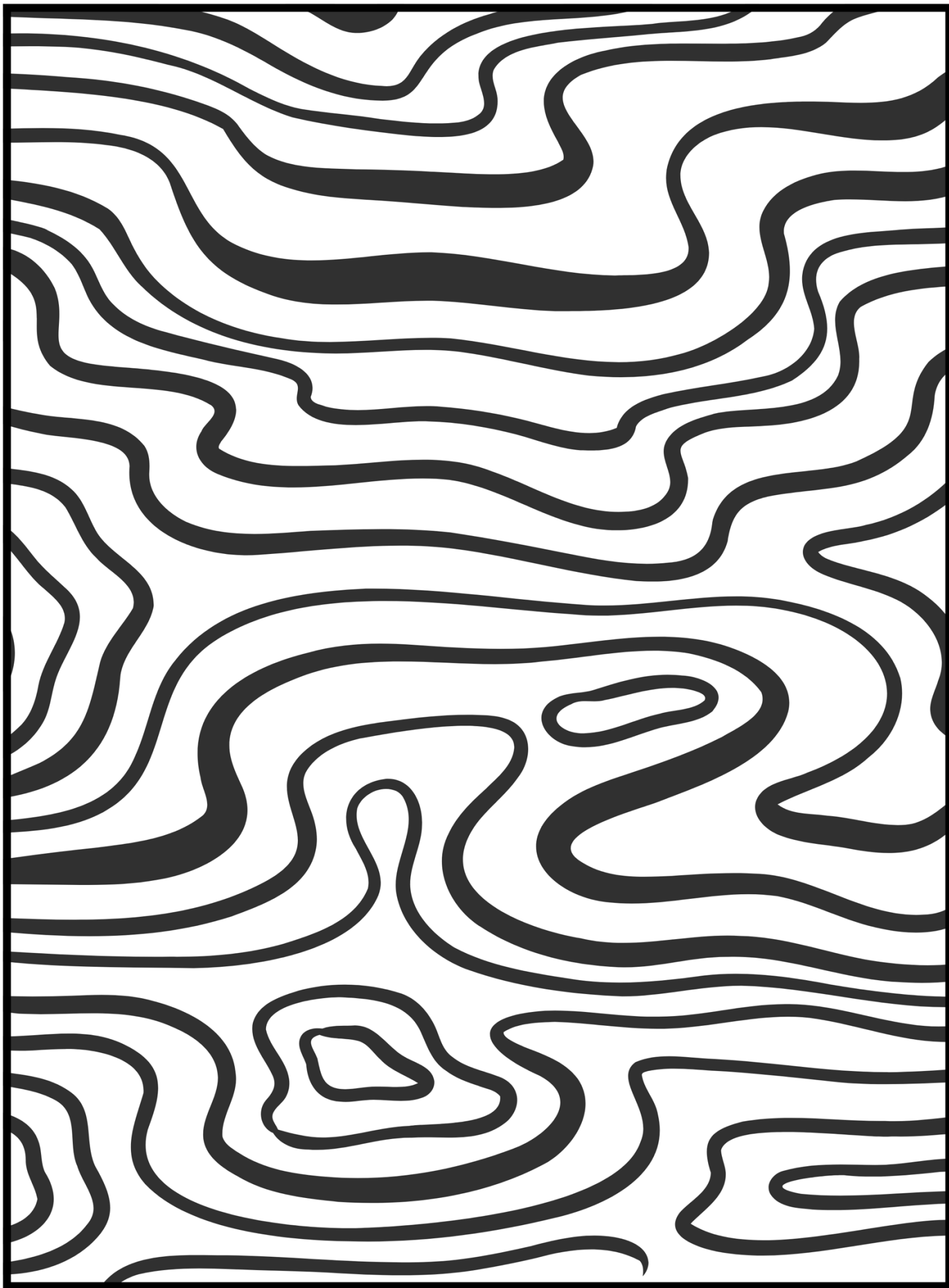


The Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA presents
Fall Theological Retreat 2025



October 12-14, 2025
Stoney Creek Hotel in La Crosse, WI





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Introduction

Together, we will explore how the Spirit is boldly drawing us into a pneumatological estuary of death and resurrection — a font of muddy, transformative material where what no longer serves us is submerged and new life emerges.

