Matthew has the landlord send two groups of collectors, possibly accounting for the Law and the Prophets, or perhaps the former prophets and the latter prophets as that concept had developed in Judaism.

Matthew has Jesus direct his thinly veiled criticism at the chief priests ***and*** the Pharisees. These were two distinct groups in Israel's leadership in the first century, and one was in the process of supplanting the other. The role and authority of the chief priests was rooted in the Temple, but by Matthew's time the Temple was no more. The Romans had leveled it in the year 70, in response to a rebellion. The symbol and focus of the identity of God's people was shifting from the Temple to the Law, and that was the province of the Pharisees.

But for the followers of Jesus, neither the Temple nor the Law would be at the heart of discipleship. While the Church, the Body of Christ, would remain rooted in its Old Testament heritage, and attempts to remove the Hebrew Scriptures from the Christian canon would be stoutly resisted, the Law and the Prophets would be understood not in their own light, but by the person and teachings of Jesus, under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus emphasizes this with a quote from the 118th Psalm:

> The same stone which the builders rejected
> has become the chief cornerstone.
> This is the Lord's doing,
> and it is marvelous in our eyes.
> On this day the Lord has acted;
> we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:22-24)

It is a serious mistake to concentrate our attention too heavily on the chief priests and the Pharisees as we consider the Parable of the Wicked Tenants. They may have been Jesus' immediate target as collaborators with empire and abusers of power, more concerned with maintaining their privileged status than with advancing God's agenda in their world.

But we are their heirs. The responsibility they bore for justice that values the rights and dignity of all, with particular attention to the poor, the oppressed, and the dispossessed, falls on the shoulders of those in our time who govern us, and on ours who are even now choosing them, and must bear responsibility for holding them accountable. To overlook, or worse, contribute to inequity and oppression, is to court the same Godly condemnation upon ourselves and our society.

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 he 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

Eternal God:
We thank you for the beauty of the World:
for the teeming life of the seas,
the flight of birds,
and the diversity of animal life.
Grant us grace to treat Creation with respect and care;
to protect endangered species,
to preserve the variety of habitats,
and to honor the delicate balance of nature.
God of life: ***hear our prayer.***

We thank you for the wealth
of blessings from land and sea;
for the power of wind, and the warmth of sun.

We pray for the nations of the earth,
give us the will to cherish this planet
and to use its resources sustainably
for the welfare of all.
God of justice: ***hear our prayer.***

We pray for the faithful witness of the Church,
called to reconcile and heal:
For this Diocese and our Bishop, Jeremiah;
for the standing Committee ;
for this parish dedicated to your glory.
God of grace: ***hear our prayer.***

We pray for the human family.
We exult in our diversity and giftedness.
We repent of our sins, divisions and violence.
By the power of your Spirit,
restore your image within us.
As every human being is known and loved by you,
may we care for one another with love and respect.
We pray for those you have commended to our care:
those on our prayer list _____]:
God of compassion: ***hear our prayer.***

We pray for those who have died,
whom we entrust to your eternal love;
may we support and comfort those who mourn.
God of peace: *hear our prayer.*

The Celebrant concludes with a Collect.

