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Twenty-Second Sunday after Trinity

1928 BCP Holy Communion

Sunday, November 16, 2025 + 10 AM St. John's Chapel Del Monte

Welcome to St. John's Chapel!

We are glad that you are worshipping with us this morning and pray that your experience here is a blessing to you. If you are a visitor, please fill out a Connection Card (pew rack) and place it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher. Let this bulletin be your guide through the service; it includes everything you need.

We are in Ordinary Time and the liturgical color for this part of the year is green. Green really fits this season because it is all about growth in the Spirit and being nurtured. It is the kind of growth and nurturing that creates abundant fruit. In fact, in St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians, Paul tells us that if we welcome the presence of the Holy Spirit within us, then the Spirit will produce fruit in us. "The fruit of the Spirit," he says, "is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Gal. 5:22–23). Through baptism, these virtues, these gifts of the Spirit, are planted in our soul. It is during this season of Ordinary Time that we work on cultivating the gifts of the Spirit.

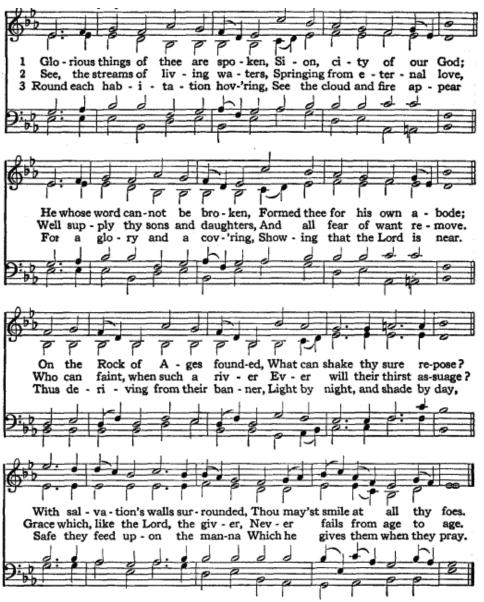
Please stay for coffee in the Parish Hall after the service.

Throughout the service the People read the words in bold and italics.

PRELUDE

Standing as able

HYMN 385 Glorious things of thee are spoken



4 Blest inhabitants of Sion, Washed in the Redeemer's blood! Jesus, whom their souls rely on, Makes them kings and priests to God. 'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings:
And as priests, his solemn praises
Each for a thank-off'ring brings,

COLLECT FOR PURITY

And the Priest, standing reverently before the Holy Table, shall say the Collect following, the People kneeling

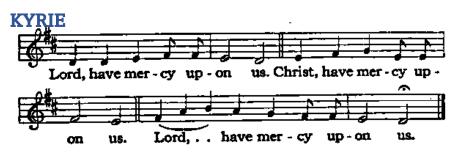
ALMIGHTY God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

THE SUMMARY OF THE LAW

Then shall the Priest, turning to the People, say

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.



COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Priest says to the people

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit. People:

Priest: Let us pray.

The people kneeling as able

Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household the Church in continual godliness; that through thy protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve thee in good works, to the glory of thy Name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The people sit

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isajah 65:17-25

Reader: A reading from the 65th chapter of the Book of Isaiah, beginning at the 17th verse.

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and

they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

Reader: Here endeth the Old Testament Lesson.

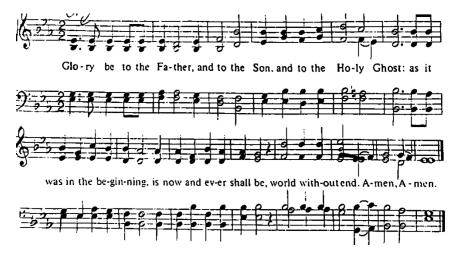
Then shall follow a Portion of the Psalms. And at the end of the Psalm, shall be sung or said the Gloria Patri. Stand as able

PSALM 32 Beati quorum

Reader: We will read Psalm 32 responsively by the whole verse.

- 1 Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven,
- * and whose sin is covered.
- 2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth no sin, * and in whose spirit there is no guile.

- 3 For whilst I held my tongue, * my bones consumed away through my daily complaining.
- 4 For thy hand was heavy upon me day and night, * and my moisture was like the drought in summer.
- 5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee; * and mine unrighteousness have I not hid.
- 6 I said, I will confess my sins unto the LORD; * and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.
- 7 For this shall every one that is godly make his prayer unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found; * surely the great water-floods shall not come nigh him.
- 8 Thou art a place to hide me in; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; * thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.
- 9 I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go; * and I will guide thee with mine eye.
- 10 Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding; * whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, else they will not obey thee.
- 11 Great plagues remain for the ungodly; * but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD, mercy embraceth him on every side.
- 12 Be glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; * and be joyful, all ye that are true of heart.