Drawing from Scripture, Lutheran theology, and contemplative practice, we will discover a refreshing opportunity to reclaim our baptismal identity as a source of courage and renewal. We will engage in vital conversations that will invite us to deepen our spiritual leadership and inspire new vision for navigating today's complex ministry challenges. Come eager to be renewed, emboldened, and sent forth with greater clarity about how our baptismal calling empowers truly transformational ministries and speaks life directly into our fractured world.

What is the Fall Theological Retreat?

*Later on that day, the disciples had **gathered together**, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then he showed them his hands and side. The disciples, **seeing the Master** with their own eyes, were awestruck. Jesus repeated his greeting: “**Peace to you**. Just as the Father sent me, I send you.” Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. “**Receive the Holy Spirit**.”*

—John 20:19-22 (The Message)

The mission of the Fall Theological Retreat is to offer Church leaders a dedicated and unique time and space designed to strengthen relationships, reinforce identity, inspire theology, and extend sabbath, all with peers and colleagues, near and not-so-near, of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.

The goals of The Fall Theological Retreat are to provide time and space for pastors, deacons, and other church leaders to:

1. See the Master. Learn through compelling, timely, relevant content.
2. Receive the Holy Spirit. Attend vibrant community worship services.
3. Gather together. Connect and enjoy fellowship with peers and colleagues.
4. Find some peace. Take time for the kind of rest that meets our unique needs.

Thank You

to the Fall Theological Retreat Planning Team.

This event is organized by the synod's Fall Theological Planning Team. They meet throughout the year to dream, plan, review feedback, work with the bishop, and discern the call of the Holy Spirit.

The Office of the Bishop wishes to extend many thanks to this team! You are encouraged to do the same when you see these leaders during the event.

Deacon Travis Beck

Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne

Rev. Timothy Bowman

Rev. Jeremy Johnson

Rev. Kristen Massa

Rev. Erik Olson

Deacon Kris Oppegard

Rev. Drew Yackel

Office of the Bishop staff:

Ashley Corbett

Rev. Matt Larson

Schedule

Sunday

- 4-5:45 Registration is open (outside Northwoods Salon)
Bishop's Reception, bar open (outside Northwoods Salon)
- 5:45 Bishop's welcome and dinner
- 7:00 Bishop's forum
- 7:30 Worship

Monday

**Breakfast on your own (continental breakfast available from the hotel starting at 6:30 AM)*

- 8:30 AM Session One
- 10:15 Break
- 10:35 Worship
- 11:30 AM Lunch
- 12:30 PM Session Two
- 1:50 Introduce workshops
- 2-5 Workshop Options

