

# Holy Eucharist

## The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost: Proper 14B

August 8, 2021

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=eig4MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3I2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: 782611


### Prelude

### Opening Hymn

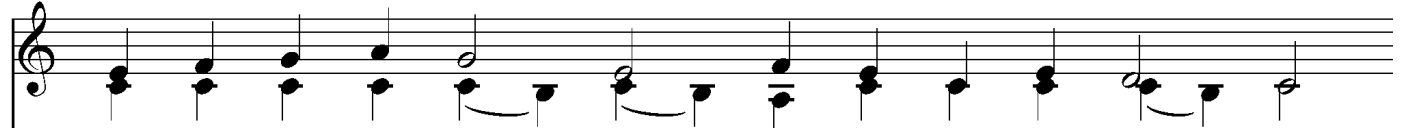
Hymnal 577

*Here in Christ we gather*

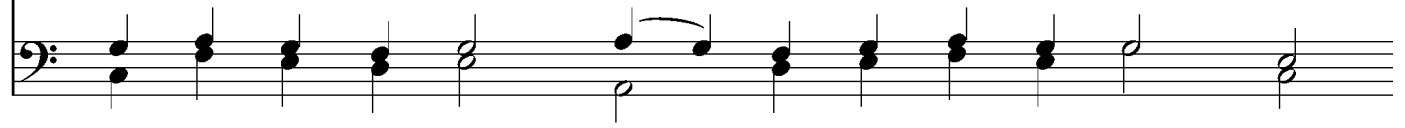
*Refrain*



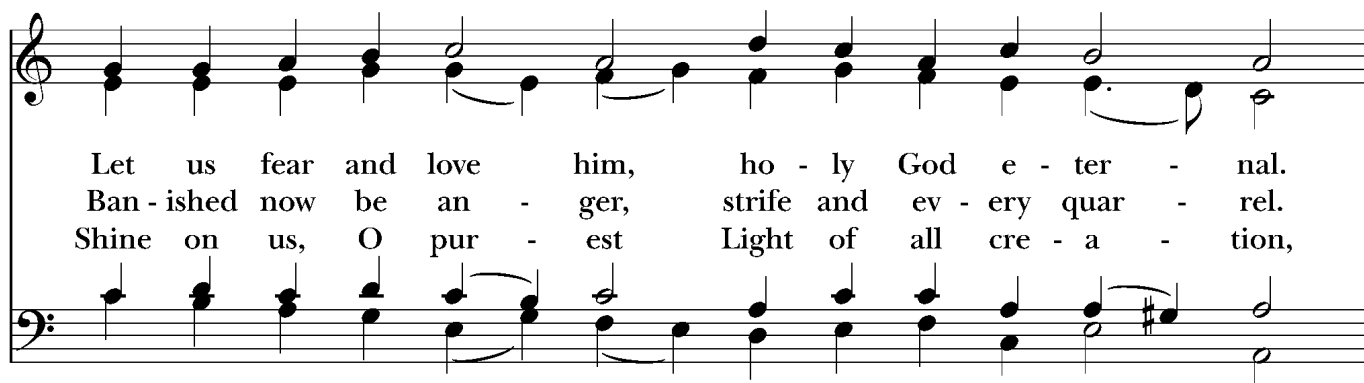
God is love, and where true love is God him - self is there.