The people sit

THE EPISTLE: Philippians 1:3-11

Reader: A reading from the 1st chapter of the book of Philippians, beginning at the 3rd verse.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

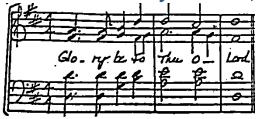
Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Reader: Here endeth the Epistle.

THE GOSPEL: St. Matthew 13:31-33, 45-46 All standing as able

Priest The Holy Gospel is written in the 13th chapter of St. Matthew, beginning at the 31st verse.

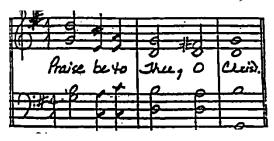
GLORIA TIBI Glory be to thee, O Lord



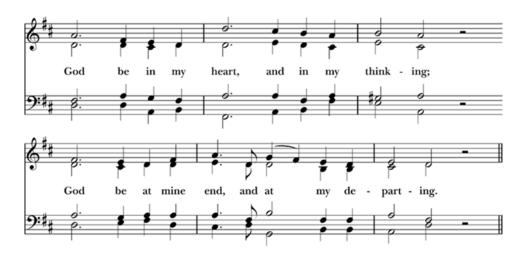
Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.

LAUS TIBI Praise be to thee, O Christ







The people sit
SERMON

No Place

Fr. Rick Miles

All stand as able

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man: And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried: And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: And he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets: And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

<u>Please be seated</u> ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthday Prayer

Watch over your child/children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their heart may your peace which passes all understanding abide all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Anniversary Prayer

God of peace, your love is generous and reaches out to hold us all in your embrace. We pray now for the couple(s) before us, committed to each other in love. Fill their hearts with tenderness. Stay with them as they travel through good times, through trouble, or through change. Bless their home, their partings, and their meetings. Make them worthy of each other's best and tender with each other's dreams. May they always trust in your love. Amen.

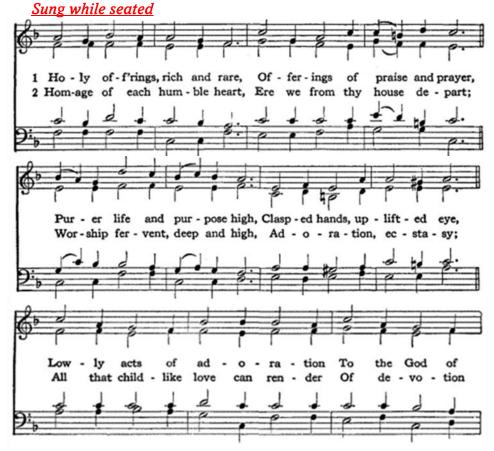
Prayer for Safe Travel

Living God, the creator of all there is and whose presence we find wherever we go: preserve those who travel; surround them with your loving care; guard them from all that may harm them: and bring them in safety and joy to their journey's end. Amen.

OFFERTORY

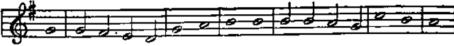
Priest Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labour to the Lord.

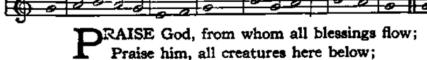
HYMN 480 (v. 1 & 2) Holy off'rings, rich and rare





DOXOLOGY HYMN 139 Standing as able





Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

AMERICA HYMN 141, v. 4



4 Our fathers' God, to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might,
Great God, our King. Amen.

Standing as able OFFERTORY PRAYER

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou are exalted as head above all.

Priest All things come of thee, O Lord,
People And of thine own have we given thee.

PRAYER FOR THE WHOLE STATE OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

<u>People kneel</u> and then shall the Priest, facing the altar, say

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church.

Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men; We humbly beseech thee most mercifully to accept our alms and oblations, and to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy Divine Majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: And grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech thee also, so to direct and dispose the hearts of all Christian Rulers, that they may truly

and impartially administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion, and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and other Ministers, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments. And to all thy People give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive thy holy Word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

We pray especially for: June, Rosemary, Tricia, Jerry and Carol, Whitney, David and Jane, Sonny and Diana, Frank and A.J., Jill, Brighten, Randy, John S., Luke, Mackenzie's family and friends, Gloria, Gail, Lila, Bill B., Geoffrey and Amy, Art and Debbie, Danny, Logan, Nancy, Mousy and family, Christine and family, Connie, Jeremey, Carl, Zane, Bethany and family, Pete T., Bill S., Joanne, Mara Stephanie, Fr. Vincent Raj, Rocco, Claudette, Christina, Rori and Shane, Art C., Dean and Monica, James, Ron, Eva, Jane B., Peter, and all those whom we name in our hearts.

