Bethlehem Lutheran Church
& Early Childhood Center

First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026

Worship Services

9:00 am | 10:30 am

Welcome to Bethlehem!

We hope you feel a warm welcome here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Please visit our website at **www.blcenc.org** for more information about the congregation. If you are visiting with us, please fill out an information card and place it in the offering basket so we can stay connected.

CHILDREN

All children are welcome in the sanctuary for worship at Bethlehem. If you prefer, there is a comfort room at the back of the sanctuary. Busy bags are available in the narthex. After Children's Time at our **10:30 AM** service children ages 3 years – 6th grade may either attend our Learning Circle program or remain with you.

COMMUNION

We practice **open communion,** meaning all are welcome to participate. We commune by intinction where the pastor dips the bread into a divided chalice with white wine or red grape juice. There is a gluten-free station on the left side of the sanctuary. We are happy to bring communion to individuals with limited mobility.

PARTICIPATION & ACCESSIBILITY

The different movements that happen during worship (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are all optional; please engage as you are comfortable or able. Hearing assistance devices are located at the back of the sanctuary and large-print bulletins are available in the narthex. If you, or someone you know, identify as neurodivergent and have questions about how to participate in worship or in one of our church ministries, please feel free to ask either the pastors or the church office for help.

PRAYER

In addition to the pastors, our Stephen Ministers are always available to pray with you about whatever is on your heart this day. Please look for the folks wearing a blue name tag with the Stephen Ministry logo. Healing prayer stations are available during communion on the second Sunday of each month.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From **Holy Communion," Tree of Life:"Beneath the Tree of Life," "Kyrie," "Lamb of God"** - Text and Tune: Marty Haugen, ©2000, 2001, GIA Publications, Inc. **"Return to God"** - Text and Tune: Marty Haugen, ©1990, 1991 GIA Publications, Inc. **"Restore in Us, O God"** - Text: Carl P. Daw, © 1989 Hope Publishing Company Music © 1985 Hope Publishing Company; Tune BAYLOR: Hal H. Hopson, © 1989 Hope Publishing Company. **"When We are Tested"** - Text: Ruth Duck, ©1996 Hope Publishing Company; Tune SLANE: Irish traditional: Public Domain. **"Jesus Is a Rock in a Weary Land"** ' Text and Tune WEARY LAND: African American spiritual, Public Domain. .For copyrighted selections, all rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.netLicenseNo.A-706214. Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license #A-706214.

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GATHERING

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

C: Amen.

L: Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Mighty God, lover of justice,