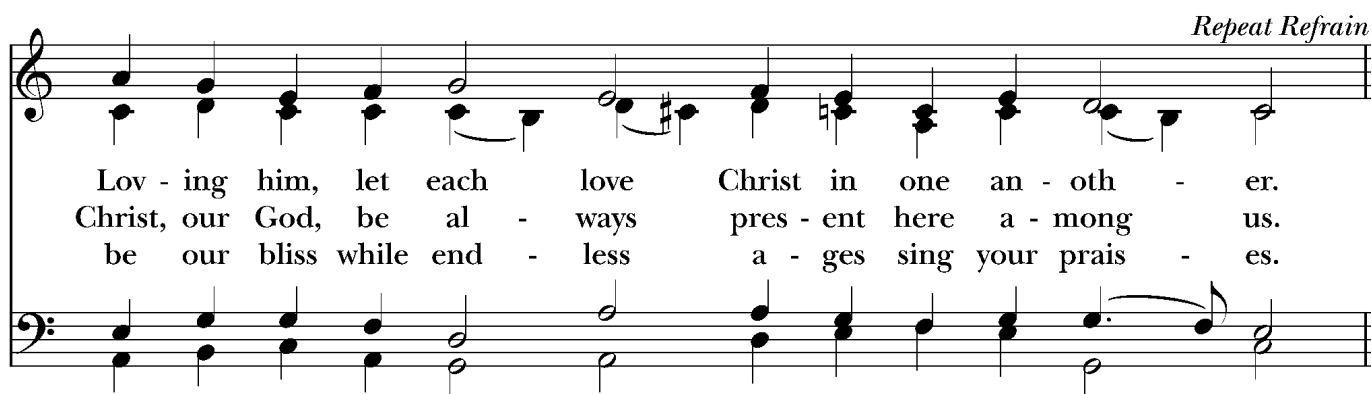
1 Here in Christ we gath - er, love of Christ our call - ing.  
2 When we Chris - tians gath - er, mem - bers of one Bo - dy,  
3 Grant us love's ful - fill - ment, joy with all the bless - ed,

Christ, our love, is with us, glad - ness be his greet - ing.  
let there be in us no dis - cord but one spi - rit.  
when we see your face, O Sa - vior, in its glo - ry.



Let us fear and love him, ho - ly God e - ter - nal.  
 Ban - ished now be an - ger, strife and ev - ery quar - rel.  
 Shine on us, O pur - est Light of all cre - a - tion,



*Repeat Refrain*  
 Lov - ing him, let each love Christ in one an - oth - er.  
 Christ, our God, be al - ways pres - ent here a - mong us.  
 be our bliss while end - less a - ges sing your prais - es.

*All standing as they are able, the Officiant says*

Blessed be God + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People*

**And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.  
 Amen.**

*The Officiant begins the Collect for Purity*

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:  
**Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we  
 may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our  
 Lord. Amen.**

*The following is sung, all standing as they are able*

## Glory to God

*Gloria in excelsis*



Glo - ry to God in the high - est land

14 peace to God's peo - ple, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth. Lord God, heavenly

19 King, Al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we

25 praise you for your glo - ry. Lord, Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the

31 Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God. You take a - way all the sin of the

36 world. Have mer - cy on us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the

43 Fa - ther. Re - ceive our prayer. For you a - lone are the

48 Ho - ly One. You a - lone are the Lord. You a - lone are the Most High

51 Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the

glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men, A - men.

## Collect of the Day

Officiant  
People  
Officiant

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**  
Let us pray.

Grant to us, Lord, we pray, the spirit to think and do always those things that are right, that we, who cannot exist without you, may by you be enabled to live according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*All sit.*

## **First Reading**

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33

A Reading from the second book of the prophet Samuel.

<sup>5</sup>The king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.” And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom.

<sup>6</sup>So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. <sup>7</sup>The men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men. <sup>8</sup>The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.

<sup>9</sup>Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. <sup>15</sup>And ten young men, Joab’s armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him, and killed him.

<sup>31</sup>Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, “Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you.”

<sup>32</sup>The king said to the Cushite, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” The Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man.”

<sup>33</sup>The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!”

<i>Reader</i>	Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.
<i>People</i>	<b>Thanks be to God.</b>

## **Psalm 130**

*to be prayed in unison*

**<sup>1</sup>Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD;**

**LORD, hear my voice; \***

**let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.**

**<sup>2</sup>If you, LORD, were to note what is done amiss, \***

**O LORD who could stand?**

**<sup>3</sup>For there is forgiveness with you; \***

**therefore you shall be feared.**

**<sup>4</sup>I wait for the LORD; my soul waits for him; \*  
in his word is my hope.  
<sup>5</sup>My soul waits for the LORD,  
more than watchmen for the morning, \*  
more than watchmen for the morning.  
<sup>6</sup>O Israel, wait for the LORD, \*  
for with the LORD there is mercy;  
<sup>7</sup>With him there is plenteous redemption, \*  
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.**

## Second Reading

Ephesians 4:25--5:2

A Reading from the Letter to the Ephesians.