And for those in military service: Houessou Jonas, The Brown family, Alex Murray, The Birkelbach family, Walid Abou Chaar, Fouad El Hayek, Elizabeth Keller, Christine Puglia, The Riley family, The Logan Behr family, The Bingham family, The Elliot family, The Hollingsworth family, Zack and Ebony LeMaster, The O'Donnell family, and The Schaeffer family.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, remembering all those who continue in our hearts; beseeching thee grant them continual growth in thy love and service, and to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen*.

Then shall the Priest, facing the people, say

Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

Then shall this General Confession be made, by the Priest (facing the altar) and all those who are minded to receive the Holy Communion, all humbly kneeling as able

CONFESSION

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; We acknowledge and

bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; The burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; And grant that we may ever hereafter Serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy Name; Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

Then shall the Priest (the Bishop if present) stand up, and turning to the People, say

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him; Have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

Then shall the Priest say

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to him.

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. St. Matthew 11: 28.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *St. John 3:16.*

Hear also what Saint Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. *1 Timothy 1:15*.

Hear also what Saint John saith.

If anyone sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our sins. *St. John 2:1-2*.

Communion at St. John's

All people, including children, seeking a deeper understanding of God through Christ, are invited to receive Holy Communion.

Kneeling or standing at the altar rail, simply hold out both hands to receive the bread. The chalice (cup) will come to you next. If drinking from the chalice, help guide the chalice to your lips when it is offered. Alternatively, you may hold the bread and dip (intinct) it in the wine, being careful not to let the wine touch your fingers. You may also cross your arms in front of your chest to receive a blessing by the priest, instead of receiving the bread and/or the wine. Gluten Free wafers are available – just ask the priest for one at the rail.

HOLY COMMUNION

After which the Priest shall proceed, saying THE SURSUM CORDA (people standing as able)

Priest. The Lord be with you.

Answer. *And with thy spirit.*Priest. Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

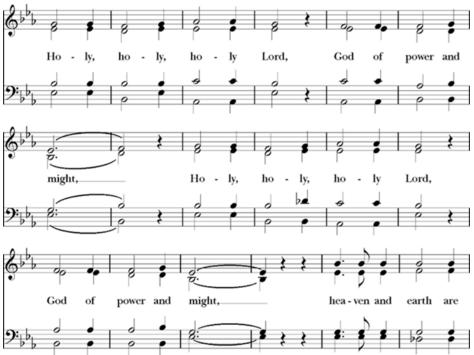
Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

Then shall the Priest turn to the Holy Table, and say (people standing as able)

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

SANCTUS





The people kneeling as able. When the Priest, standing before the Holy Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the People, and take

the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again:

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took Bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me.

Likewise, after supper, he took the Cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

THE OBLATION

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy Divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now

offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

THE INVOCATION

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood. And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him. And

although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end.



And now, as our Saviour Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Priest and people

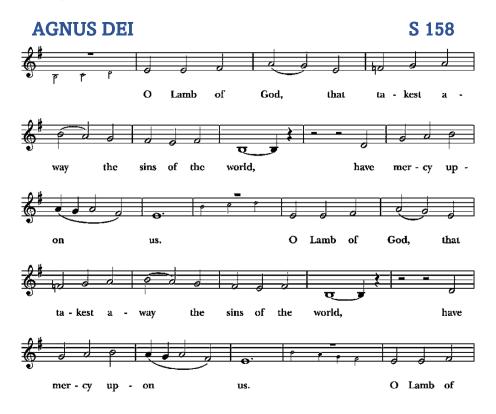
Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Then shall the Priest, <u>kneeling down</u> at the Lord's Table, say [with the people], in the name of all those who shall receive the Communion, this Prayer following

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

Priest and people

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.







COMMUNION

The priest turns to the people and says

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Then shall the Priest First receive the Holy Communion in both kinds himself, and proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner, (if any be present,) and, after that, to the People also in order, into their hands, <u>all devoutly</u> <u>kneeling as able at the altar rail.</u>

Then shall the Priest say, the people kneeling as able, POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

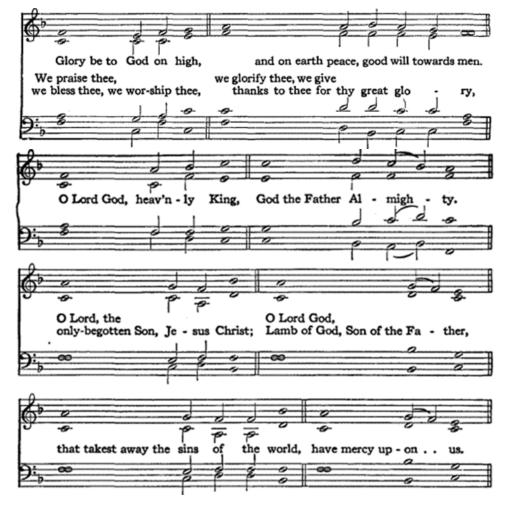
Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of his most precious death and passion. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do

all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Then shall be sung or said the Gloria in excelsis, <u>all</u> <u>standing as able</u>

GLORIA 739





THE BLESSING

Then, the People kneeling, the Priest (the Bishop if present) shall let them depart with this Blessing

The Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen*.

