

**Bethel Lutheran Church**  
**Palm Sunday, Year A**  
**March 29, 2026**



Rev. Diane Martinson  
Music & Choir Director: Rowen Erickson

**Worship Volunteers**

**Assisting Minister:** Doug Hanson

**Reader:** Peggy Hansen

**Altar Guild:** Pat Petzel

**Communion Assistant:** Peggy Hansen

**Ushers:** Karl & Bonnie Peterson

**Video Tech:** Yvonne Pamperin

---

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**GATHERING**

**WELCOME**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**CHOIR INVOCATION** - *Ride on, Ride on in Majesty!*

## **PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Matthew 21:1-11**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

1 When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." 4 This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

5 "Tell the daughter of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming to you,  
humble and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7 they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. 8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

10 When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?"

11 The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

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

## **BLESSING THE PALMS**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Let us go forth in peace, **in the name of Christ. Amen.**

*Refrain*



All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



- 1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
- 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
- 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
- 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
- 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

*Refrain*



now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.  
 cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.  
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.  
 To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.  
 great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.  
 Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray, **Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**WORD**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

4 The Lord GOD has given me

a trained tongue,

that I may know how to sustain

the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens,

wakens my ear

to listen as those who are taught.

5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear,

and I was not rebellious;

I did not turn backward.

6 I gave my back to those who struck me

and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face

from insult and spitting.

7 The Lord GOD helps me;

therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,

and I know that I shall not be put to shame;

8 he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand in court together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

9a It is the Lord GOD who helps me;

who will declare me guilty?

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 31:9-16**

9 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;

my eye wastes away from grief,

my soul and body also.

**10 For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing;**

**my strength fails because of my misery,**

**and my bones waste away.**

11 I am the scorn of all my adversaries,  
a horror to my neighbors,  
an object of dread to my acquaintances;  
those who see me in the street flee from me.

**12 I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;  
I have become like a broken vessel.**

13 For I hear the whispering of many—  
terror all around!—  
as they scheme together against me,  
as they plot to take my life.

**14 But I trust in you, O LORD;  
I say, "You are my God."**

15 My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

**16 Let your face shine upon your servant;  
save me in your steadfast love.**

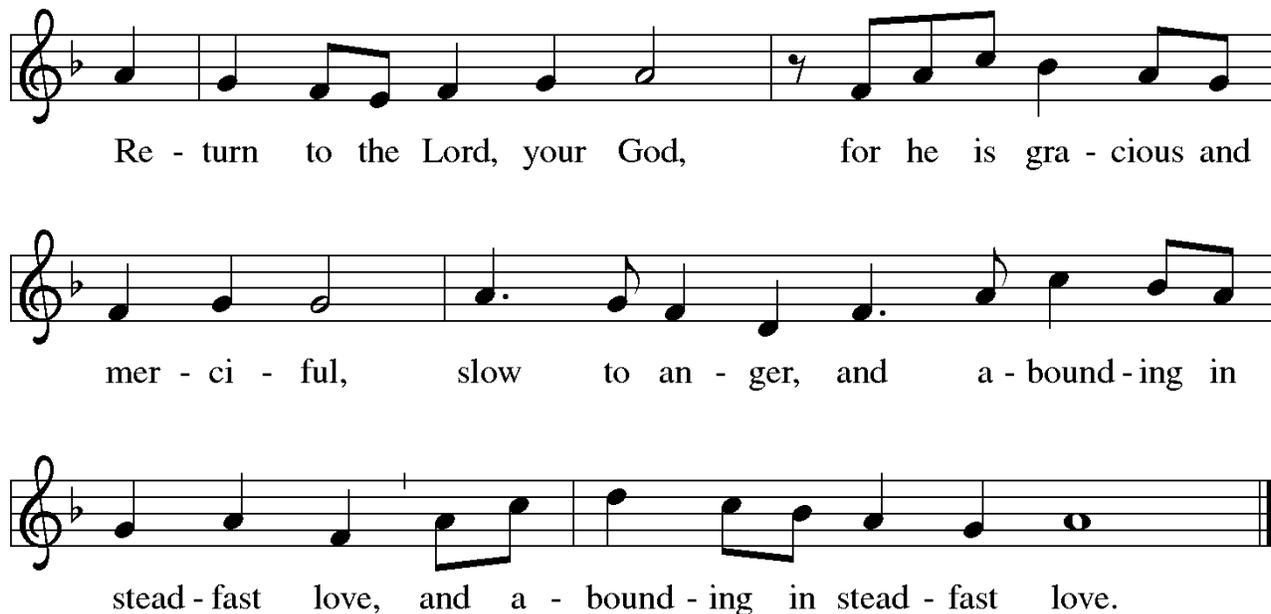
#### **SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11**