<sup>25</sup>So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. <sup>26</sup>Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup>and do not make room for the devil. <sup>28</sup>Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. <sup>29</sup>Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, <sup>32</sup>and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. <sup>5:1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, <sup>2</sup>and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

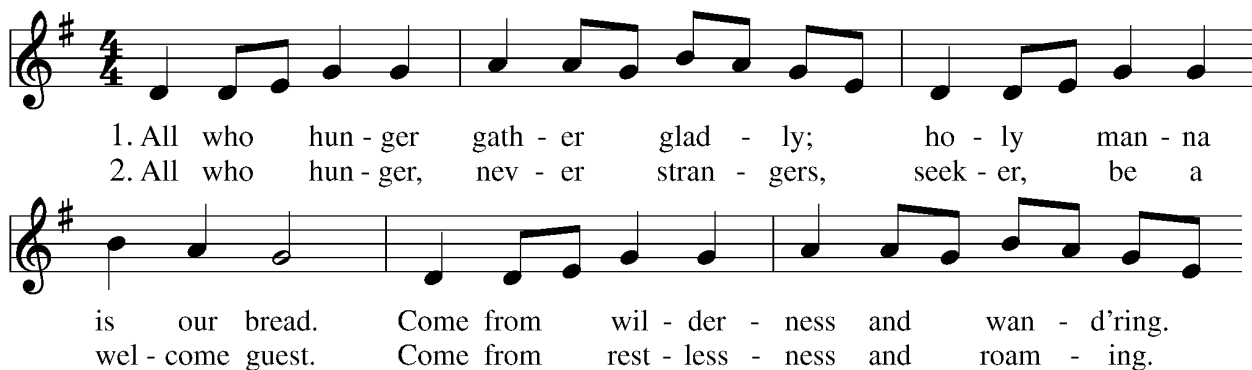
*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*All stand as they are able.*

