

Ascension Sunday



May 17th 2026
Portage Lake United Church

Welcome and Announcements

*We gather in the name of the Holy Trinity, one God, source of all goodness and mercy.
No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

- Everyone is invited to stay following worship for a Potluck luncheon celebrating our long time church secretary Beth Smock, who has retired and will be moving next month to southern Indiana.
- Angel Mission needs: Whole grain pasta.
- *Are there any other announcements?*



*Liturgical Color White and/or Gold
Lectionary Year A*

President: Rev. Peter Norland
Musician: Susie Bykkonen
Greeters: Mary and Al Eckhart
Reader: Marla Bohnhoff
Prayer Writer: Jim Northey
Coffee: POTLUCK
Children's Church: Olivia Bykkonen



Madeline Larson 2023

MEDITATION

Sanctifying Time, Place and People,
Humans are ambivalent toward holiness.

We are drawn toward those qualities exemplified by a St. Francis or by Mother Teresa, or by communities who witness to gospel under severe persecution. Yet we find such qualities disturbing, too far removed from the way we must live our daily.

- Don E. Saliers

PRELUDE

The Solid Rock

Edward Mote & William B. Bradbury/arr. Laura Bergquist

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

✦ CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

The heavens proclaim God's righteousness;
we behold God's glory.

**God has gone up with a shout,
with the sound of a trumpet.**

Give thanks to God, O faithful ones.

Sing praises to God; sing praises.

Sing praises to our King; sing praises!



Ann Campbell

"Come, Christians, Join to Sing" BLUE 150

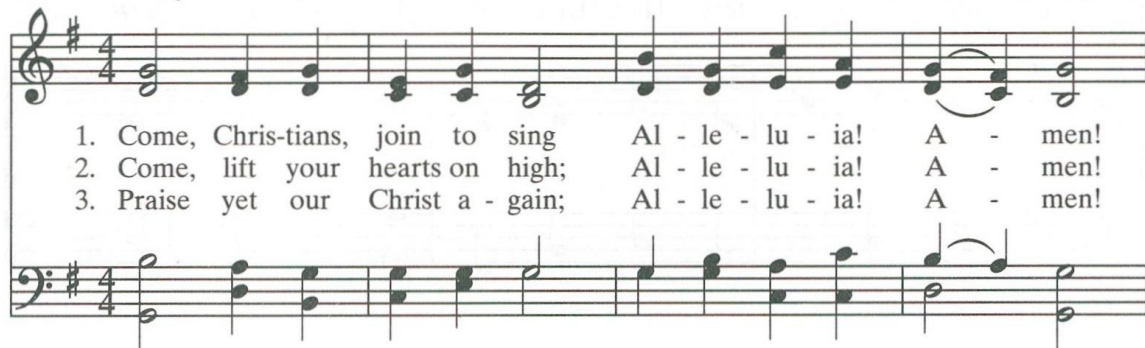
Used with permission.
One License # A-725614

