

Introduction to the day: In spite of all we have heard and all we have seen, it is often hard to believe. Because it is hard to believe, we will invest ourselves in the Easter mystery for fifty days (a week of weeks). Because it is hard to believe, John the evangelist will provide sign after sign celebrating Jesus' victory over death. Because it is hard to believe, the risen Jesus will return to us again and again in the mystery of holy communion, inviting us to touch and taste his presence, and offering us his peace.

GATHERING

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

OPENING SONG/PRELUDE

Today is the Day

©Lincoln Brewster

(sung by Wing & A Prayer only)

LITANY/CALL TO WORSHIP

O God, you have claimed us in baptism through the waters of Creation:

we join the Atlantic and Pacific, the Great Lakes and the Caribbean in giving you thanks and praise.

O God, you have called us to live in unity and love with our neighbors:

we join in worship with all creatures that walk, crawl, slither, fly, or swim.

O God, you nourish the earth with water and snow, and till the soil with frost and thaw:

we come before you to be cultivated by your Word.

O God, the planets and solar systems and galaxies belong to you:

we come before you with great humility, amazed that you are even mindful of us.

WELCOME

The congregation invited to stand as they are able and face the baptismal font.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forms the Earth,
redeems all Creation,
and sustains life. **Amen.**

God of tempest, God of whirlwind,
in the beginning when the Earth was formless, your Spirit swept over the waters.
You spoke, and the wind of your Word fashioned order:
darkness and light; sea and sky and soil;
sun and moon; birds and fish; creatures, plants, and people; and with a word, you took delight.
You looked upon your Creation and called it good.

After you poured out the floods of judgment,
you set your bow in the clouds, a promise to every living creature that water is life.
You spoke, and the sky sang with all the colors of your covenant:
for cardinals and foxes, bumblebees and tortoises, Noah and his family,
and all descendants of your first act of redemption.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

We marvel at your Creation, for it is good!

At Jacob's well, the woman from Samaria witnessed the water of eternal life from your beloved Son.
In baptism, your Spirit brings water to life.

You speak, and your children are born from the womb of your mercy.

You wrap us in the grace of your never-ending love
and raise us to share that love with all you have made.

You look upon your Creation and call us good.

Forgiven in the waters of baptism,

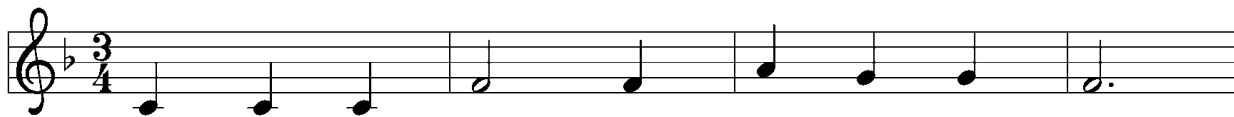
We praise you, Creator of all things.

We worship you, Redeemer of all that lives.

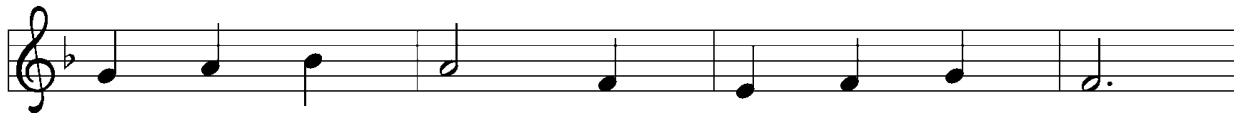
We serve you, Sustainer of your people in every land. Amen.

Please remain standing and turn to face the altar as you are able.

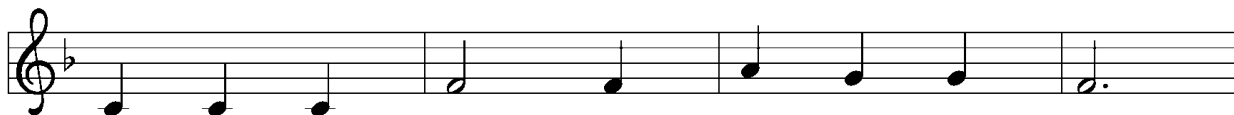
GATHERING SONG *Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia: Mfurahini, haleluya* (ELW 364)



M - fu - ra - hi - ni, ha - le - lu - ya,
1 Christ has a - ris - en, al - le - lu - ia.
2 For three long days the grave did its worst
3 The an - gel said to them, "Do not fear.



m - ko - mbo - zi a - me - fu - fu - ka.
Re - joice and praise him, al - le - lu - ia.
un - til its strength by God was dis - persed.
You look for Je - sus who is not here.



A - me - fu - fu - ka, ha - le - lu - ya,
For our re - deem - er burst from the tomb,
He who gives life did death un - der - go,
See for your - selves the tomb is all bare.



m - si - fu - ni sa - sa yu ha - i.
e - ven from death, dis - pel - ling its gloom.
and in its con - quest his might did show.
On - ly the grave - clothes are ly - ing there."