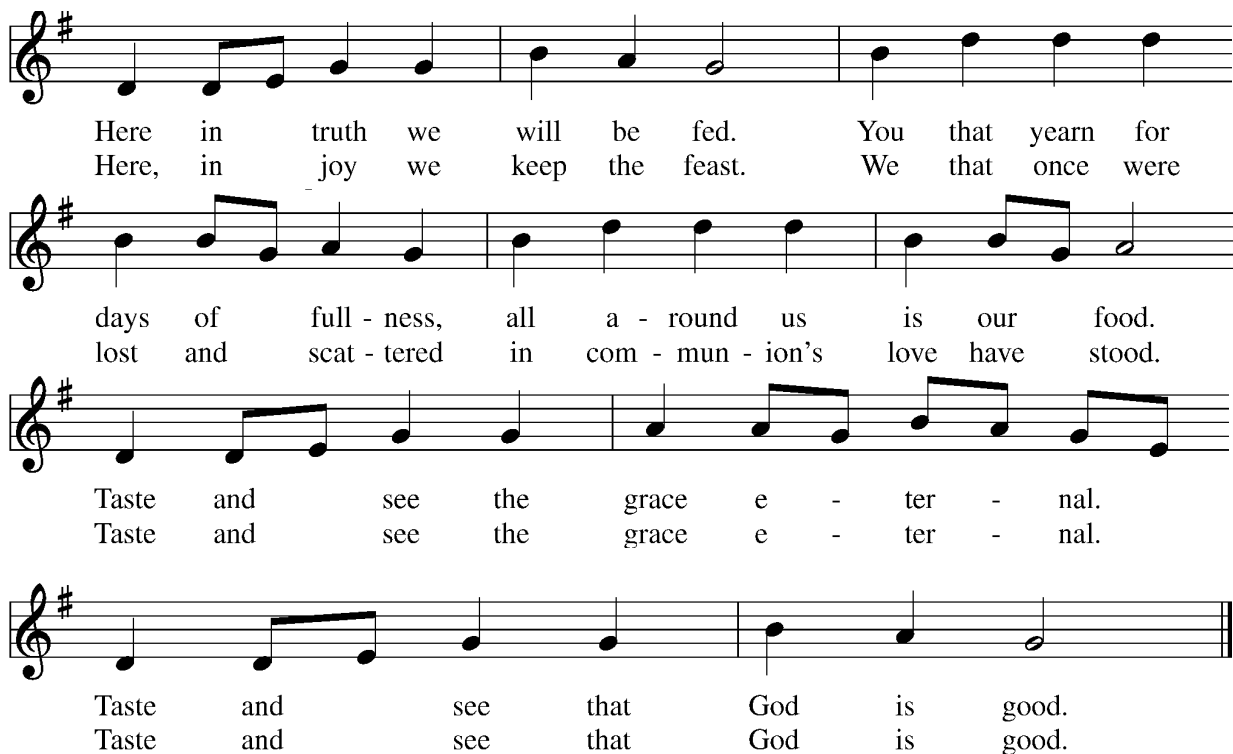
## SEQUENCE HYMN

WLP 761

*All who hunger, gather gladly*



1. All who hun - ger gath - er glad - ly; ho - ly man - na  
2. All who hun - ger, nev - er stran - gers, seek - er, be a  
is our bread. Come from wil - der - ness and wan - d'ring.  
wel - come guest. Come from rest - less - ness and roam - ing.



Here in truth we will be fed. You that yearn for  
Here, in joy we keep the feast. We that once were  
days of full-ness, all a-round us is our food.  
lost and scat-tered in com-mun-ion's love have stood.  
Taste and see the grace e-ter-nal.  
Taste and see the grace e-ter-nal.  
Taste and see that God is good.  
Taste and see that God is good.

## Holy Gospel

John 6:35, 41-51

*All stand as they are able.*

*Gospeller*  
*People*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.  
**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. <sup>41</sup>Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." <sup>42</sup>They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" <sup>43</sup>Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. <sup>44</sup>No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. <sup>45</sup>It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. <sup>46</sup>Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. <sup>47</sup>Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. <sup>48</sup>I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup>Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. <sup>50</sup>This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup>I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."



*Gospeller*  
*People*

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



## **Sermon**

### **Nicene Creed**

*All stand as they are able.*

*Officiant* Let us affirm the faith of the Church using the words of 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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father [and the Son],  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

# Prayers of the People

*All remain standing.*

*Officiant:* Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer: you brought us into being, and we cannot exist without you. Give us the strength we need for today, and the hope we need for tomorrow.

*Intercessor:* We pray for Christ's body, your church, and for those who lead and for those who follow. We pray for our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Moises, Elizabeth, Donald and Craig, all ministers, priests, deacons, ministry teams, those in formation; and for our brothers and sisters worshipping at Holy Cross, Novi, St John's, Clinton, and Holy Comforter, Dajabon, in the Dominican Republic. Grant that we not grieve your Holy Spirit with our words or actions. Remind us that we are members of one another. Teach us to be imitators of you. Give us the strength we need for today, **and the hope we need for tomorrow.**

*Silence is kept.*

We pray for those in authority across the globe. Infuse them with wisdom and speak peace into their hearts. Expand your vision for the world to every corner of the earth, to every part of your creation. Give us the strength we need for today, **and the hope we need for tomorrow.**

*Silence is kept.*

We pray for those who carry burdens of illness, pain, anxiety, or grief. May they draw strength from your presence and comfort from those around who care for them, [especially \_\_\_\_\_].

We thank you, and we bless you for all the gifts you have given us [especially \_\_\_\_\_].

We pray for those who have died, who are now surrounded by your glory and the songs of angels. We remember especially\_\_\_\_\_. Comfort those who mourn with your promise of hope and the resurrected life. Give us the strength we need for today, **and the hope we need for tomorrow.**

*Officiant:* Almighty God, by your Holy Spirit you have made us one with your saints in heaven and on earth: Grant that in our earthly pilgrimage we may always be supported by this fellowship of love and prayer, and know ourselves to be surrounded by their witness to your power and mercy. We ask this for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whom all our intercessions are acceptable through the Spirit, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## Confession of Sin

*All kneel as they are able.*



*A minister then says*

Let us confess our sins to God.

*A period of silence is observed.*

*Minister and People together say*

**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.**

*A Priest stands and says*

Almighty God, who pardons all who truly repent, + forgive your sins, strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen.**

## **Peace**

*All stand as they are able.*

<i>Officiant</i>	The peace of the Lord be always with you.
<i>People</i>	<b>And also with you.</b>

*Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

## **Announcements**

## **Holy Communion**

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.  
*Ephesians 5:2*

***The People then are seated.***

### *How the Holy Communion is prepared*

The Presider, other Eucharistic Ministers, and any participating Acolytes must wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, before celebrating and before distribution. Gloves will not be used. The Presider alone will bring the bread and wine from the credence table to the Altar at the time of the offertory. All of the elements for Holy Communion will be placed on the Altar for the Eucharistic Prayer. The Presider alone stands at the altar, with others 6 feet or more away.

