

St. Luke 6:35a

But love your enemies, and do good and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 23, 2025

Prelude

*The Processional Hymn *Blest Be The Tie That Binds* (ELW) No. 656

*The Confession and Forgiveness (ELW) page 94

P: In the name of the Father, and of the †Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: God of all mercy.....of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

P: Most merciful God,

C: We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P: In the mercy of almighty God,.....in the name of the Father, and of the †Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

*The Apostolic Greeting (ELW) page 138

P: 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.

*The Kyrie (*sung response*) (ELW) page 138

P:, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: Amen.

*The Hymn of Praise *What A Friend We Have in Jesus* (ELW) NO. 742

Listening for the Promise

Weekly Devotional

February 23, 2025—Seventh Sunday After Epiphany

“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”

-1 Corinthians 15:26 -

Nothing makes us more uncomfortable than the reality of death. The great enemy that is death reminds us quite painfully how helpless we are to prevent its vice-like grip from claiming the people we love, and one day laying claim to us. Death doesn't care about who we are, how old or young we are, how rich or poor we might be, it is an equal opportunity enemy. Death will come whether we have lived the healthiest life we could possibly know or whether we've not taken care of ourselves. The haunting words will soon be spoken as we near Ash Wednesday, "For you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19c)

One of the most frequently held misconceptions that I've come across as a pastor is how people view death as being a tool for God. It is expressed in words such as, "God needed another angel," or "It was God's will." While it may be intended to serve as a word of comfort, it can and has turned people off from God. Yes, it is hard to know what to say when we are confronted with the death of a loved one. Many people standing in front of the deceased family at the casket in the funeral home don't know what to say. My suggestion is to say very little. Assure the grieving of your love for them, that you are keeping them in your prayers.

Death is not God's friend. Death is not what God desires for us. But, death does not have the final word. Death's power was destroyed in the resurrection of Jesus. In rising from the dead, Jesus freed us from death's attempt to separate us from God. Paul wrote of this in Romans 8 where he states, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life,...will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:39)

Like the forces of sin and the devil, death is on borrowed time. In Revelation we read that death is going to be destroyed, cast out into the lake of fire (20:14) and death will be no more (21:4).

God does not steal loved ones away from us. In Jesus, God rescues us from death's grip, bringing us to the joy of heaven where there is no more sorrow, crying, pain, or death. God reunites us with our brothers and sisters in Christ of every generation. Against the great enemies of God, of which death is one, this is true: God wins!

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EMERGENCY CONTACTS
FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

PA Mental health support and referral line

1-855-284-2494

WASHINGTON, PA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS LINE

1-877-225-3567

WASHINGTON COUNTY BHDS LINE

724-228-6832

SCOTT BERRY DIRECT LINE

724-250-4079 (FOR CHURCH MEMBERS ONLY)

FOR OTHER NEEDS, CONTACT 211 OR THE CHURCH.

Sober House Living

724-228-2203

Turning Point at Washington

*Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray,

C: O God, You know our fears and lack of confidence. Forgive our willful ways, and defend our faith through the teaching of Your Christ, through whom You gather saints to give You glory without end. Grant this, we pray, through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading

Genesis 45:3-15

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Psalmody for the Day *(read responsively)*

Psalm 103:1-13

¹Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

²Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits,

³who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

⁴who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

⁵who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

⁶The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

⁷He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the people of Israel.

⁸The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹He will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger forever.

¹⁰He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him;

¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us.

¹³As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:21-26, 30-42

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

*The Gospel Acclamation *(sung)*

(ELW) page 142

C: Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

* The Gospel

Luke 6:27-38

C: Glory to You, O Lord. (sung after announcement of the Gospel)

C: Praise to You, O Christ. (sung after conclusion of the Gospel)

Children's Sermon

Pastor Grewe

(children leave for Sunday School)

Sermon

Rev. Robert B. Grewe

*The Hymn of the Day

Son of God, Eternal Savior

(ELW) No. 655

*The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection(+) of the body, and the Life everlasting. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adult Catechism class is on Tuesday at 11 and 7 pm. We are discussing the book we read over the summer. All are welcome. We look forward to you joining us in our discussion.