5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
6 who, though he existed in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be grasped,  
7 but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
assuming human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a human,  
8 he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.  
9 Therefore God exalted him even more highly  
and gave him the name  
that is above every other name,  
10 so that at the name given to Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
11 and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and  
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in  
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

### GOSPEL: Matthew 27:11-54

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." 12 But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. 13 Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" 14 But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. 15 Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. 16 At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus Barabbas. 17 So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" 18 For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. 19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." 20 Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. 21 The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22 Pilate said to them, "Then what should

I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" 23 Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" 24 So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." 25 Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" 26 So he released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. 28 They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. 31 After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. 32 As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. 33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), 34 they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. 35 And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; 36 then they sat down there and kept watch over him. 37 Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." 38 Then two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. 39 Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads 40 and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." 41 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, 42 "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. 43 He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to, for he said, 'I am God's Son.' " 44 The rebels who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. 45 From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. 46 And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" 47 When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." 48 At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. 49 But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." 50 Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. 51 At that moment

the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. 53 After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. 54 Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

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

**SERMON**

**Rev Diane Martinson**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*O Day Of Rest And Gladness*

**Cranberry 521**



1 O day of rest and glad - ness, O day of joy and light,  
2 On you, at earth's cre - a - tion, the light first had its birth;  
3 To - day on wea - ry na - tions the heav'n-ly man - na falls;  
4 New grac - es ev - er gain - ing from this our day of rest,



O balm for care and sad - ness, most beau - ti - ful, most bright:  
on you, for our sal - va - tion, Christ rose from depths of earth;  
to ho - ly con - vo - ca - tions the sil - ver trum - pet calls,  
we reach the rest re - main - ing to spir - its of the blest.



on you the high and low - ly, through a - ges joined in tune,  
on you, our Lord vic - to - rious the Spir - it sent from heav'n;  
where gos - pel light is glow - ing with pure and ra - diant beams  
We sing to you our prais - es, O Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son;



sing, "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly," to the great God tri - une.  
and thus on you, most glo - rious, a three-fold light was giv'n.  
and liv - ing wa - ter flow - ing with soul - re - fresh - ing streams.  
the church its voice up - rais - es to you, blest Three in One.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807–1885, alt.

Music: ELLACOMBE, German melody, 18th cent.; adapt. X. L. Hartig, *Melodien zum Mainzer Gesangbuche*, 1833

## APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,

**was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

*A brief silence.*

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For what else do the people of God pray?

O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

---

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**MEAL**

## **OFFERING**

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

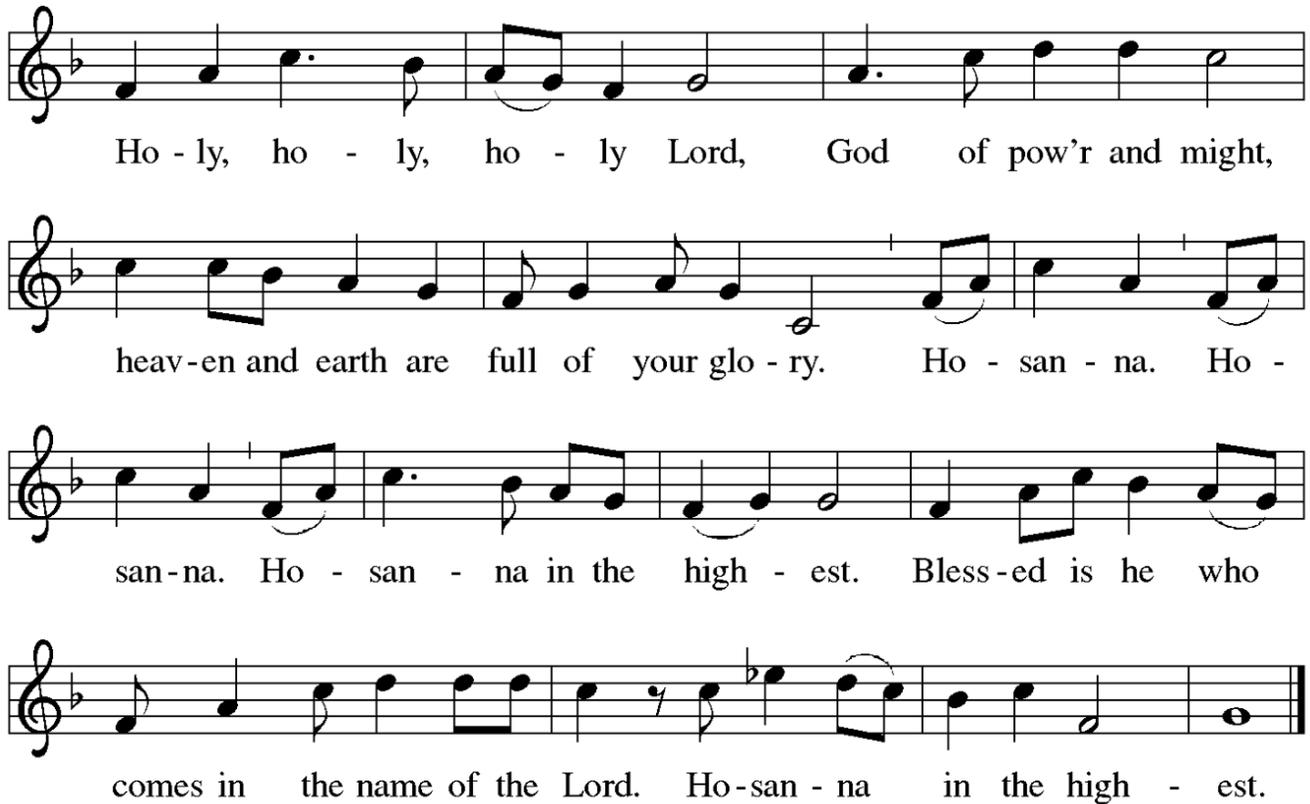
O God, **maker of heaven and earth,**  
**your steadfast love embraces all creation.**  
**You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth**  
**and bring forth its bounty.**  
**Through these gifts of bread and wine,**  
**draw us into the death and life of your Son,**  
**who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.**  
**We ask this in Jesus' name. 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 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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace.