The **priest's wafer and chalice** will be uncovered in front of the Presider during the Eucharistic Prayer. They **are for the Presider alone**. They are consumed entirely by the Presider, or appropriately disposed of after the service.

The priest's wafer and the people's wafers will be kept separate at all times. The **people's wafers will be a container** on the Altar, which will remain covered throughout the Eucharistic Prayer.

During consecration, the Presider will touch the container, not the wafers.

The **distribution** of consecrated wine is not permitted at this time (as of June 19, 2020 Diocese of Michigan directive).

### *How the Holy Communion will be distributed*

Everyone distributing communion will use hand sanitizer before they begin distribution. Gloves will not be used.

Communicants will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer before receiving. Hand sanitizer will be available at the service.

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The people will come to the Altar rail as they are able. The Minister will place the bread in the hand. The distribution will happen without directly touching the hand of the person receiving. Hand-to-mouth distribution is not permitted. If hand-to-hand contact happens, the minister will re-sanitize.

If a blessing is preferred, the blessing will be given without touch.

***The people stand as they are able as a minister brings forward the alms basin.***

**Offertory Hymn**

**Doxology**

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*The people remain standing.*

*The Officiant says*

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.**

God of the living and the dead, it is our joy to give you thanks and praise because,  
though we are your rebellious creation, you love us and go to every length  
to bring us home to you.

As your servant David's son Absalom was left hanging between heaven and earth,  
your Son Jesus hung on the cross for our salvation.

As the young men struck David's son and killed him, so Jesus, the Son of David,  
had a spear thrust into his side.

And as David cried, "Would that I had died instead of you!" we recall that in Christ  
you did die instead of us, your wayward children.

And so with humble, thankful hearts we join the angels and archangels  
to sing the hymn of your endless glory.

## **Sanctus**

The musical notation is written on two staves in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn, with the lyrics "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly" written below it. The second staff begins with a measure rest marked with a "5", followed by the melody for the second line, with the lyrics "God of po - wer and might. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly" written below it.

9  
 God of po - wer and might. Hea - ven and earth are  
 12  
 full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! All  
 15  
 hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho -  
 18  
 san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!  
 24  
 Bles-sed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD. *molto rit.*

*The Officiant continues*

True and living God, in Christ you send us the bread that comes down from heaven, and you promise that whoever eats of this bread will live forever. Sanctify your people that they may be marked with a seal for the day of redemption and be raised up on the last day.

Send your Holy Spirit on this bread and this cup, that they may be for us  
 the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

who, at the table with his disciples, took bread,  
 gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying,

"Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

After they had eaten, he took the cup.  
 Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

"Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant,  
 which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
 Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

*The Officiant continues*

Faithful God, you call us to imitate you in truth-telling, honesty, grace,  
kindness, forgiveness, and tender love. Show your people when to be angry,  
and how not to let the sun go down on their anger.

Come among any who are entangled in bitterness and wrath and wrangling  
and malice and slander.

Bring healing to all who are estranged from family,  
or ones to whom they were once bound in love.

Build up those who are cast down by harshness or cruelty or violence.  
Usher every willing heart into the banquet of your kingdom,  
that all your creation may share the wonder of your mercy,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **AMEN.**

*The Officiant then continues*

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

**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 for ever. Amen.**

# Breaking of the Bread

*A period of silence is kept.*

*The Officiant says*

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

*The Officiant says*

This is the table, not of the righteous, but of the poor in spirit.

It is made ready for those who love God and who want to love God more.

So come, you who have much faith and you who have little,

You who have been here often

and you who have not been for a long time or ever before,

you who have tried to follow and all of us who have failed.

These are the gifts of God for the People of God.

**Christ invites everyone to be known and fed here.**

*The Presider continues*

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, those who are not physically present here join us in offering you praise and thanksgiving. We remember your death, Lord Christ; we proclaim your resurrection; we await your coming in glory. And since they cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, we beseech you to come spiritually into their hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us all with your grace, Lord Jesus, and never let us be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. **Amen.**

*All baptized persons are welcome to receive Holy Communion.*

*After Communion, the Officiant says*

Let us pray.