Adult Sunday School is held before our Church Service starting at 9:45 am in the church library. Come join us.

Bell Choir rehearsal is Thursday at 6:30 pm. We would love for you to join us. Please see Kris Briggs if you are interested, kkbrgs1@gmail.com. All are welcome.

Our **Dartball team** is looking for more members. Practices are Tuesdays at 7 pm. No experience is needed. Come join us for fun and fellowship. We hope to see you soon. Please contact Dennis Schmidt for information.

Chess Club meets on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm. All are welcome from beginners to experienced. We hope that you will join us for fellowship and fun. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

Feb. 25—Dartball Game at 7:30 PM—First Lutheran at North Buffalo.

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

*The Prayers of the Church (response)

P: Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

*Sharing of the Peace

The Musical Offering

*The Offertory

Create in Me a Clean Heart

(SBH) No. 27

*The Lord's Prayer

C: 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.

Announcements

*The Benediction (sung response)

C: Amen, Amen, Amen.

*The Recessional Hymn

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

(ELW) No. 631

Sending Song

"Be the Love of Christ"

*The Dismissal (response)

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

First Lutheran Church

92 W. Walnut St., Washington, PA

724-225-4040

e-mail: secretary@flcwash.church

On line service posted weekly on website: www.flcwash.church

The Rev. Robert B. Grewe

724-705-4050

revrob@flcwash.church

Dennis Schmidt, Lutheran Lay Worship Leader

J. Judson Lacko, Lutheran Lay Worship Leader

Matthew Cimino, Organist and Music Director

The Flowers on the Chancel are given to the glory of God.

The Lay Reader is

Acolytes are Lillah and Elijah Clark.

Counters/Greeters today are J. Black and R. Williams.

Welcome to our Visitors! The people of this congregation welcome you as you join us in worship this morning. Please sign the register, located in the narthex. If you have questions, please see the pastor or contact the church office.

Do you wish to become a member of First Lutheran Church? Please contact Pastor Grewe.

The Communion

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God: and re -

new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -

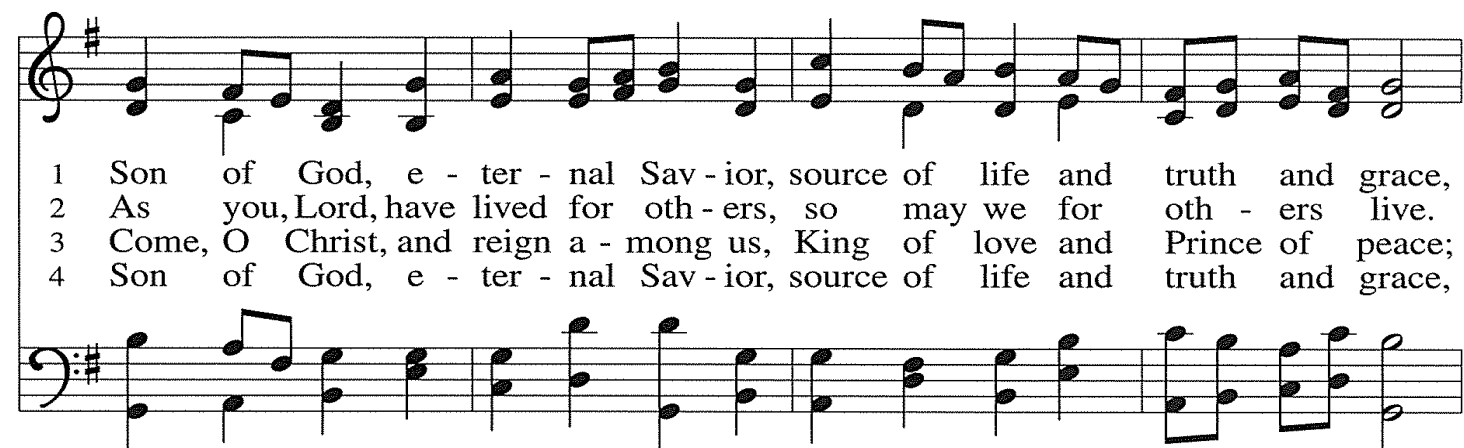
way from thy pres - ence: and take not thy Ho - ly

Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of

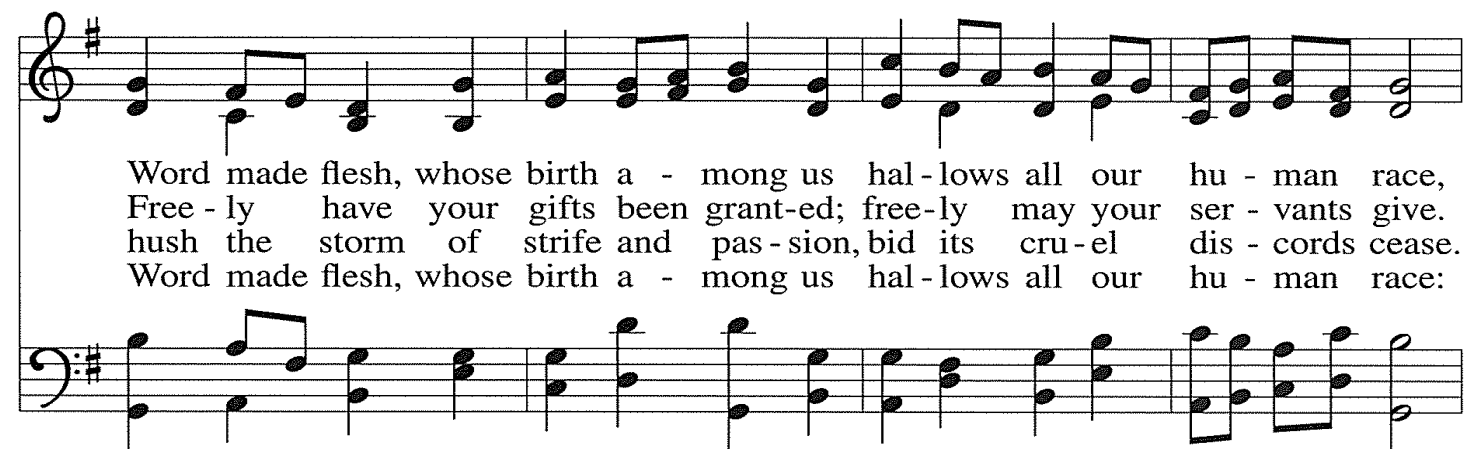
thy sal - va - tion: and up - hold me with thy free Spir - it.