The Peace

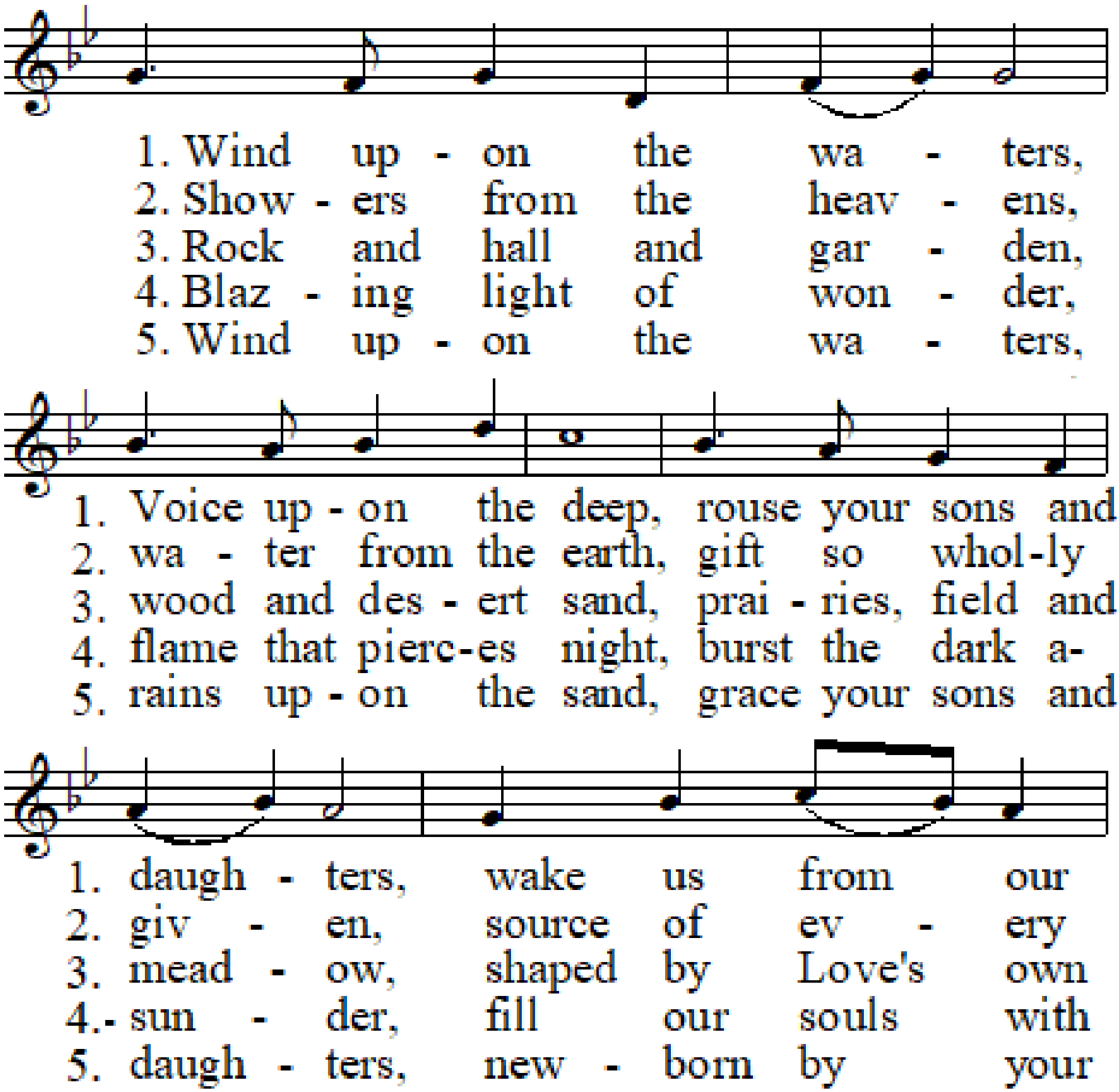


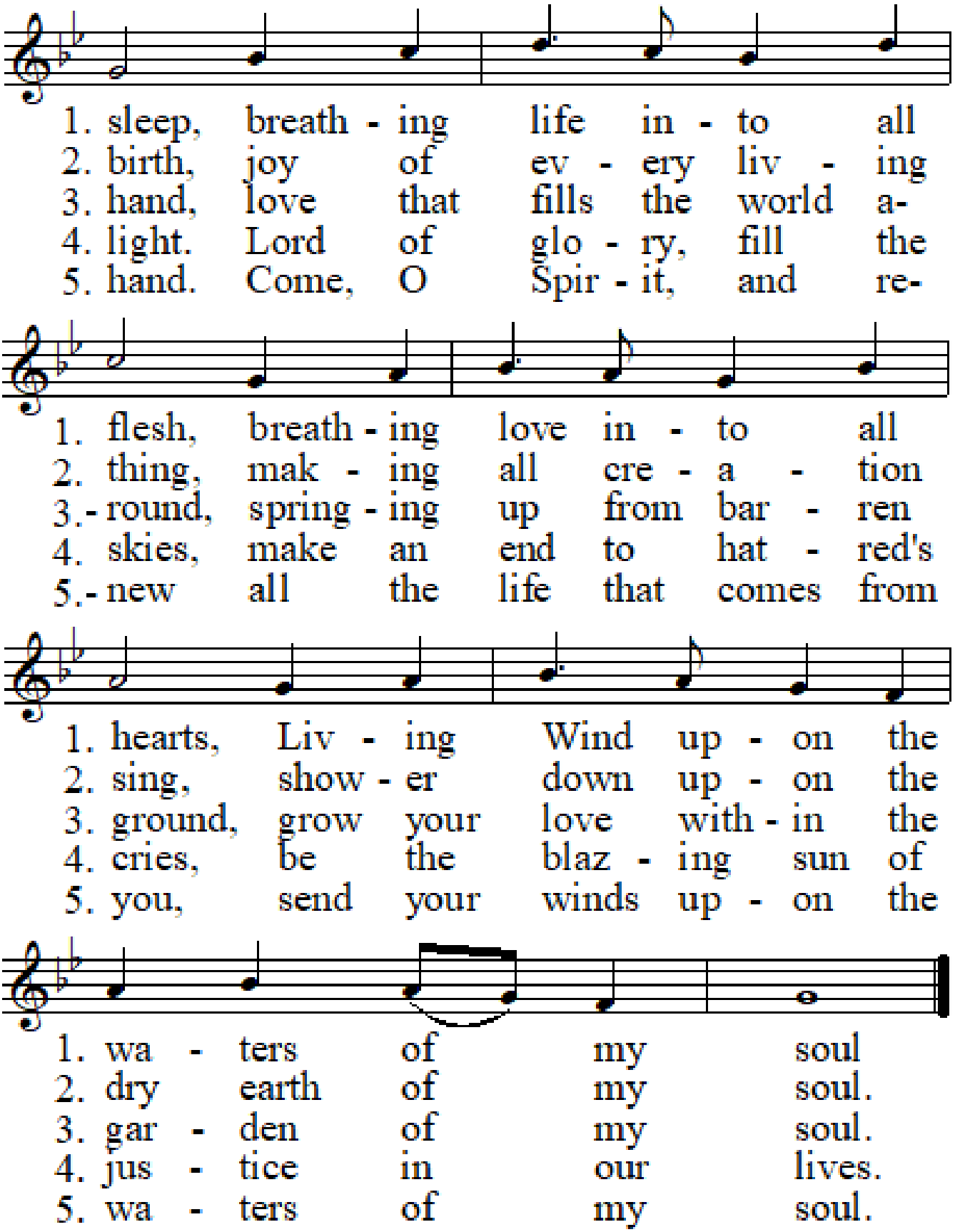
The Liturgy for the
Celebration of Holy Communion

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:




1. sleep, breath - ing life in - to all
2. birth, joy of ev - ery liv - ing
3. hand, love that fills the world a-
4. light. Lord of glo - ry, fill the
5. hand. Come, O Spir - it, and re-
1. flesh, breath - ing love in - to all
2. thing, mak - ing all cre - a - tion
3. round, spring - ing up from bar - ren
4. skies, make an end to hat - red's
5. new all the life that comes from
1. hearts, Liv - ing Wind up - on the
2. sing, show - er down up - on the
3. ground, grow your love with - in the
4. cries, be the blaz - ing sun of
5. you, send your winds up - on the
1. wa - ters of my soul
2. dry earth of my soul.
3. gar - den of my soul.
4. jus - tice in our lives.
5. wa - ters of my soul.

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.