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 you have made us one

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**

*A priest blesses the people, saying*

Go into the world, and know how much a tired and hurting world needs your strength and gladness. For there are deeds of compassion and courage that will never be done, unless you do them; and words of hope and healing that will never be spoken, unless you speak them.

And may God's blessing + be with you,  
Christ's peace be with you,  
the Spirit's outpouring be with you, now and always. **Amen**

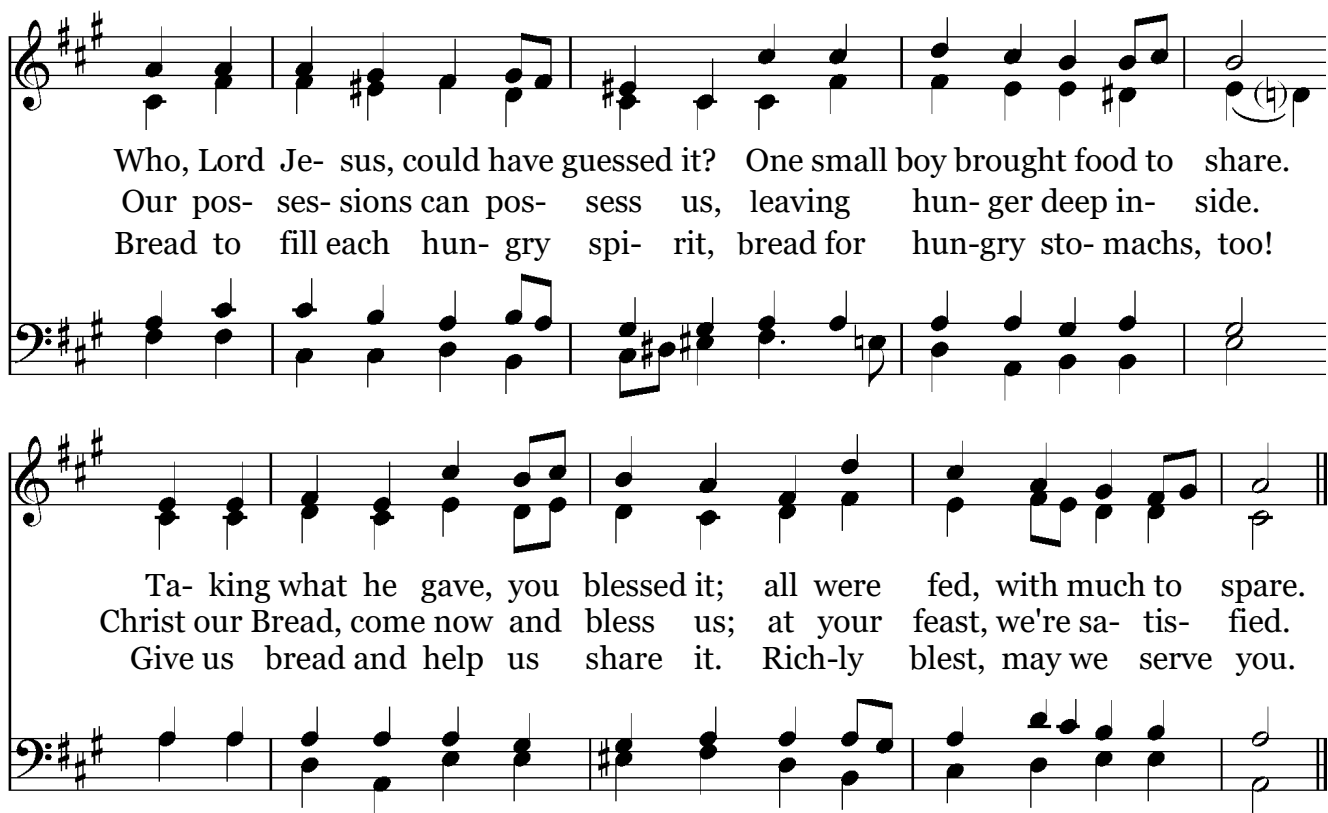
## **Closing Hymn**

Tune: *Beecher*

*Where is bread?*

"Where is bread?" the great crowd murmured, thousands strong, yet all in need.  
Where is bread? We know their yearning; every day, we wish for more.  
"Where is bread?" the call is rising; millions cry who must be fed.