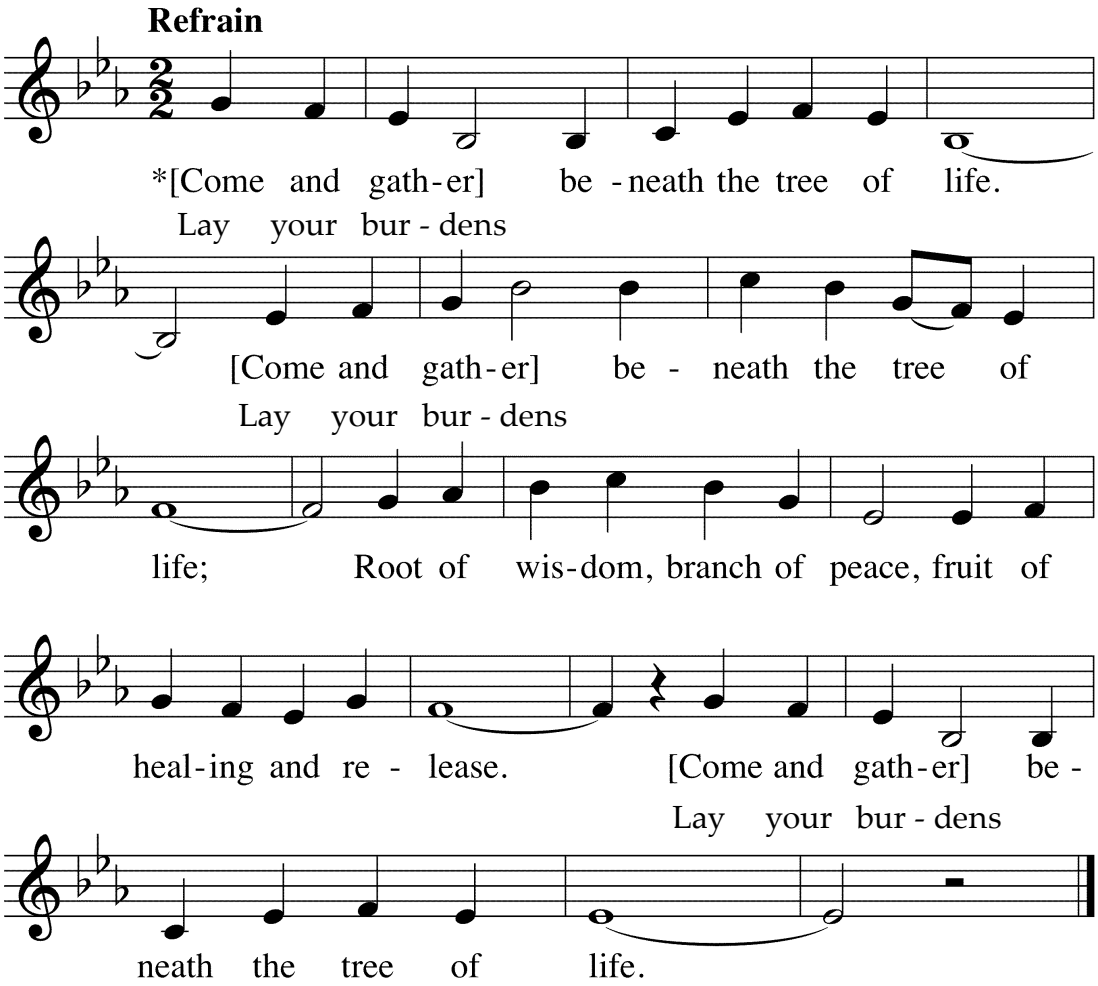
C: You call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.

L: The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in ✠ Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN Beneath the Tree of Life

(Congregation sings refrain; Cantor sings verses)