150 Come, Christians, Join to Sing

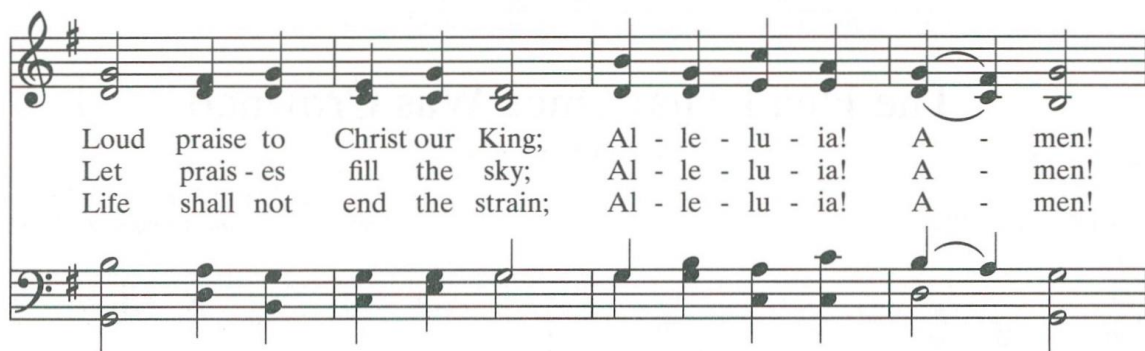
MADRID 6.6.6.6 D

Spanish folk melody
Arr. Benjamin Carr, 1824
Harm. David Evans, 1927

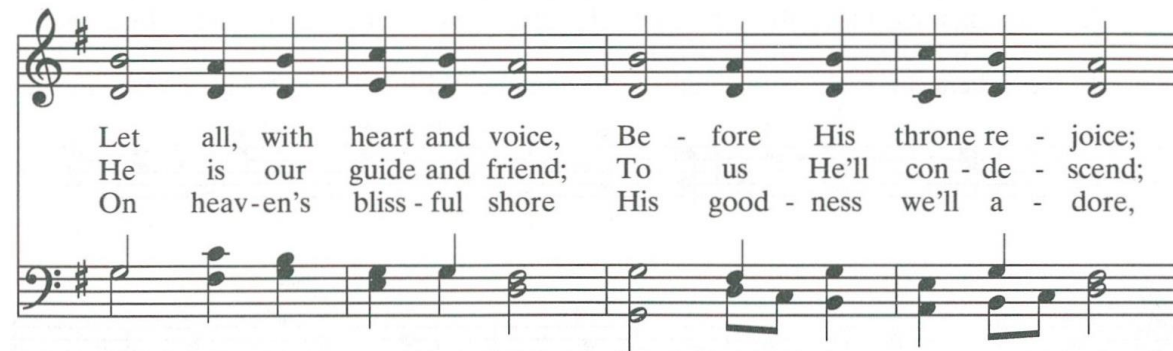
Christian Henry Bateman, 1843



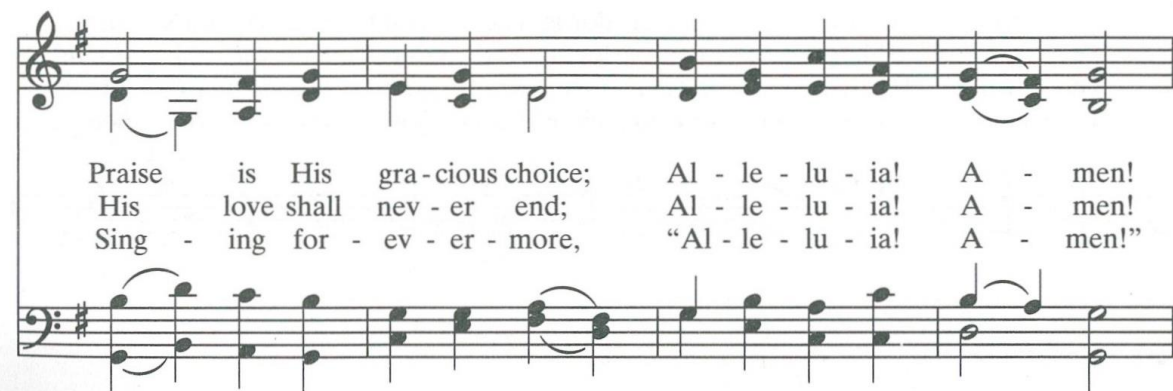
1. Come, Chris-tians, join to sing Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
2. Come, lift your hearts on high; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
3. Praise yet our Christ a - gain; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



Loud praise to Christ our King; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
Let prais - es fill the sky; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
Life shall not end the strain; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



Let all, with heart and voice, Be - fore His throne re - jice;
He is our guide and friend; To us He'll con - de - scend;
On heav - en's bliss - ful shore His good - ness we'll a - dore,



Praise is His gra - cious choice; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
His love shall nev - er end; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
Sing - ing for - ev - er - more, "Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!"