Son of God, Eternal Savior

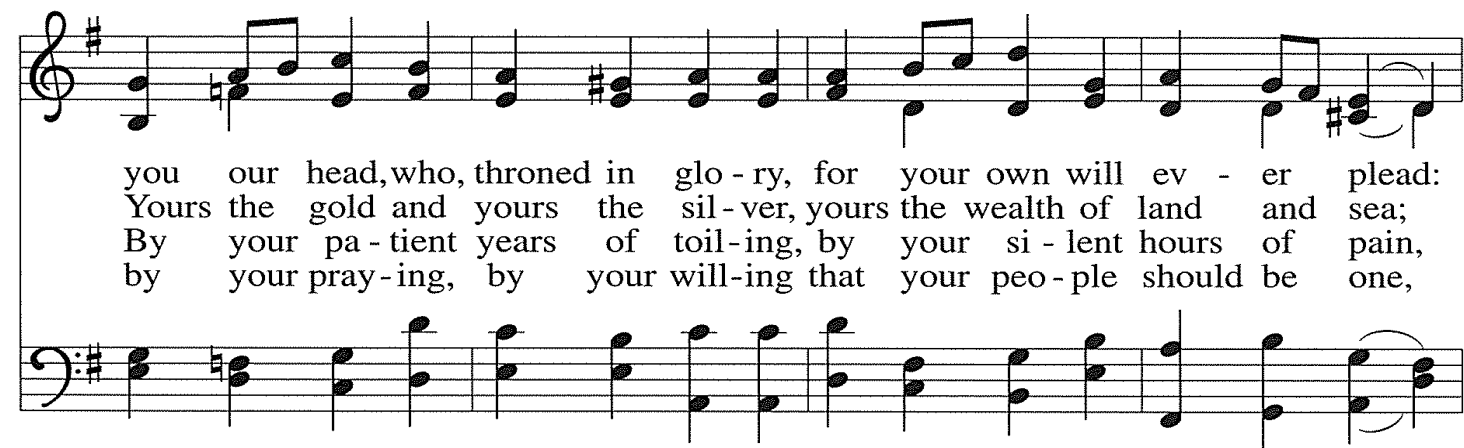
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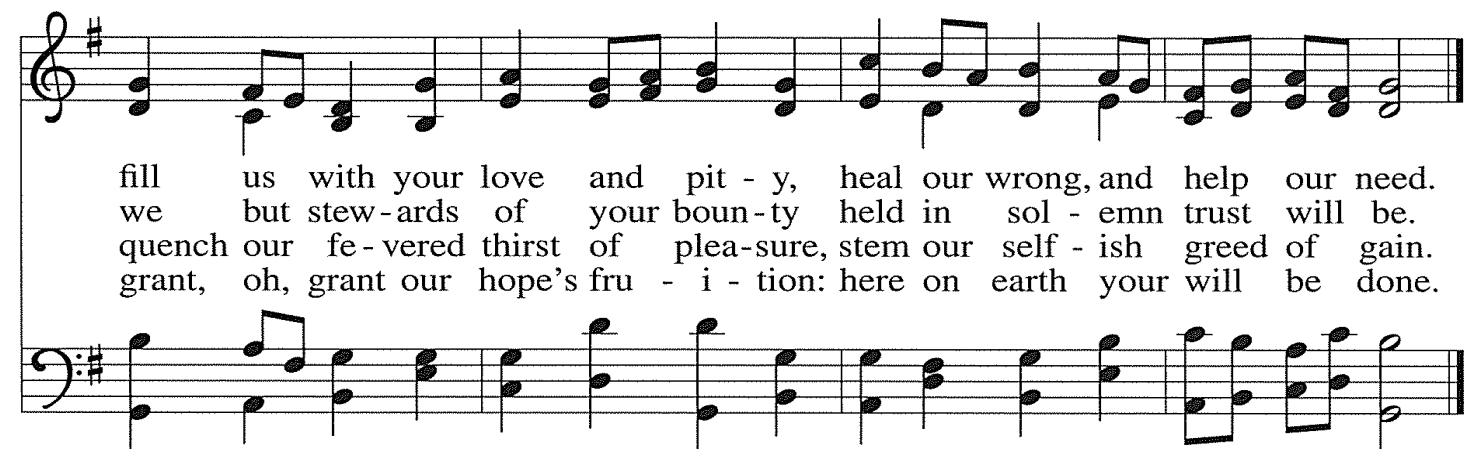
1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

Nursery: We welcome all children to be a part of worship, but we realize that sometimes the service can be too long for the little ones. We have a nursery for those attending to the needs of infants and small children. There is a speaker in the nursery so that parents can still hear the service. You are welcome to use the nursery for the entire service, or just a small part.

The Flower Chart for 2025 is posted in the narthex. If you wish to place flowers, (real or artificial) near the altar, sign your name opposite the date of your choice. You will be reminded of your date and asked for the wording you want in the bulletin two weeks before the due date.

Sign-up sheets are posted to host a coffee hour in 2025. Please write your names under the month you would like to host. The coffee hours have been a wonderful time of fellowship and the hosts have been awesome! Thank you!!

Sign-up sheets are posted for Lay Readers in 2025. Please sign up.