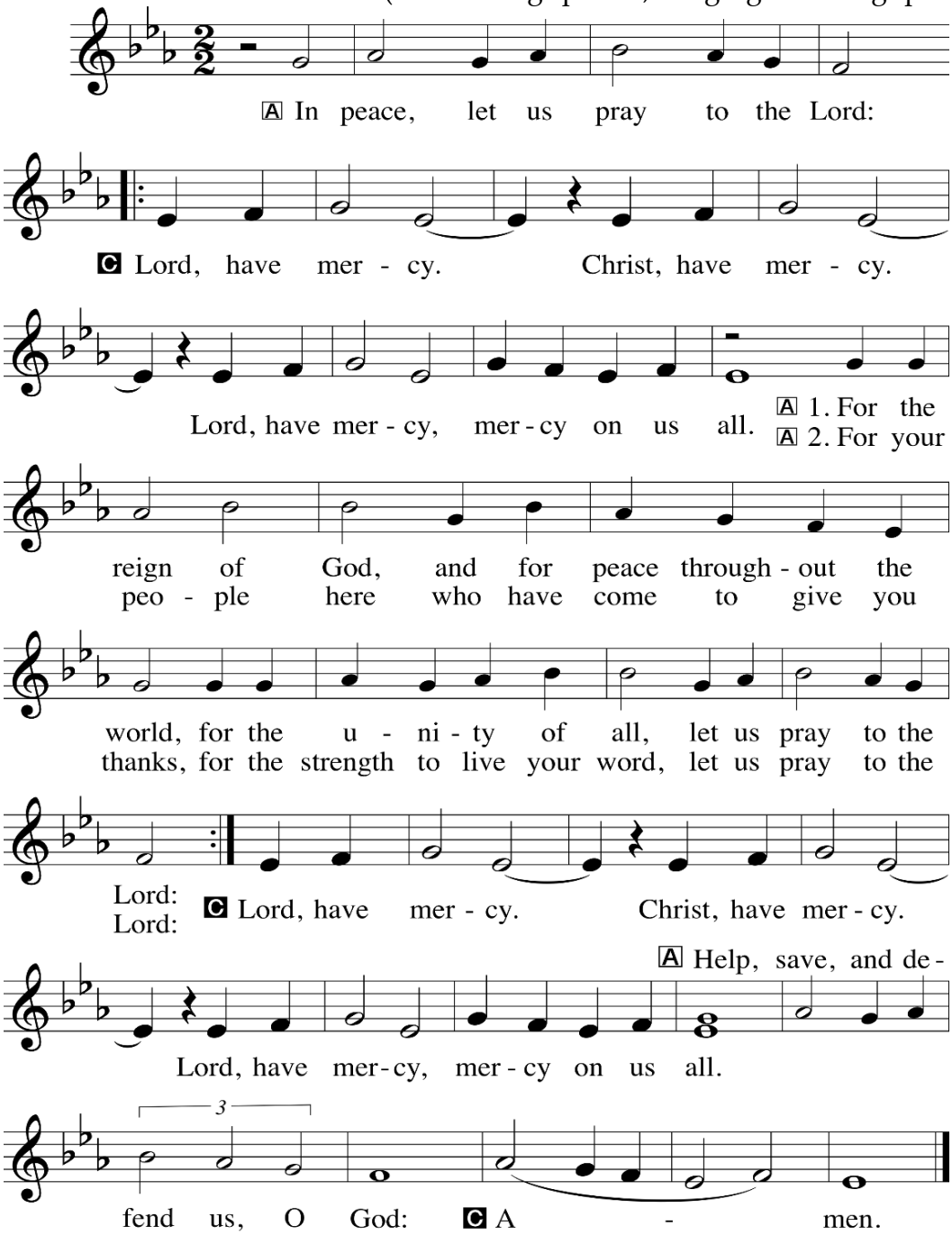


GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

KYRIE (Leader sings part A, congregation sings part C)



(Return to Gathering Hymn and sing "lay your burdens")

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray … **C: Amen.**

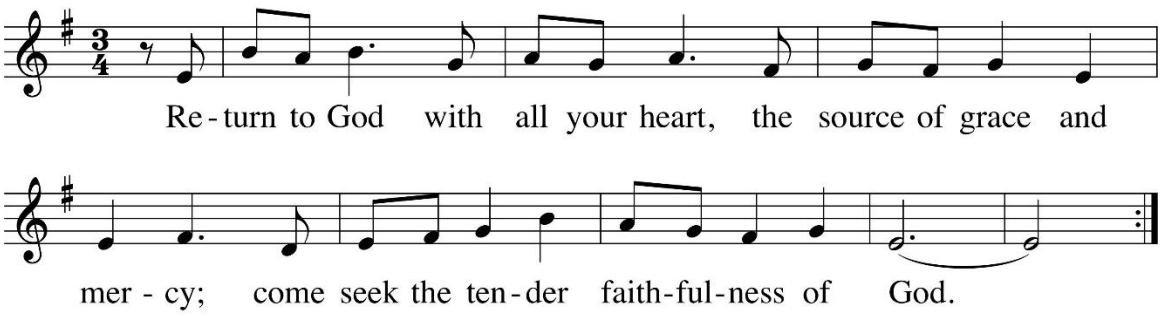
CHILDREN'S TIME (10:30 AM)

WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

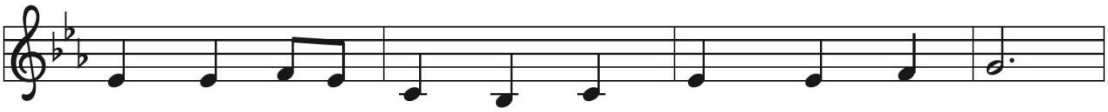


GOSPEL READING Matthew 4:1-11

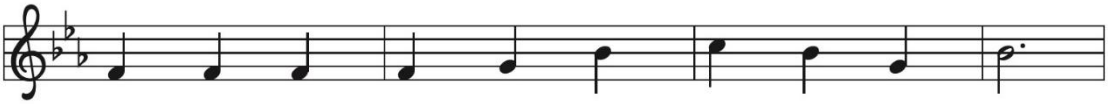
R: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON Pastor Sam Nelson

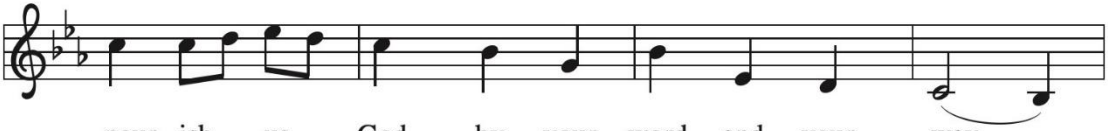
HYMN OF THE DAY When We Are Tested – ACS 922



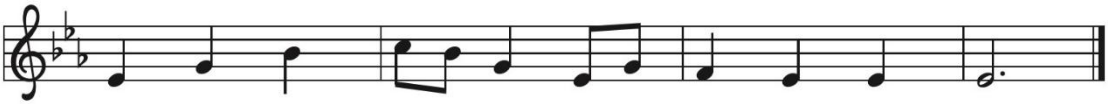
1 When we are test - ed and wres - tle a - lone,
2 When in the des - ert we cry for re - lief,
3 When we are tempt - ed to bar - ter our souls,
4 When we have strug - gled and searched through the night,



fam - ished for bread when the world of - fers stone,
plead - ing for paths marked by cer - tain be - lief,
trad - ing the truth for the pow'r to con - trol,
sort - ing and sift - ing the wrong from the right,



nour - ish us, God, by your word and your way,
lift us to love you be - yond sign and test,
teach us to wor - ship and praise on - ly you,
Sav - ior, sur - round us with cir - cles of care,



food that sus - tains us by night and by day.
trust - ing your pres - ence, our on - ly true rest.
seek - ing your will in the work that we do.
an - gels of heal - ing, of hope, and of prayer.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L: Lord in your mercy, **C: Hear our prayer.**

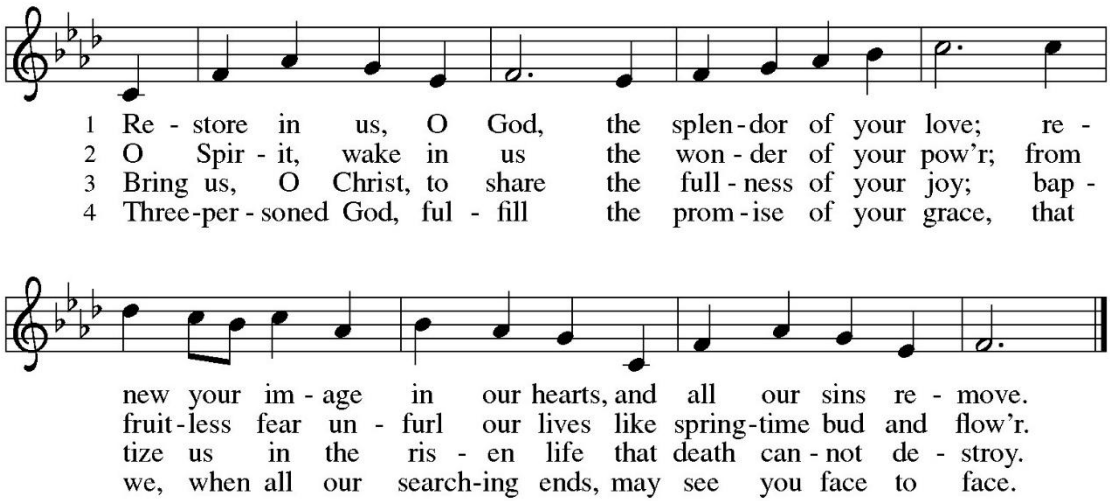
THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always, **C: And also with you!**