Music: Harmonization from the Revised Church Hymnary 1927. Used by permission of Oxford University Press.

+ PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord God of power and might, we are breathless when we behold your glory. Shape our words into praise and may our actions be a reflection of your goodness. Keep our feet on the earth and your good news on our lips, that we may bring truth where there is deception, hope where there is fear, liberation where there is oppression, companionship to those who are abandoned, and abundance to those who hunger and thirst, in the name of Jesus the Christ, whom alone we worship and serve. Amen.

+ THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (Responsive)

In the waters of baptism,
we receive God's promise and grace,
we, together, are united with the Risen Christ.

We give thanks for the gift of baptism.

From the very beginning, O God,
you have brought forth life from the waters.

At a time when all seemed lost, in a time of the great flood,
you made a way for new life through the waters.

When your people cried for liberation parting the sea,
you made a way for new life through the waters.

You entered into your creation, nurtured in the water of
Mary's womb, and baptized in the river Jordan, through Jesus,
you made a way for new life through the waters.

By your Spirit, you raised your servant from death, in his
resurrected life you promised the renewal of all creation—
that promise is for us, too.

You make a way for new life through the waters.

Your grace washes over us in the waters of baptism.

United in Christ, you make us new.

In these waters, we hear your Word to us:

"You are my beloved."

And that is our truth forever.



✦ PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Greet each other with a sign of God's peace.

Children of God, we are the body of Christ.

**By one spirit
we were baptized into one body.**

Keep the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace.

Amen! We are bound by the love of Christ.





WORD

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

✦ FIRST READING Acts 1:1-11

Jesus sends the apostles

^{1:1} In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach ^{1:2} until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ^{1:3} After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ^{1:4} While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; ^{1:5} for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ^{1:6} So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ^{1:7} He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ^{1:8} But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ^{1:9} When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ^{1:10} While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ^{1:11} They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

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

Second Reading Ephesians 1:15-23

Seeing the risen and ascended Christ

^{1:15} I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ^{1:16} I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, ^{1:17} that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ^{1:18} so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ^{1:19} and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ^{1:20} God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ^{1:21} far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ^{1:22} And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ^{1:23} which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

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

How Firm a Foundation

361

“K” in *A Selection of Hymns*, 1787
Ed. John Rippon; alt.

FOUNDATION 11.11.11.11

American folk melody
Funk’s *Genuine Church Music*, 1832

1. How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord,
2. “Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dis - mayed,
3. “When through the deep wa - ters I call thee to go,
4. “When through fi - ery tri - als thy path - way shall lie,

Is laid for your faith in God’s ex - cel - lent Word!
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
The riv - ers of sor - row shall not o - ver - flow;
My grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;

What more can be said than to you God hath said,
I’ll strength - en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
For I will be near thee, thy trou - bles to bless,
The flame shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign

To you who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
Up - held by My righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
And sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.
Thy dross to con - sume, and thy gold to re - fine.

5. “The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake.”