**Dinner is on your own!*

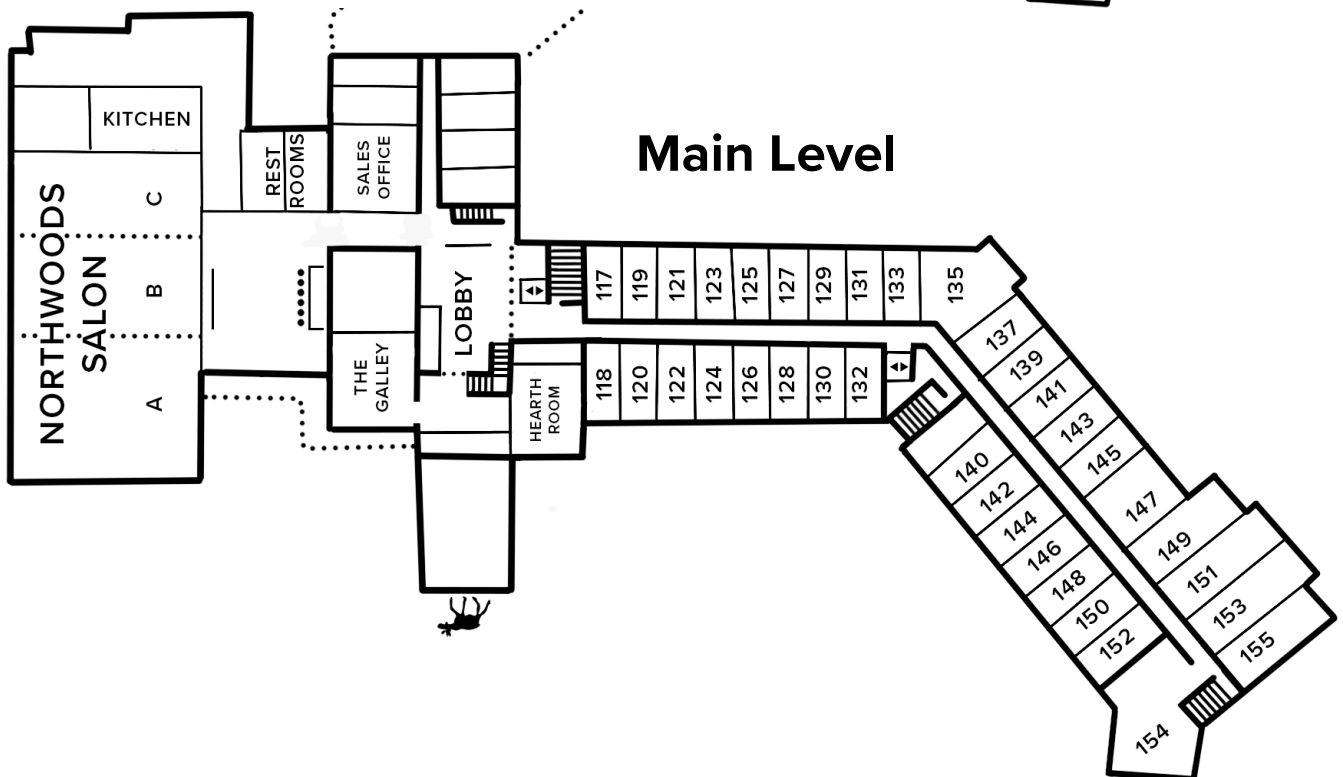
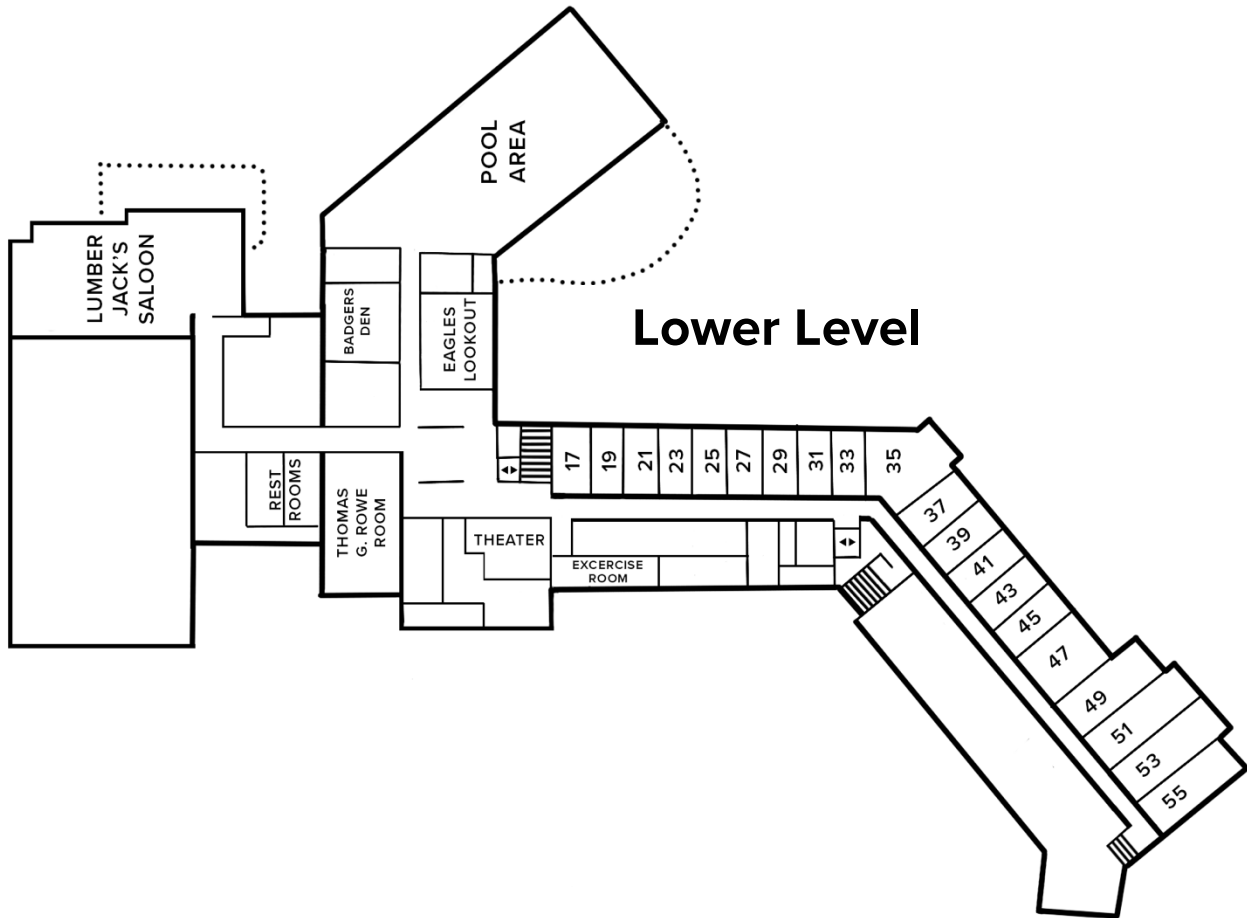
- 6:00 PM Open invitation dinner group (aka Free Radicals) meets in lobby