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

SPECIAL MUSIC "Come Along Home to Jesus"

OFFERTORY RESPONSE Restore in Us, O God – ELW 328 vs. 1 & 2



MEAL

GREAT THANKSGIVING

L: The Lord be with you, **C: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts, **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

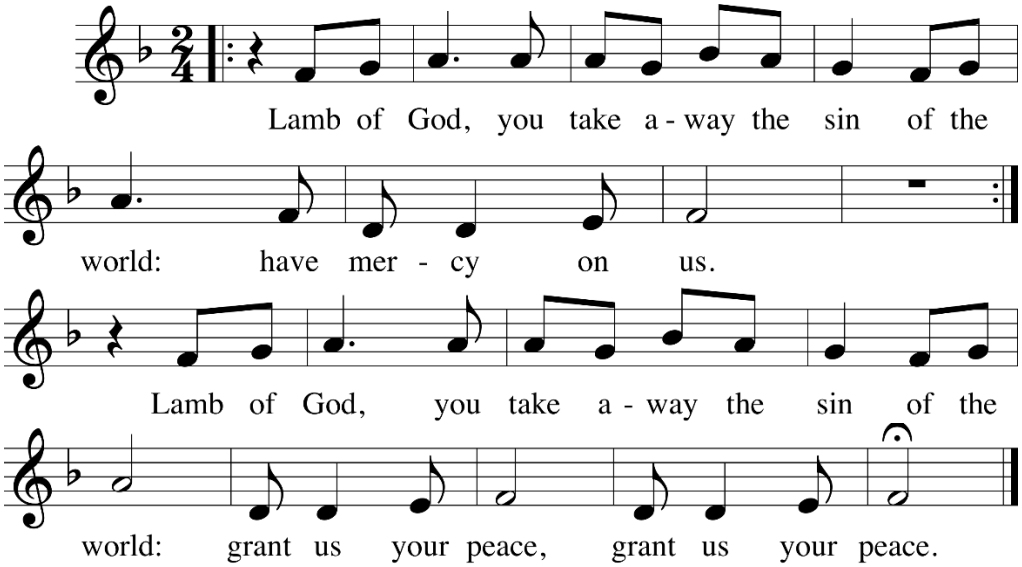
C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER ELW pg. 112

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.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION Lamb of God from Tree of Life