Standing as able

HYMN O day of peace that dimly shines



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DISMISSAL

Priest Let us go into the world rejoicing in the

power of the Spirit.

People Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



Today's Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God by Jerome Politzer in loving memory of his parents, The Rev. Jerome and Mrs. Beverly Politzer.

Serving Today

Acolyte: Art Brost

Lay Reader: Elizabeth Barratt

Usher: Chibby Ogbuka

Upcoming

- Sunday, November 23, Morning Prayer at 10 AM
- Sunday, November 30, First Sunday in Advent, Morning Prayer at 10 AM

2026 Stewardship Campaign ends TODAY. If you need a pledge card, there are extra cards on the table at the back of the Sanctuary. We need everyone's help. It's not too late to pledge!

CHRIST BEFORE US



As of November 12, the following households have pledged their faith in our community, and we are so very grateful: Dick & Elizabeth Barratt, Geoff & Amy Holland, Gail Strandberg, D'aun & Rick Miles, Jean Givetz, Joan Gorry, Marti Myszak, Sonny & Diana Vaughn, Monica Nathan, Eva Richards, and Jerome Politzer.

Pastoral Emergency? Please call the church office (831) 375-4463, or to get in touch with Fr. Rick call (336) 613-2829.

The bulletins are completely underwritten by a private donation.

Staff

Priest-in-Charge: The Very Rev. Dr. Richard Miles

Organist: Mary Clare Martin

Parish Administrator: Cynthia Brown

Bookkeeper: Brieanne Goldberg

Sexton: Jose Martinez

Vestry & Officers of the Parish

Senior Warden: Geoffrey Holland

Junior Warden: Art Brost Treasurer: Monica Nathan Clerk: Elizabeth Barratt

Jean Givetz Amy Holland Chibby Ogbuka

Ministry Directors

Director of Readers: Monica Nathan Director of Ushers: Chibby Ogbuka

Director of Acolytes: Art Brost

Altar Guild: Alice Bowhay, Jean Givetz, Gail Strandberg, Marti Myszak, and Margee Bennett Weddings: Margee Bennett and Cynthia Brown Historians/Archivists: Richard & Elizabeth Barratt

The Nicene Creed, Week 7 of 8

To commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea (May-August 325), the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter, bishop of Wisconsin, has written a series of reflections on the Nicene Creed and its relevance for contemporary Episcopalians. Over the coming weeks, we'll share his teachings, written mostly in a question-and-answer format.

I read or heard somewhere that the root meaning of credo is to "give the heart," so intellectual assent is not the point.

I am not sure that is accurate. In any event, to say that the root meaning of *credo* is to "give the heart" and reduce its meaning to only that is like saying that every time the atheist, Richard Dawkins, says, "Good bye," he really means, "God be with ye." However helpful it might be in adding color to our understanding, the meaning of words and phrases are not reducible to their roots. The meanings of words evolve. What did credo mean to those who used it in the 4th century? One need only look at the historical context and development of the Creed to know that it was meant to delineate right belief from wrong belief as well as to shape the direction of the heart (and imagination).

Both are necessary. You cannot give your heart to something without some knowledge or belief about that to which you are giving your heart. And you cannot truly come to know something without giving your heart to it. Loving and knowing go together. Can I claim to love my wife but then believe whatever I want to believe about the kind of person she is, trying to fit her into some fantasy of my own making? Getting to know her as she is is what it means to love her. And it is by attending to her in love that I get to know her.

We are not supposed to be able to say the Creed with integrity if we find it incredible (a related word). The very reason for trying to shift the meaning of *credo* from intellectual assent is self-contradictory in as much as it is based on the conclusion that some aspects of the Creed are no longer intellectually credible.

Continuing to say the words of the Creed without intellectual assent and meaning them in their common sense warps language. Either we mean it or we don't. Or we stretch the meaning of words beyond all logic. What if we used the same approach to language with the marriage vows? Can I have an affair and then tell my wife she needs to get over her unsophisticated, literalistic interpretation of "forsaking all others?"

Reducing the Creed to "matters of the heart" to minimize its intellectual claims tailors it to the heritage of a naïve romanticism prioritizing feeling over reason. It is an odd thing to do for those who (as Episcopalians sometimes love to do) pride themselves on being in the "thinking person's church."

Stay tuned for next week's final installment!

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