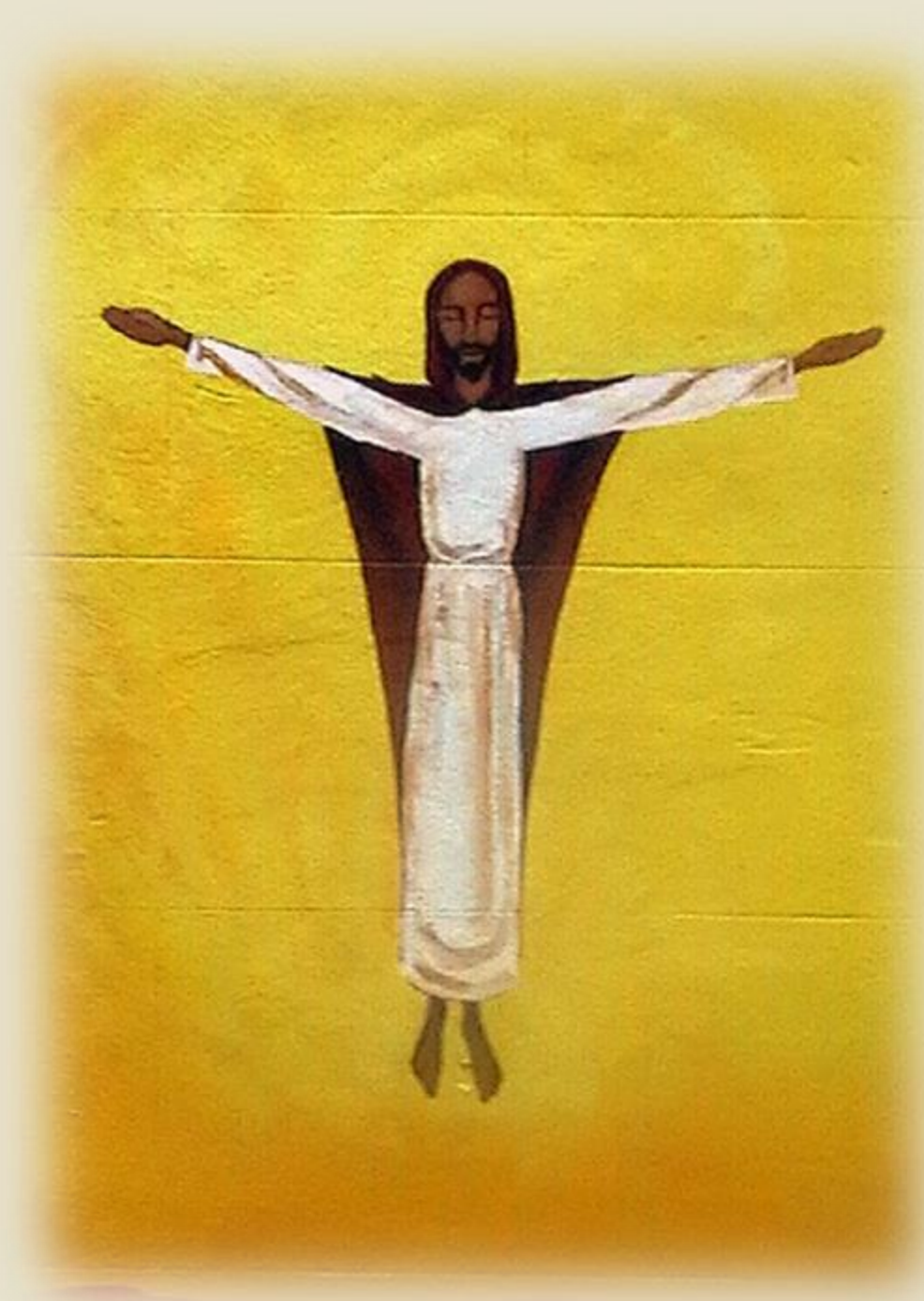
✦ GOSPEL READING Luke 24:44-53

Christ present in all times and places

^{24:44} Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-- that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." ^{24:45} Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ^{24:46} and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day ^{24:47} and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ^{24:48} You are witnesses of these things. ^{24:49} And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." ^{24:50} Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ^{24:51} While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ^{24:52} And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ^{24:53} and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

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

Sermon



Ascension
Mural of Christ ascending to heaven on a
graffiti wall in Bristol, England.

+ OFFERING AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

Generous God,
may these gifts we bring
be used to bless, to build, and to beautify
through generous and faithful care.
Amen.