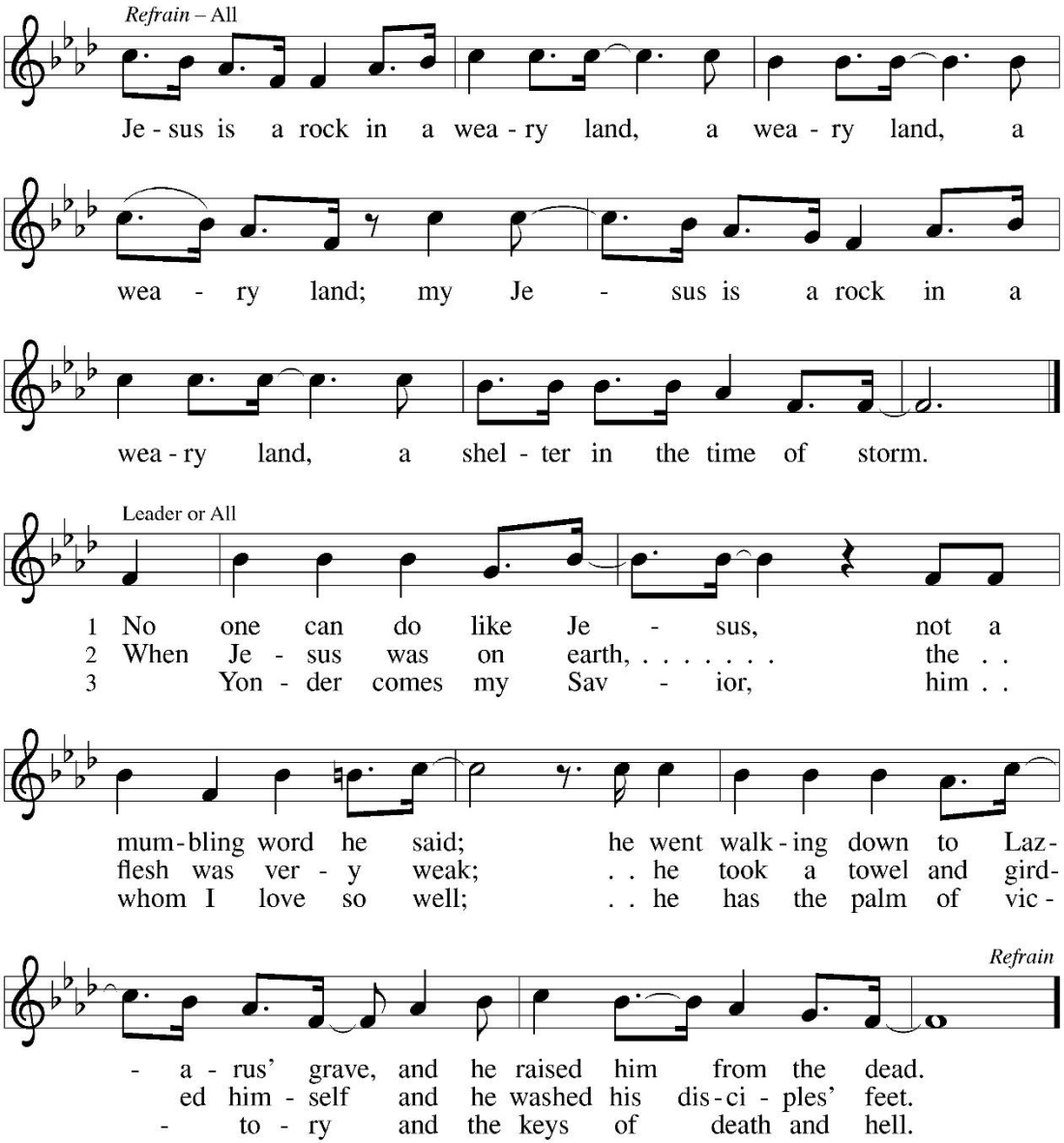
COMMUNION HYMN "Come to the Table of Grace" – WME

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land – ELW 333



DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, return to the Lord! **C: Thanks be to God!**

All Are Welcome!

We live in a diverse world. We are hurting, broken and heavy hearted. We are loving, joyous, and above all, we are welcoming. Regardless of the color of your skin, or the color of your hair; regardless of your gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, relationship status, or political affiliation, you are welcome here. We honor indigenous people and are committed to the work of anti-racism and the stewardship of the creation.

If you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, agnostic, Muslim, Jewish, seeking, have never set foot in a church, or are a life long Lutheran; you have a place here. If you own, rent, or have nothing at all; you are welcome here. If you are neurodivergent, fully abled, disabled, or a person of differing abilities; if you have regrets, fears, addictions, or afflictions; you have a place here.

All who are wise and all who are confused, all who have found love and all who have lost it, all who celebrate this welcome statement and all who fear it - are welcome here.
Come as you are and be celebrated for who you are. Your place is here. Bethlehem Lutheran is an All are Welcome church.

Reconciling in Christ

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Electronic Giving at Bethlehem

Offering gifts can be made electronically on our website **www.blcenc.org** under the contribute tab, or by scanning this QR code. There are options for one-time donations, recurring gifts, and special offerings. **No account is needed to donate on our website.**

You can also use the **Vanco Mobile App**. Simply download it from your app store, and search "Bethlehem Lutheran Church Encinitas" by name (there is no invite code). If you already have an account from our website, the same login information will work. If not, please sign up with a new account. **Thank You for Supporting Bethlehem!**

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