Refrain & additional verses on following page

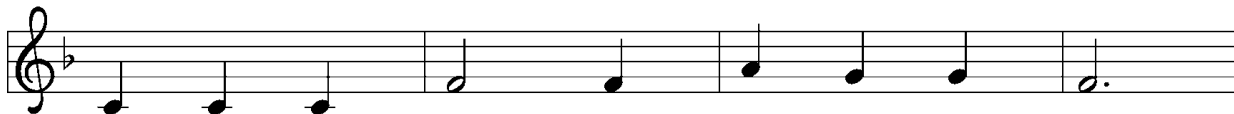
Refrain



Tu - mwi - mbi - e so - te kwa fu - ra - ha.
Let us sing praise to him with end - less joy.



Ye - su a - me - to - ka ka - bu - ri - ni.
Death's fear - ful sting he has come to de - stroy.



Ka - shi - nda ki - fo, ha - le - lu - ya;
Our sin for - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!



ha - le - lu - ya, Ye - su yu ha - i.
Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

4 "Go spread the news: he's not in the grave.
He has arisen this world to save.
Jesus' redeeming labors are done.
Even the battle with sin is won."
Refrain

5 Christ has arisen to set us free.
Alleluia, to him praises be.
Jesus is living! Let us all sing;
he reigns triumphant, heavenly king.
Refrain

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE

Kyrie

©Kent Alleluia Liturgy

Music & Lyrics on next page

Leader

In peace, let us pray
to the Lord

CONGREGATION

Lord. have mer cy,
Christ have mer - cy,
Lord have mer - cy.

2

Leader

For the peace from above,
and for our salvation, let us pray
to the Lord

CONGREGATION

Lord_ have mer- cy,
Christ have mer-cy,
Lord have mer - cy.

Leader

For peace in the world,
for the health of God's church,
and for all unity, let us pray
to the Lord

CONGREGATION

Lord_ have mer-cy,
Christ have mer - cy,
Lord have mer - cy.

Leader

For this holy house,
and we who offer praise, let us pray
to the Lord

CONGREGATION

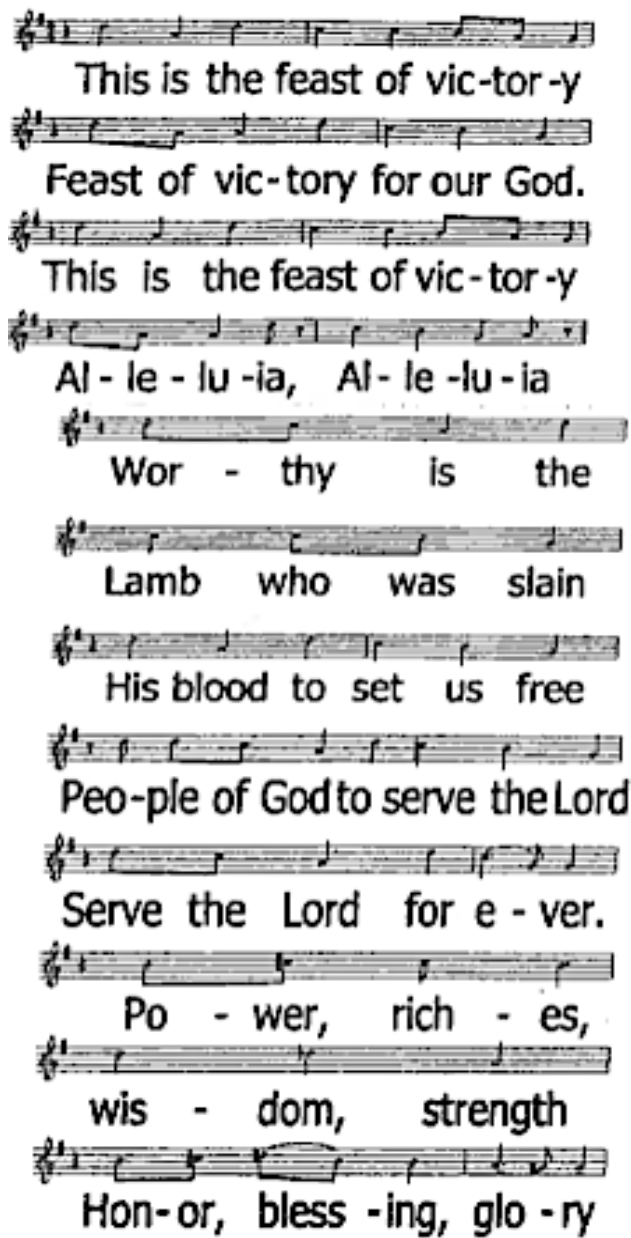
Lord_ have mer cy,
Christ have mer - cy,
Lord have mer - cy.