"Where is bread?" your people wondered, faced with such a crowd to feed.  
God, in time, we're slowly learning: all we own can make us poor.  
God, your answer seems surprising: "You, my Church, you give them bread."



Who, Lord Je- sus, could have guessed it? One small boy brought food to share.  
 Our pos- ses- sions can pos- sess us, leaving hun- ger deep in- side.  
 Bread to fill each hun- gry spi- rit, bread for hun-gry sto- machs, too!

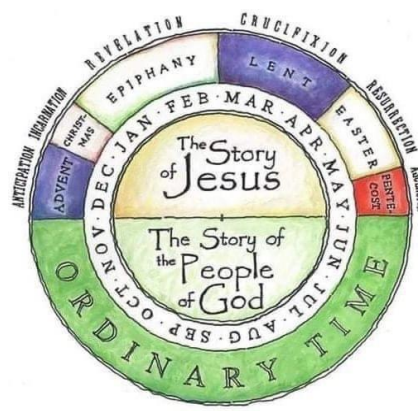
Ta- king what he gave, you blessed it; all were fed, with much to spare.  
 Christ our Bread, come now and bless us; at your feast, we're sa- tis- fied.  
 Give us bread and help us share it. Rich-ly blest, may we serve you.

## Dismissal

*Minister* And now, my siblings in Christ, I bid you go in peace  
 to love and serve our Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God!**

## Postlude





## Upcoming Commemorations

- August 8 Dominic, Priest and Friar, 1221  
9 Herman of Alaska: Missionary to the Aleut, 1837  
10 Laurence of Rome, Deacon and Martyr, 258  
11 Clare of Assisi, Monastic, 1253  
12 Florence Nightingale, Nurse, 1910  
13 Jeremy Taylor, Bishop and Theologian, 1667  
14 Jonathan Myrick Daniels, Martyr, 1965

+++++

### A word from the writer of today's Closing Hymn

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette is a pastor and contemporary hymnwriter in the tradition of Brian Wren. She lives with her husband, Bruce, who is also a pastor, in Delaware. Here is her commentary on the text of her hymn "Where is bread?"

"This hymn was written on a train when I was traveling to a hymn conference. It celebrates the only miracle that is found in all four gospels (the feeding of the five thousand: see Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:32-44, Luke 9:10-17 and John 6:1-15). Jesus meets our physical as well as spiritual needs in his holistic ministry; the church is called to do the same.

When Jesus was faced with a crowd of hungry people, he had compassion on them and gave them food to take care of their physical hunger. Jesus, the Bread of Life, cared for the needs of hungry people.

We hunger, too, though many of us don't hunger for food. We are over-stuffed with possessions and hunger for Life. I remember working as a summer intern in one community with absolutely beautiful homes; some of the residents hated to go out at night because they didn't want to leave their very expensive houses behind. There had been a rash of robberies in their neighborhood that year- They were afraid someone might break in while they were away at a church meeting or a social gathering, so they stayed home.' community to hold onto the things they owned.

I met another person, a member of a different church, who had been fighting with her family over an inheritance and had not spoken to them for years because of how possessions had been divided. It is easy to become possessed by possessions. Yet the things we own won't satisfy us in the end. We need the Bread of Life.

In the world around us, we hear cries of hunger from the millions of people in our world who don't have enough to eat. When the disciples came to Jesus and said, "The people are hungry," Jesus told them, "You give them something to eat." As Christians obeying the call of Jesus to help our hungry neighbors, we find our richest blessings in reaching out and serving others. "Give us bread and help us share it" is a prayer for others and for us, too."

From Carolyn's book *Songs of Grace: new hymns for God and Neighbor*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2009, p.22.