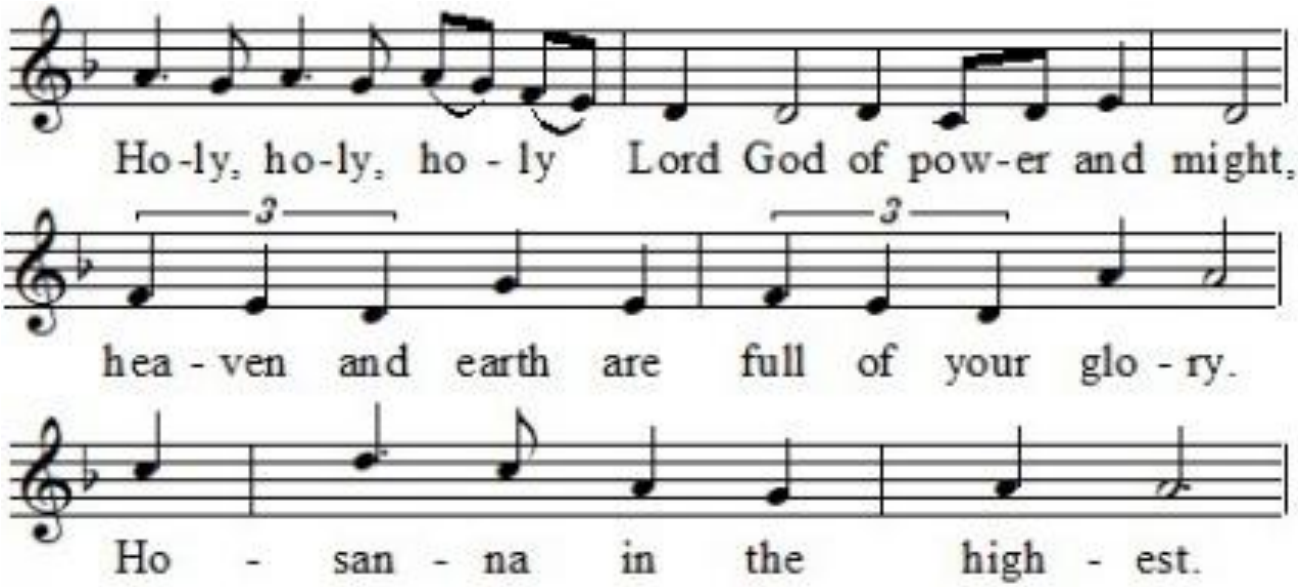
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

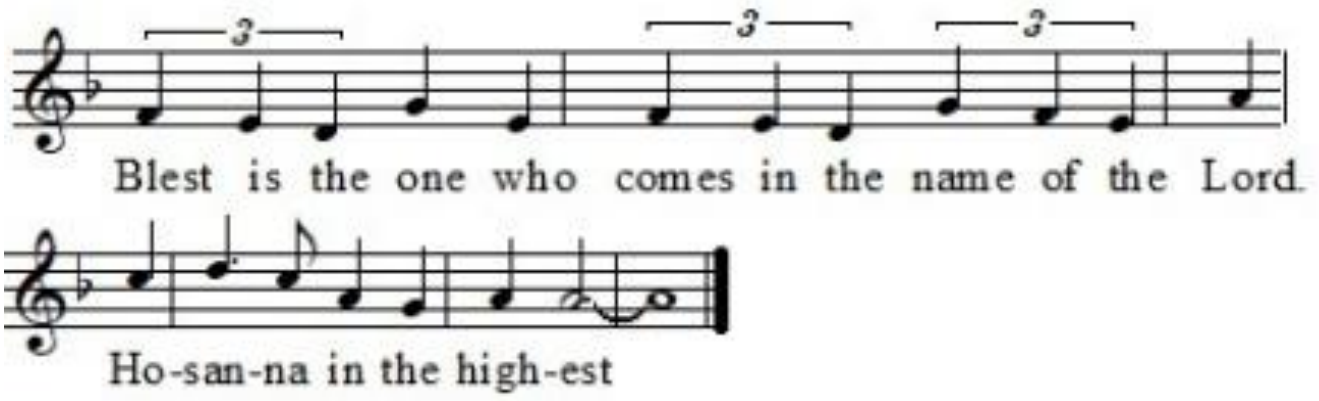
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