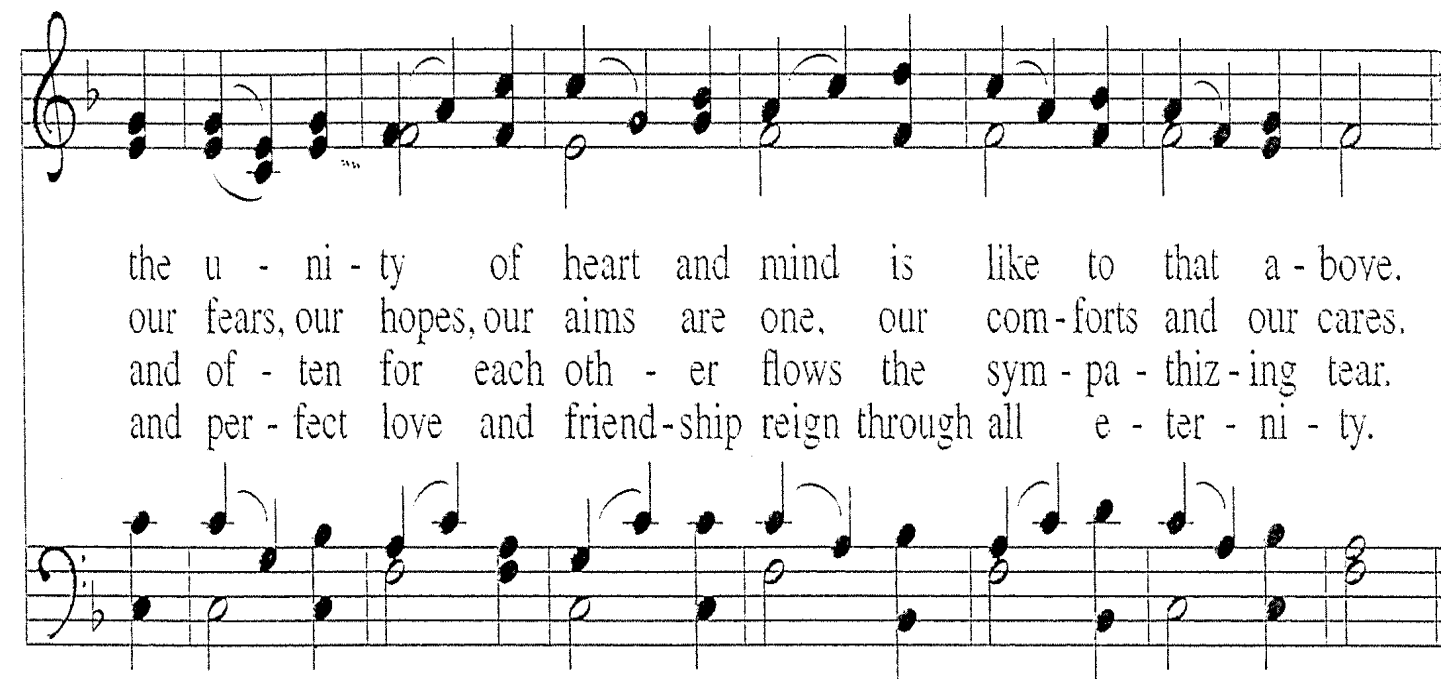
Please pray for those in need of healing:

Isaac Christian, the Pollana family, Sylvia Sunstrum, Tyler, Danielle Sherman, Amy Verderber, Lou Mayne, Judy, Brooke, Debbie, Sayward, Jim H. Judy Coble, Linnese, Donna B., Karen John. Neil Bassi, Phyllis Daniels, Beckie Wood, Bridgette, Alex Houck, Stacy Carroll, Rhonda Hendrickson, Ron Erdmann & Belinda, Wilda Dirbi, Leeann Vitteck, James, Lori Mauer, Budd Platts, Mark V., John, Ed Dupas, Sandy Salerno, the Gavazzi family, Janelle Henderson, Rex Gibson, Pat Dupas, Gwen Roberts, Judy Domrowsky, Tammy, Cheyenne Walker, Judi, Lenny & Sandy, Larry Downing, Carol Cancelmi, Amanda Laib, Sandy Hebrank, Jennifer Sasek, Larry Zimmerman, Jean Shearer, Elizabeth, Phyllis, Joe Kern, Lisa Wilds, Julia Jeffcoat, Richard Hager, Rob, John, Terri Newton, Holly Hiser, Shari Kienzle, Susan Westcott, Eric Fritz, Terry Jurkovsky, Karen Dawson, Judd Lacko, Cadence, Sandy Mannsman, Robyn Cameron, Ian, Isaiah, and Alecia, Nettie Walsh and her parents and family, Greg Mason, and Joanne Reck.