## **OFFERING OUR DONATIONS OF FOOD AND FUNDS** **TO FAITH IN ACTION**

Faith in Action is continuing to provide leadership in collecting donations to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas. They are in need of our continuing help. ***The usual "TOP ITEMS" needed are:*** baked beans, coffee, canned tomatoes, hamburger helper (or any helper), spaghetti sauce, small cans Campbell's soup, ketchup, ranch dressing, cereal, 64oz fruit juices, chips, crackers, toilet paper, laundry soap, cleaning products. You may bring your donations to FIA, or to Nancy who will see that they get there. **If you bring food directly to FIA**, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. If you write a check, please make it to *Faith In Action*. The **next Food Drive at the church** will be **next Sunday, August 15**. Please leave your donations at the church on that day.

Financial donations to help us combat the continuing effects of the pandemic can be made by PayPal at [www.faithinaction1.org](http://www.faithinaction1.org), by [Facebook](#), or by mailing a check to *Faith in Action*, 603 S. Main Street, Chelsea MI 48118. **If you need help, please call FIA at (734) 475-3305**

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### **Pentecost Proper 14B August 8, 2021**

#### **2 Samuel 18:5-9, 31-33**

David's kingdom is in rebellion and his troops encounter the rebels in the forest near Ephraim. David gave orders that his rebel son, Absalom, be dealt with "gently." David's forces are victorious, but in the course of battle, Absalom is killed as he rides through the forest. A Cushite messenger brings the news to David and the king begins to weep and mourn the loss of his son. This is one of the tragic stories of the Hebrew scriptures – for though the kingdom is preserved through military might, King David is not immune to the painful circumstances of its preservation.

- How do we discover God's presence working through the painful circumstances of our lives?

#### **Psalms 130**

When we are speechless during times of sorrow and despair, Psalm 130 provides words to express our grief and hope in God's merciful redemption. In prayerfully reciting the psalm, our hope is to experience God's forgiveness, mercy, and redemption in the midst of pain and suffering. Psalm 130 is one of the choices for use during the burial service in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*.

- Describe and discuss the varied forms of human reactions to pain and suffering.
- Are we comforted by the words of the psalms, especially Psalm 130?

#### **Ephesians 4:25-5:2**

Paul, in this selection from Ephesians, advises the believing community to live peacefully in communion with one another. They are not to be angry – or at least they are not to remain angry overnight! Paul goes on to advise all the things that they are not to do; to be wrathful, bitter, or slanderous. But Paul does not conclude on a negative note. He then tells them what they are to do: "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving" (v. 32). The reading ends with Paul encouraging the community to journey in

love as Christ loved us and to let their lives be a reflection of God. Ephesians 5:2 is an offertory sentence option in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*.

- Is it important to be an active member of a Christian community?
- Why do we gather and worship as a community?
- How well do we follow Paul's recommendations for communal living?

### **John 6:35, 41-51**

This gospel passage from John centers around one sign and one issue in the gospel: John's account of the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus' special relationship with the Father. First is Jesus' special relationship with the Father. If one desires to be close to Jesus, then one must be "drawn" by the Father. Jesus continues, describing how those who listen and hear God come to Jesus. Jesus tells the people that no one has seen the Father except the One who has come from the Father. Later in the gospel, Jesus will tell Philip and the other disciples that to see him (Jesus) is to have seen the Father (14:9).

Second, after he speaks of the Father, Jesus makes the profound statement that he is the bread of life and connects that point to the Exodus story. Manna, in the Exodus wilderness journey, provides necessary food for the survival of God's people. Jesus proclaims that those who ate the manna died and those who partake of the bread of life that is given from heaven will have eternal life.

- How do you react to the rather abrupt ending of this gospel passage?
- Does this passage make you want to hear more about Jesus' relationship with the Father and the bread of life?
- As a Christian, how might you explain Jesus' special relationship with the Father and his being the Bread of Life?

*This study was written by Paul White*

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**Glory to God** and **Sanctus** musical settings from *St Barnabas Mass*, by Doug Howell. © 2016 Creative Measures. Used by permission of the composer.

**Confession** from *Enriching our worship*, p.19 **Postcommunion prayer**, p.69; **Blessing**, p.71.

**Eucharistic Prayer** from Wells, Samuel and Abigail Kocher, *Eucharistic prayers*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016, pp.244-245.

**Invitation to the Table** adapted from *The Iona Abbey Worship Book*, (Glasgow, UK: Wild Goose Publications, 2001)

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### **Our Mission:**

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ,  
and to serve Jesus by serving others in the world,  
guided by the values of Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



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