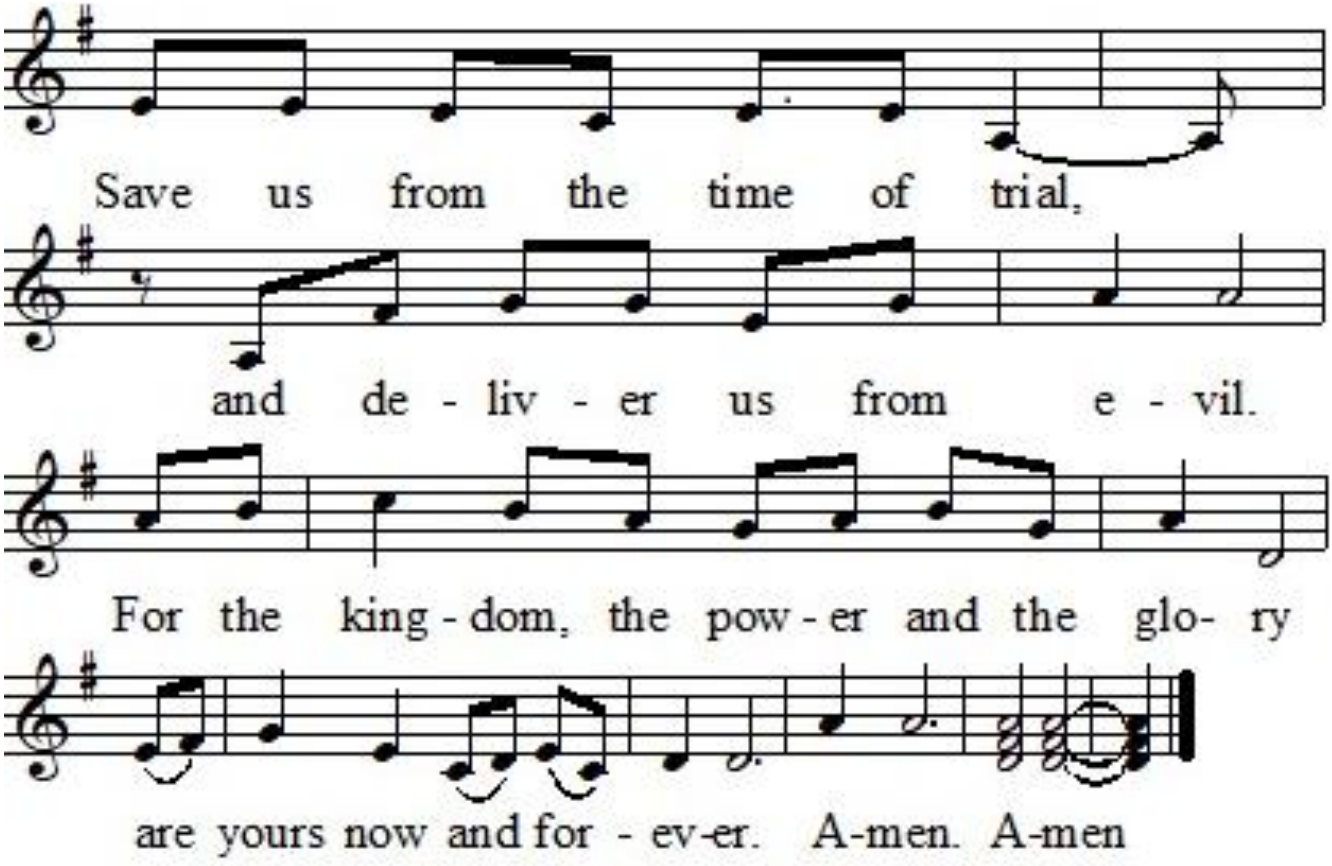
Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world.

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***!

I chose you and appointed you, says the Lord,
that you should go and bear fruit,
fruit that will last.