Tuesday

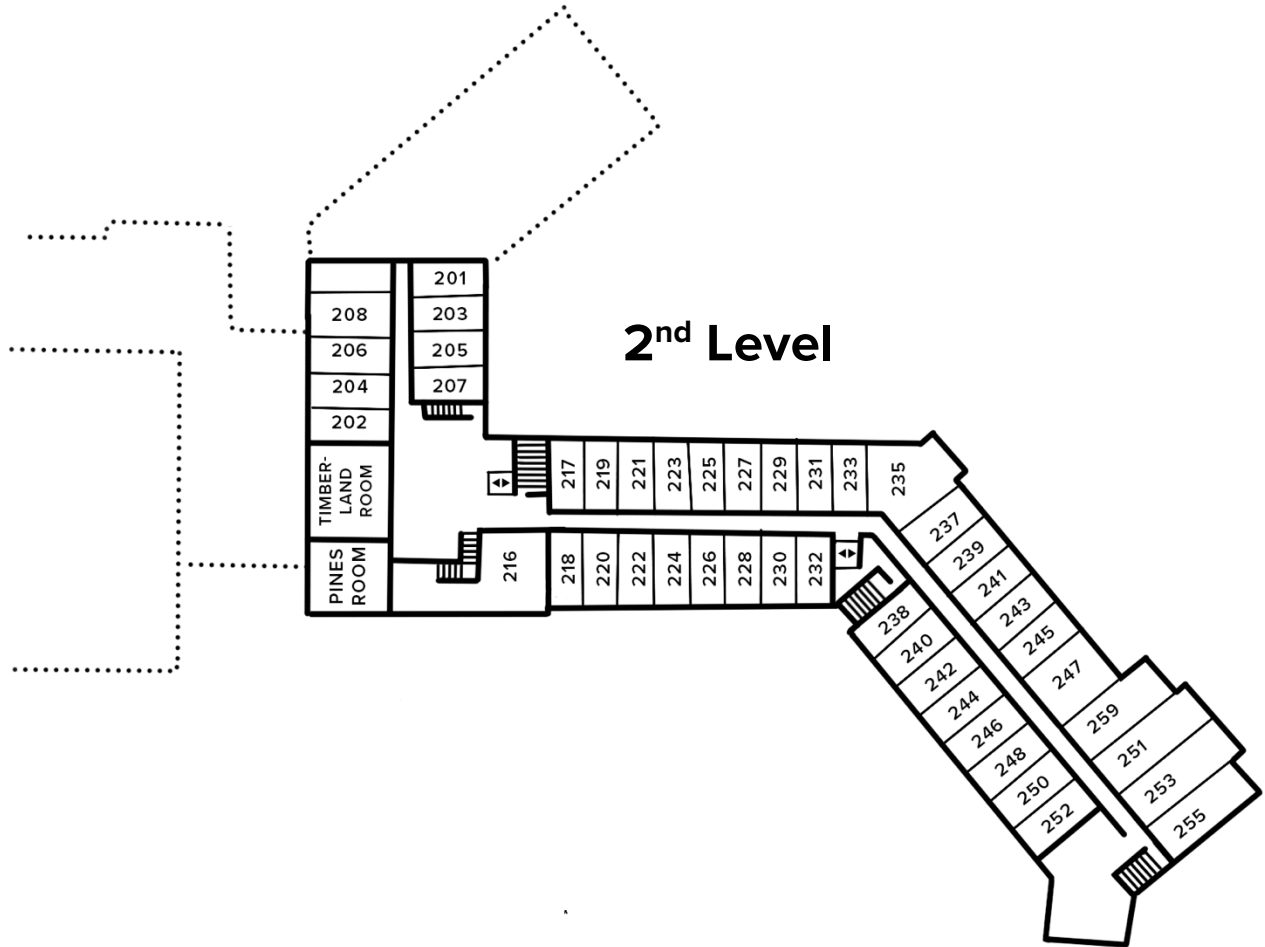
Breakfast on your own (continental breakfast available from the hotel starting at 6:30 AM)

- 9:00 AM Session Three
- 10:40 Break
- 11:00 Closing worship
- 11:45 Departure

Hotel Map



Hotel Map



Stoney Creek Hotel

3060 S Kinney Coulee Road

Onalaska, WI 54650

608-781-3060

stoneycreekhoteles.com/hotel/la-crosse

Offering

The 2025 Fall Theological Retreat offering will be directed toward acute needs in South Sudan.

This year's Fall Theological Retreat offering will be directed to acute needs among our global companions in South Sudan. Recent USAID budget cuts have created immediate and serious challenges for families and communities already facing hardship. Through this offering, we are able to stand alongside our siblings in Christ, sharing resources that will provide tangible support in the midst of these urgent needs. As the event gets closer, we will share additional details. For now, we invite you to prepare to give generously, trusting that your gifts will be used faithfully and directly to strengthen the church's witness of hope and solidarity in South Sudan.

Ways to Give:

1. Online at: semnsynod.org/giveonline or by scanning the QR code. Select the "Theo Retreat Offering."

2. During worship on Tuesday as baskets are passed.



Need more options? Connect with Rev. Emily Carson!

Special Guest

Speaker:

Rev. Leila Ortiz

Bishop Emerita of the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod, ELCA



In August of 2025, The Rev. Leila M. Ortiz completed a six-year term as bishop of The Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod of the ELCA and is currently "All but dissertation" with a concentration in Systematic/Contemporary Theology and special interest in Protestant Latinx Liberation Theologies and the impact of Latina hermeneutics on Lutheran ecclesiology. As of October 1, 2025, she is serving as Pastoral Theologian in Residence at Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan, New York.