Leader

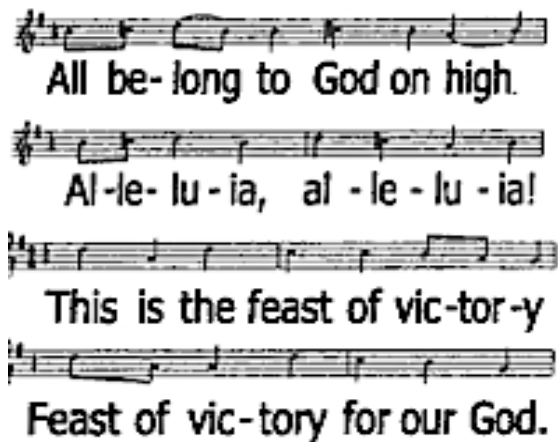
Help, save, comfort and defend us,
gracious Lord

CONGREGATION

Lord. have mer- cy,
Christ have mer - cy,
A - - - - men



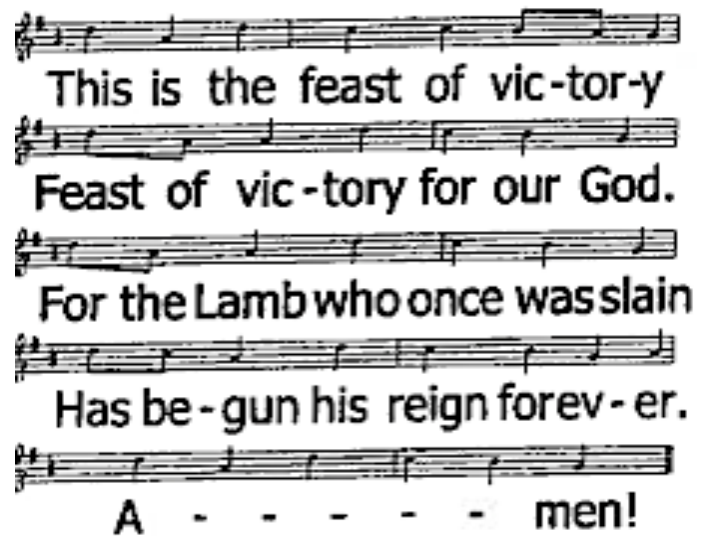
This is the feast of vic-tor-y
 Feast of vic-tory for our God.
 This is the feast of vic-tor-y
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia
 Wor - thy is the
 Lamb who was slain
 His blood to set us free
 Peo-ple of God to serve the Lord
 Serve the Lord for e - ver.
 Po - wer, rich - es,
 wis - dom, strength
 Hon-or, bless - ing, glo - ry



All be-long to God on high.
 Al-le- lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 This is the feast of vic-tor-y
 Feast of vic-tory for our God.




This is the feast of vic-tor-y
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia
 Sing with all God's
 ho - ly peo - ple
 Join the hy - mn of
 all cre - a - tion
 Bless - ing, hon - - or,
 glo - ry, mi - ght
 Be to God and the
 Lamb for - ev - er
 A - men! A - men!



This is the feast of vic-tor-y
 Feast of vic-tory for our God.
 For the Lamb who once was slain
 Has be - gun his reign forev - er.
 A - - - - men!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Source of All, throughout your good creation we hear resurrection: percussive spring rains; the hymnody of birds; silent explosions of bursting buds. Yet we also see your wounded hands in the clotted sea, the bleeding sky, and the lacerated earth.

Open our ears with renewed awe for the splendor that unfolds around us and renewed compassion for your cries for help. Then calm our fears and fill us with your peace, that we, too, might become your risen body, overflowing with grace to transform and renew, until together with all that you have borne, we join in one great anthem of New Life. In the name of the Risen Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

Please be seated

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Acts 5:27-32 (Barbara Morris)

Peter has been arrested for proclaiming the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. His response to the charges of the high priest summarizes the early church's proclamation of forgiveness of sin through repentance.

A reading from Acts.

²⁷When they had brought [the apostles,] they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." ²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 118:14-29 (Barbara Morris)

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

¹⁵**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:**

"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷**I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.**

¹⁸The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹**Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**

²⁰"This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter."

²¹**I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.**

²²The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

²³**By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

²⁴This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵**Hosanna! O LORD, save us! We pray to you, LORD, prosper our days!**

²⁶Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD.

²⁷**The LORD is God and has given us light.**

Form a procession with branches up to the corners of the altar.

²⁸You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.

²⁹**Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God's mercy endures forever.**

SECOND READING: Revelation 1:4-8 (Barbara Morris)

The book of Revelation recounts a mystical vision of the risen Christ experienced by a Christian prophet named John. Here he describes Christ as a timeless redeemer, the beginning, present, and end of all time.