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

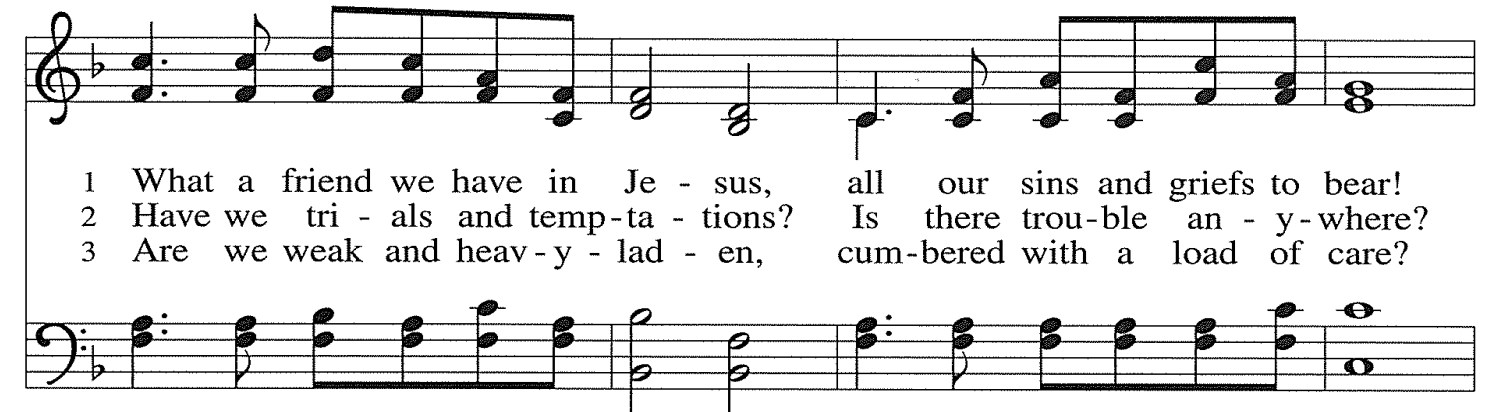


1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris-tian love;
 2 Be-fore our Fa-ther's throne we pour our ar-dent prayers;
 3 We share our mu-tual woes, our mu-tual bur-dens bear,
 4 From sor-row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;