Rev. Ortiz has significant experience in global Lutheran theological dialogue, serving as a U.S. representative at The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Global Theological Consultations in Wittenberg, Germany (2012) and Geneva, Switzerland (2016). During the LWF Assembly in Karakow, Poland (2023), she was elected to serve a five-year term on the council and appointed to the Ecumenical Relations Committee. In June of 2025, she was elected to serve on the, "Special Committee for the Augsburg Confession 500," to develop a framework that can serve as a compass for LWF Communion Office programs, member church participation, and preparation for the Assembly in 2030.

She is also a published theologian, contributing to "Global Lutheranism: Vitality and Challenges," co-authoring a chapter in "Faith on the Avenue: Religion on a City Street" (Oxford University Press, 2014), and publishing in Gather Magazine, Dialog: A Journey of Theology, and workingpreacher.org.

When not immersed in theological discourse or pastoral care, Rev. Ortiz enjoys exploring New York City's diverse neighborhoods and cuisine, hosting friends and family, and experimenting with recipes that blend her Puerto Rican heritage with flavors from her travels.

Workshops

Artem Divina

with Rev. Kristen Massa, Associate Pastor at Central Lutheran Church in Winona

Time: 3:30-5 PM

Location: Badger's Den

God is many things, but one of the first things they did was create. If we are made in God's image, then we are all creative beings. Let go of your hinderances, that F- in art you got in kindergarten, and your negative self-talk, and come join us to learn the art of "Artem Divina"—that is, "Divine Art." This spiritual practice includes reading or listening to scripture, listening to the Holy Spirit for words, images, or colors that come to mind, then spending time to rest and respond by creating. Artem Divina follows the same pattern of lectio Divina—read, reflect, respond, and rest.

Pastor Kristen will guide you in a short lesson on watercolor techniques, and then we will create using the Artem Divina template. All abilities are welcome and encouraged, as there is no right or wrong way to create!

Finding Your Way to a Sermon – Efficiently!

with Rev. Glenn Monson, teaching pastor at Mount Olive in Rochester

Time: 3:30-5 PM

Location: Timberland Room

Gerhard Forde, longtime professor at Luther Seminary, once famously said, "People don't care what you think about God; they care what God thinks about them." This workshop will give you a proven method for discerning what God might be saying in any given text. A step-by-step method, from tips for hearing the text anew to ideas for sermon format, will be provided in this workshop. We will even work through the texts assigned for this coming Sunday, so you can leave the workshop with your sermon prep half done! Pastor Glenn has taught this method to pastors in Tanzania, Colombia, and in a workshop in the Zumbro conference. He has also done preaching coaching in small groups or one-on-one via Zoom.

Improv Olympics: Team-Based Play & Improv Fun

with Geoff Smith

Time: 2-3:20 PM

Location: Salon

****Space is limited to 20! Signup opens at the registration table on Monday at 7:30 AM.***

Join us for a fast-paced, joy-filled workshop featuring spontaneous hijinks in an Improv-Olympics-style format, participants will be assigned to teams and engage in lighthearted, interactive games that may, entirely by accident, sharpen your skills in active listening, collaboration, adaptability, and storytelling. No experience necessary. Bring your willingness to play, laugh, and be present.

Up to 20 participants. *Overflow attendees are welcome* to cheer on our teams, shout suggestions, and to laugh and applaud along as part of our rowdy, supportive audience.

Your host, Geoff Smith, is a seasoned collaborative storytelling facilitator, improviser, and (should the need arise—which it often does) an enthusiastic Zumba party host!

Lowered in Love: The Gift of Community, Vulnerability, and Grace in Public Life

**with Rev. Chris Meester, Associate Pastor at Trinity Lutheran in Owatonna, and
Rev. Laurel Meester, Associate Pastor at First Lutheran in Blooming Prairie**

Times: 2-3:20 and 3:30-5 PM

Location: Thomas G. Rowe Room

Church leaders live a public life. We are invited into a congregation's greatest joys—births, baptisms, confirmations, job success, marriages, retirements—and also into its deepest sorrows—funerals, diagnoses, divorces, doubts, and more. As pastors, we carry our own moments of grief and celebration too. How do we honor these seasons honestly while remaining faithful to our call of caring for others?