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 image shows a musical score for a hymn, consisting of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,". The second staff continues: "heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -". The third staff continues: "san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who". The fourth staff concludes: "comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est." The music features various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, along with rests and dynamic markings.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. 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.

On that night when he gave himself up for us, as he sat at the table and broke bread with his friends, he said: "Take and eat; this is my body which is broken for you.

Remember me each time you do this."

After they had eaten, he took the cup, and said: "Remember me as you drink from this, for it is my life, poured out for you—the beginning of a new relationship with God."

Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, O God, that we may experience the presence of the Word-made-flesh—Jesus Christ. Breathe your Spirit in us that we may be one body with him—living out his ministry in the world today and every day. This we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## 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.

## COMMUNION HYMN *Improvisation by Rowen Erickson*

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray, **God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**MUSICAL OFFERING:** Piano Sonata in B Flat Major, W.A. Mozart

By Rowen Erickson & Dave Raynier.

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**SENDING**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLESSING**

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:  
God, who calls all things into existence,  
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,  
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,  
✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**

*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

**Cranberry 632**



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,  
2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;  
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,  
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.  
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
bears all our years away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
still be our guard while troubles last  
and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Music: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1678–1727

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

---

### Funding for Mission & Budget

Monthly Receipts through 3/16/26	\$ 9,714.00
Monthly Budget Expenses:	\$18,843.00
YTD Receipts through 2/28/26:	\$ 34,928.00

---

### The Bethel Weekly

**Culver's Share Night:** is coming up March 31st from 5-8pm at the Suamico location (11820 Velp Ave). Bring yourself, your family, or your neighbors to a meal or buy some gift cards. Bethel receives 15% of all sales (including gift cards). There are already plans for another share night in May so keep watching for that information and volunteer sign up sheet.

**Holy Week Schedule:** Worship will be as follows:

April 2nd Maundy Thursday 6:30pm

April 3rd Good Friday 6:30pm

April 5th Easter 9:00am

There are sign up sheets in the hallway for all the opportunities to help make these special services successful.

**Easter Choir Practice:** Mark your calendars, Easter Choir practice will be Saturday April 4th at 11:00am.

**Communication Training:** Cathy Cowling, an experienced church consultant, will be with us for four consecutive Wednesday evenings at 6pm beginning on April 22nd through May 13th. During her time with us, Cathy will help us talk about the conflict and loss of trust with leadership and then focus on learning more healthy and effective skills and tools for communication and dealing with conflict. She will also attend worship with us on April 12th so members have the opportunity to meet her. Please plan to attend as many of these meetings as possible.

**Woodside Donations:** We have started collecting donations for woodside. The red wagon is for Resurrection Food Pantry and the metal basket is for Woodside. They are needing the following items:

\*Markers & Colored Pencils \*Figurines to paint \*New Nail Polish  
\*Hygiene products (deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste)  
\*Socks with grips \*Full size candy bars \*Seasonal Décor/ Trinkets

**Resurrection Food Pantry:** Don't forget we are collecting for Resurrection food pantry. If you can bring some of the normal staples its' appreciated. (beans, canned meat, and soups,) They also need toilet paper.

---

**Copyright and Streaming Licenses:**

Augsburg Fortress Liturgies License #22041 CCLI License #2623795

One License #734715