Personification of Gentleness 1220-1240
Cathedrale d'Amiens
Amiens, France

Lord, Be Glorified 43

Descant

3 In your church, Lord, be glo - ri - fied, be glo - ri - fied;
4 In your world, Lord, be glo - ri - fied, be glo - ri - fied;

C G/B Am Em Dm7 Gsus G B \flat Gsus G

1 In our lives, Lord, be glo - ri - fied, be glo - ri - fied;
2 In our homes, Lord, be glo - ri - fied, be glo - ri - fied;
3 In your church, Lord, be glo - ri - fied, be glo - ri - fied;
4 In your world, Lord, be glo - ri - fied, be glo - ri - fied;

in your church, Lord, be glo - ri - fied to - day.
in your world, Lord, be glo - ri - fied to - day.

C G/B Am Em Dm7 Gsus G7 C

in our lives, Lord, be glo - ri - fied to - day.
in our homes, Lord, be glo - ri - fied to - day.
in your church, Lord, be glo - ri - fied to - day.
in your world, Lord, be glo - ri - fied to - day.

Text and music: Bob Kilpatrick (b. 1952)
© 1978, Bob Kilpatrick Music, admin. Lorenz Publishing Co.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A serene sunset scene over a large body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water's surface. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds, some of which are illuminated from below by the setting sun. In the distance, a dark, silhouetted treeline or forest line stretches across the horizon. In the foreground, several dark rocks are scattered in the water, and the bare branches of a tree are visible on the left side of the frame.

Christ who fills all in all, hear our prayer.

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (ECUMENICAL)

**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 forever.
Amen.**



Photograph by Ren Spring 2023

SENDING

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

742 We Will Walk with God

Sizohamba naye



We will walk with God, my broth-ers; we will walk with God.
Si - zo - ham - ba na - ye, wo wo wo, si - zo - ham - ba na - ye.



We will walk with God, my sis-ters; we will walk with God.
Si - zo - ham - ba na - ye, wo wo wo, si - zo - ham - ba na - ye.



We will go re - joic - ing till the king - dom has come.
Ngom-hla wen - ja - bu - la, si - zo - ham - ba na - ye.



We will go re - joic - ing till the king - dom has come.
Ngom-hla wen - ja - bu - la, si - zo - ham - ba na - ye.

With its themes of commitment and sending, this energetic song from Swaziland works well for ending a time together, either an occasion of worship or some other gathering. The simple tune does not require supporting instruments but invites percussion and improvisation.

✦ CHARGE AND BLESSING

God's Spirit is poured out upon us
to make our hearts strong with love and bold with praise
that we may proclaim the ways of God
to the ends of the earth.

May the glory of God fill you with praise,
the beauty of Christ strengthen you in service,
and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace.



POSTLUDE

His Eye Is On The Sparrow

Charles H. Gabriel/arr. Mark Hayes

Question for Reflection

The risen and ascended Christ promises to send us power from on high. How do you use such “soul force” to bring forgiveness, blessing, and love to others?



Christ Ascending
El Picacho City Park
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Thanks to:

Presider: Rev. Peter Norland
Musician: Susie Byykkonen
Greeters: Mary and Al Eckhart
Reader: Marla Bohnhoff
Prayer Writer: Jim Northey
Coffee: POTLUCK
Children's Church: Olivia Byykkonen

Next Week: Pentecost

Presider: Rev. Peter Norland
Musician: Susie Byykkonen
Greeters: NEEDED
Reader: NEEDED
Prayer Writer: Lois Jambekar
Coffee: Mary and Lois
Children's Church: Olivia Byykkonen

Acts 2:1–21, 1 Corinthians 12:3b–13; John 7:37–39

All Scriptures taken from NRSV, copyright Thomas Nelson publishers.
All songs used with permission. One License # A-725614

Additional descriptions can be found at the Art in the Christian Tradition image library, a service of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/>. All images available via Creative Commons 3.0 License.



Portage Lake United Church

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) & UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1400 East Houghton Avenue, Houghton Michigan 49931
www.PLUC.org office@pluc.org (906)482-5224

Rooted in the Trinity. Growing in God's Word.
Branching out to those in need. Nourished by many waters.