A reading from Revelation.

⁴John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷Look! He is coming with the clouds;

every eye will see him,

even those who pierced him;

and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

KIDS' MESSAGE (Pr. Allen Dunn)

The congregation is invited to stand as they are able to welcome the Gospel

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31 (Daneen Pysz)

The unprecedented events of the day of resurrection continue as the risen Jesus appears to his fearful disciples. A week later, after Thomas worships Jesus, Jesus pronounces that the blessings of the resurrection are also for those who "have not seen and yet believe."

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the

mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated

SERMON (Daneen Pysz)

The congregation is invited to stand as they are able

HYMN OF THE DAY *Now the Green Blade Rises* (ELW 379)



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,
2 In the grave they laid him, love by ha - tred slain,
3 Forth he came at Eas - ter like the ris - en grain,
4 When our hearts are win - try, griev - ing, or in pain,



wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;
think - ing that he would nev - er wake a - gain,
he that for three days in the grave had lain;
your touch can call us back to life a - gain,



love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps un - seen;
raised from the dead, my liv - ing Lord is seen;
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

CREED

Let us join with Christians throughout the world this Easter Season and confess our shared faith 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.**

Please be seated

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Barbara Morris)

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

Holy One who acts righteously, equip your church as witnesses of your goodness to go and tell others of your abundant love, that they may believe that Jesus is our salvation and life. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Renew your people's commitment to use resources responsibly and to live well with your creation. Invite us to recognize and nurture signs of resurrection life in the natural world. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Direct those who are given human authority to lead with humility and compassion. By your Holy Spirit channel their attention toward serving those who are most in need. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Uphold your children who cry out to you. Wherever people are overcome by the fear of death, breathe into them your life and peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Inspire those who lead your people in worship and praise. With joyful motion and sound, send us forth with praise that we cannot keep to ourselves. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give us the words of your saints who, like Thomas, boldly confessed your Son as Lord and God. With Jesus our leader, empower us to live according to his ways. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

(Prayer requests provided by congregation may be added here by Reader)

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

We acknowledge that all we have is a gift from God and in gratefulness we return to God a portion of the time, finances, and gifts that God has given us.

Thank you so much for your continued support.

OFFERING PRAYER

Sovereign of the universe, you set the parameters of the sea and renew the earth with light from the ages and rain from the heavens. Receive the gifts we bring as we care for oceans, lakes, and all habitats, to the glory of God in the name of Christ our peace.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,

our living Water and our merciful Guide,

together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we bless and magnify you.

You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,

who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,

his life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.

Pour out your Spirit on this holy food

and on all the baptized gathered for this feast:

wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us using the language of our hearts.

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, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The risen Christ dwells with us here.

All who are hungry, all who are thirsty, come.

*All are welcome to join in our communion celebration.
Please follow the directions of Pastor Carolyn and the ushers.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, generous God, for in this bread and cup we have tasted the new heaven and earth where hunger and thirst are no more. Send us from this table as witnesses to the resurrection, that through our lives, all may know life in Jesus' name.

Amen.

The congregation is invited to stand as they are able.

SENDING

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

BLESSING

The God of all Creation, of oceans and lakes, of prairie dogs and moose, of spring rains and winter squalls, of Pluto and Mars, bless, keep, and strengthen you and all Creation, today, tomorrow, and always. In the name of the ✝ Triune God.

Amen

SENDING SONG

Thine Is the Glory (ELW 376)

Music & Lyrics on following page

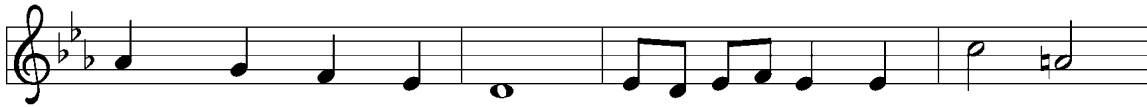




1 Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con-qu'ring Son; end - less is the
 2 Lo, Je - sus meets thee, ris - en from the tomb! Lov - ing - ly he
 3 No more we doubt thee, glo - rious Prince of life; life is naught with-



vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won! An - gels in bright rai - ment
 greets thee, scat - ters fear and gloom; let his church with glad - ness
 out thee; aid us in our strife; make us more than con-qu'rors,



rolled the stone a - way, kept the fold - ed grave - clothes
 hymns of tri - umph sing, for the Lord now liv - eth;
 through thy death - less love; bring us safe through Jor - dan

Refrain



where thy bod - y lay.
 death hath lost its sting! Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con-qu'ring
 to thy home a - bove.



Son; end - less is the vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won!

Please be seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

After brief announcements related to the ministry of Bethel, the congregation is invited to stand and face the font.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Care for Creation.

Thanks be to God and we will.