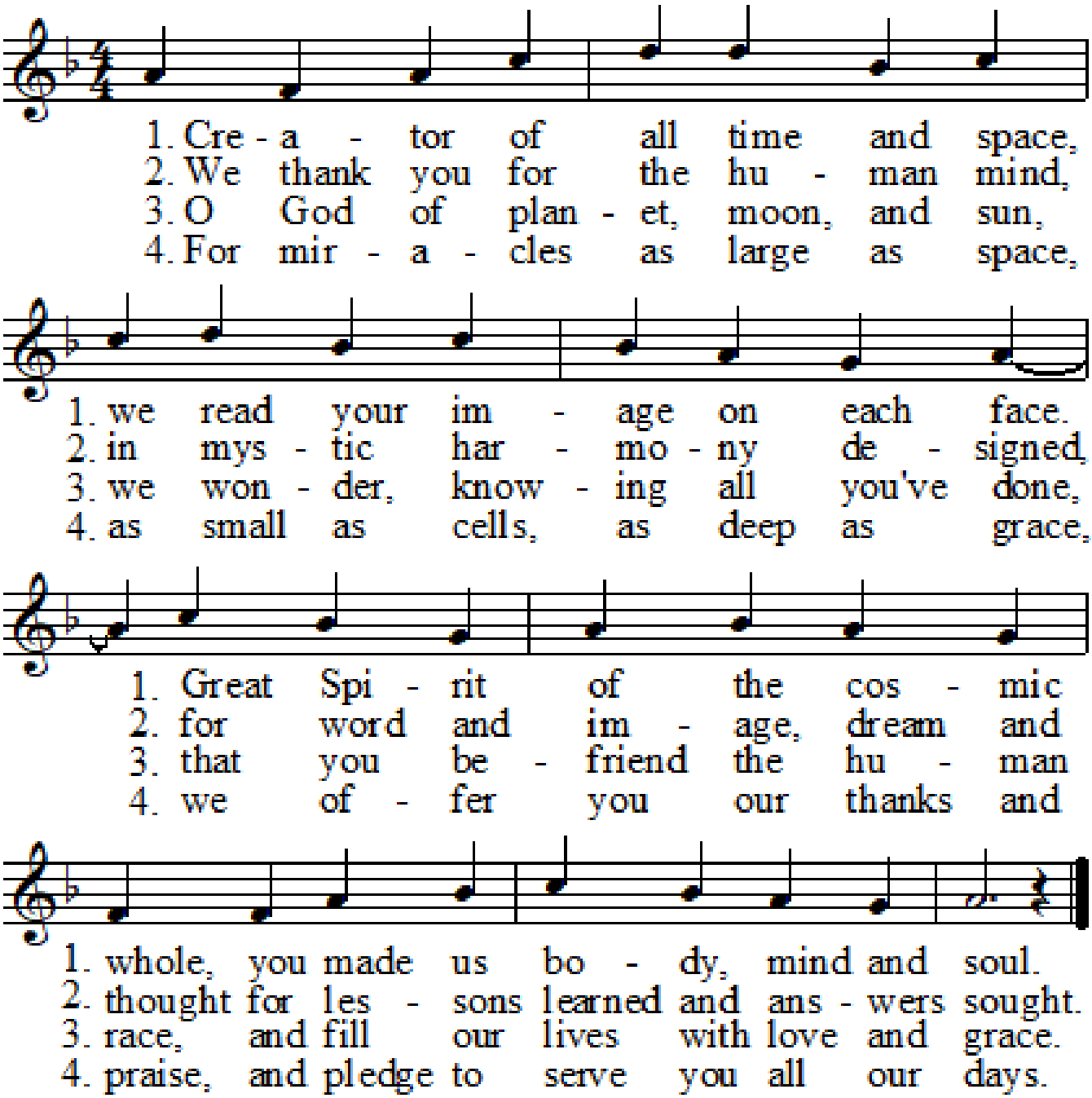
Alleluia! ***Alleluia***!

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.