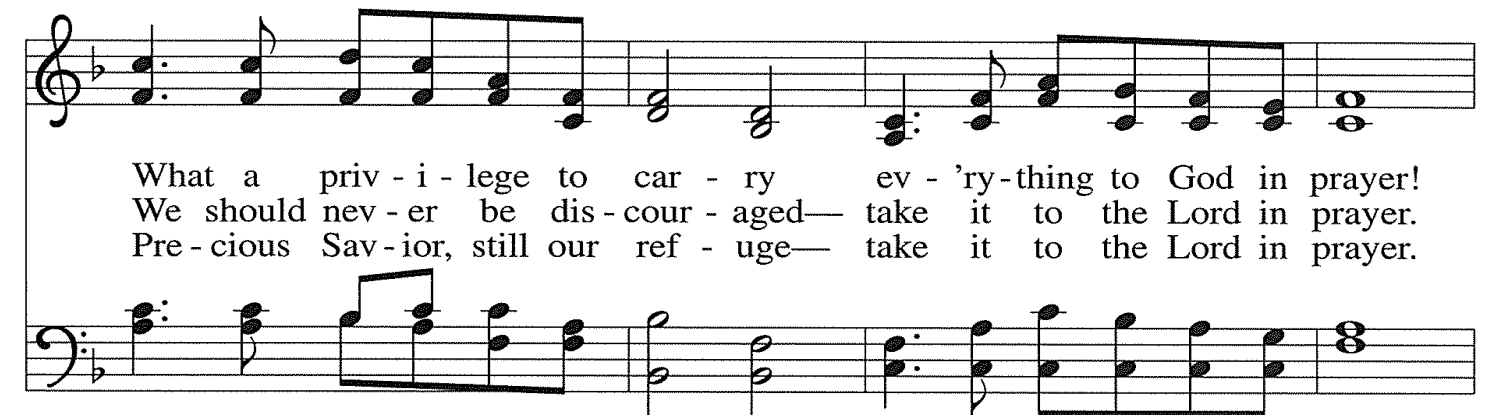


the u-ni-ty of heart and mind is like to that a-bove.
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com-forts and our cares,
 and of-ten for each oth-er flows the sym-pa-thiz-ing tear.
 and per-fect love and friend-ship reign through all e-ter-ni-ty.

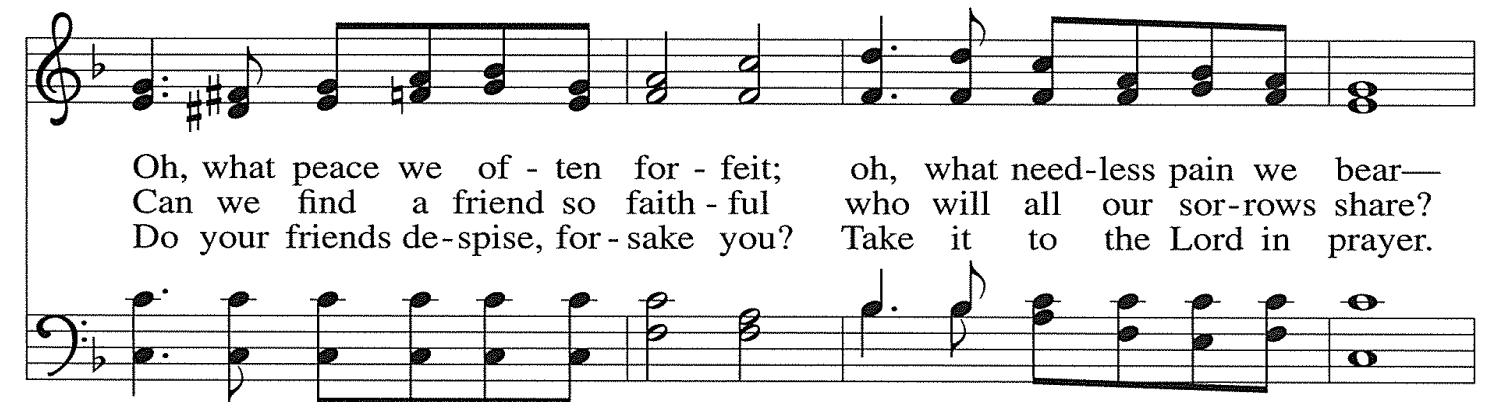
What a Friend We Have in Jesus



1 What a friend we have in Je-sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
 2 Have we tri-als and temp-ta-tions? Is there trou-ble an-y-where?
 3 Are we weak and heav-y-lad-en, cum-bered with a load of care?



What a priv-i-lege to car-ry ev-'ry-thing to God in prayer!
 We should nev-er be dis-cour-aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.
 Pre-cious Sav-ior, still our ref-u-ge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of-ten for-feit; oh, what need-less pain we bear—
 Can we find a friend so faith-ful who will all our sor-rows share?
 Do your friends de-spise, for-sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be-cause we do not car-ry ev-'ry-thing to God in prayer!
 Je-sus knows our ev-'ry weak-ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.
 In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so-lace there.