Communion Hymn: Not available





Post-communion Prayer

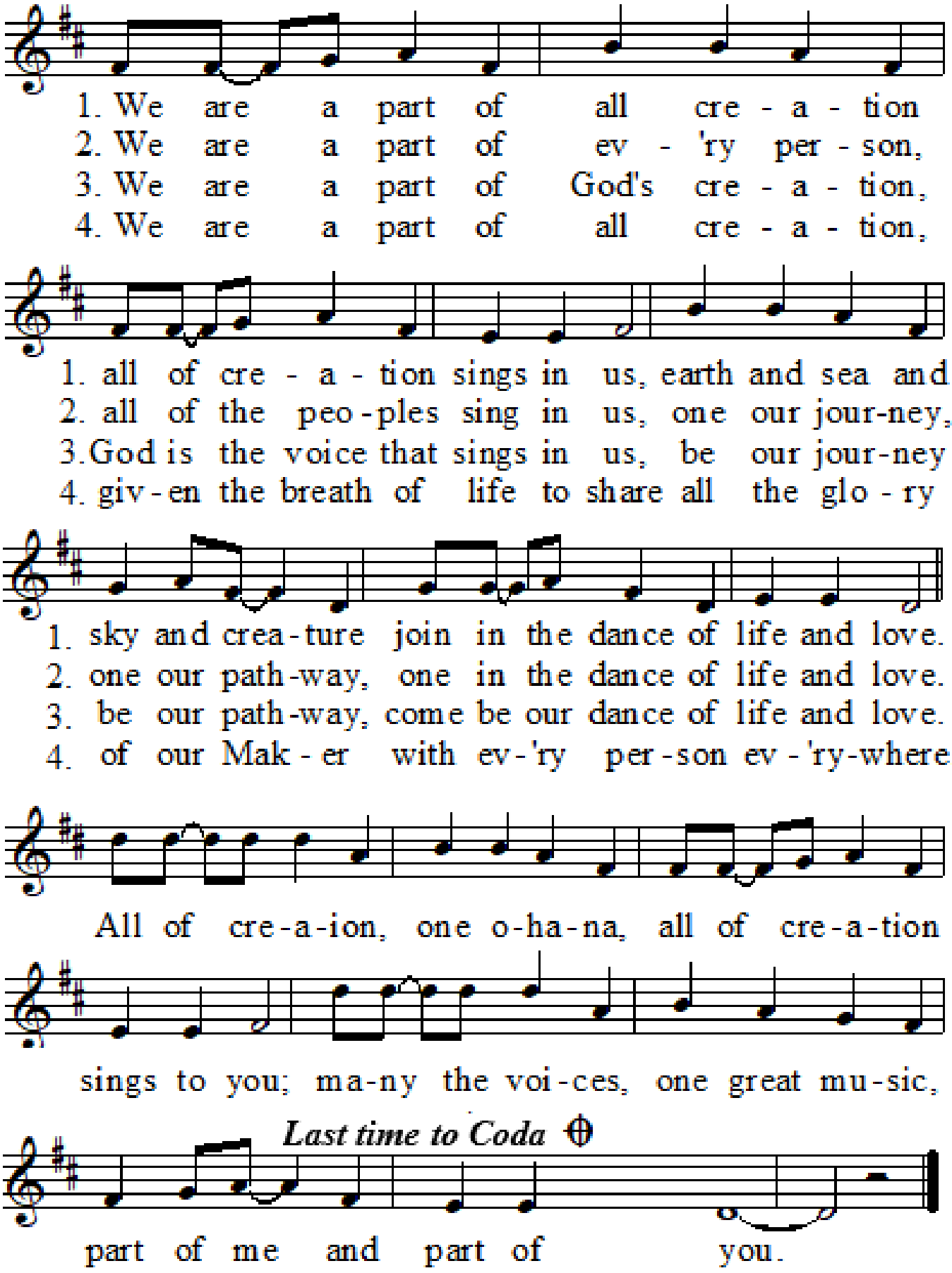
Holy One,
you feed us with bread from heaven
and the gifts of mother earth.
In this communion, you have drawn us
into your embrace and you call us to friendship
with one another.
You have given us the gift of reconciliation.
May we who have tasted that gift from you,
offer ourselves in peace and humility to one another.
And may you always walk among us as friend. Amen.

Blessing & Dismissal

Go forth now to care for God's world.
Use resources wisely. Share your knowledge.
Sacrifice where necessary.
Live in harmony with all creation.
Go out into all the world as prophets
of a new way of living and preach the good news to all.

And the blessing of the Creator God, the Risen Son,
and the Promised Holy Spirit
bless you that you might be a blessing to others
today and always. ***Amen.***

Parting Hymn: ***(Words different)***



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The Penitential Order is based on a prayer from *U.N. Environmental Sabbath Program Earth Prayers*, ed. Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 70-71.
Taken from *Season of Creation*

Psalm 80:7-14:
Words: A New Metrical Psalter: New Revised Lectionary Edition
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Music: *Conditor alme siderum*; .Sarum Plainsong, mode IV (Public domain)

Parting Hymn: "We are a part of all creation"
Words & Music *One Ohana)*: Marty Haugen (1950-)
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