This session explores the tension of leading in both joy and sorrow as public figures. Together, we will reflect on God's presence in our vulnerability, discover practices that sustain authenticity without losing healthy boundaries, and consider how our own witness can point people to Christ in life's highest and lowest moments.

Portico Benefits

with Rev. Timothy Schroeder, Regional Representative for Portico Benefits Services

Time: 2-3:20 and 3:30-5 PM

Location: Hearth Room

Learn from your Portico Benefits Representative.

Putting Your Head in the Buzzsaw: Talking Politics in a Congregational Setting

**with Rev. Justing Boeding, the Directing Pastor of United Lutheran in Red Wing, and
Rev. Todd Buegler, the Senior Pastor of Trinity Lutheran in Owatonna**

Times: 2-3:20 and 3:30-5 PM

Location: Eagle's Lookout

In congregational life, we have historically stayed away from discussions of politics. But in our current world, where daily decisions are made that cause some people joy and others pain (especially to those on the margins), how can our faith-talk not engage the world of politics? And, as those called to steward Christian community, how do we do that wisely? Justin and Todd don't necessarily know the answer to this question. But in their congregations, they have tried to hold

healthy space for conversation about the place where faith and politics meet. Our conversation together will focus on the questions of wise stewardship of conversation, best practices, and holding the tension between faith and politics while maintaining community.

Tell Me a Story: Discerning Congregational Identity, Values, and Guiding Principles.

with Rev. Dr. Scott E. Olson, Retired Intentional Interim Pastor and Dean of Faculty for the Lutheran Transitional Ministry Association (LuTMA)

Time: 2-3:20 and 3:30-5 PM

Location: Pines Room

In this workshop, participants will gain hands-on experience about a way to engage congregations through the power of their stories. Stories tell us a lot about who we are and what we value. They are also fascinating to hear and to share. Dr. Olson will not only explain strategies he has used in his intentional interim work but also give participants the opportunity to practice them. Please come prepared with a story about your congregation to share. If anyone would like to have an extended conversation about interim ministry, Dr. Olson would be willing to meet as a group or singly. He'll be available during the entire retreat.

Waves of Change: Paying Attention to What's Shifting in Our Contexts with Deacon Travis Beck, Director of Worship, Music, & Arts at Mount Olive in Rochester

Time: 3:30-5 PM

Location: Salon

At any given time in our congregations and communities, there are incoming and outgoing trends, ideas, practices, and paradigms. What's emerging for one congregation may be fading away in another; what's tried and true in one community may be dragging another down. In this workshop, we'll wrestle with the question, "What's happening now in our contexts that we need to pay attention to?" We'll reflect on the waves of change happening around us, share what's making us hopeful or concerned, and explore what implications and opportunities we see as we look to the future.



**Southeastern
Minnesota Synod**
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



2026 Ballot Positions

Synod Secretary

Position is nominated by Synod Council

Augsburg University Corporation Board

Up to 3

Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council

At large members: up to 4 lay and 5 rostered

Youth member (17 or younger at election): 2

Young adult (age 18-30 at time of election): 1

Nomination forms must be submitted online at:
semnsynod.org/nominations

Due date: March 8, 2026

Questions can be directed to: nominations@semnsynod.org

Synod Nominating Committee:

Rev. Matthew Griggs	Blue Earth River Conference pastormattgriggs@hotmail.com	2023-2026
Rev. Maureen Hagen	Cannon River Conference pastor@vasalutheran.org	2023-2026
Rev. Heath Queen	Minnesota River Conference queenh1559@gmail.com	2025-2028
Katherine Holger	Root River Conference kdtoad@hotmail.com	2025-2028
Deacon Robert Tewes	Zumbro River Conference roberttewes64@gmail.com	2023-2026
Lisa Dierks Synod Vice President	Committee Chair lisamnrd1@gmail.com	2025-2029



Sunday Worship

GREETING

L: Beloved in Christ, we are gathered as pastors and leaders of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. We come from many places, many communities, many stories.

Just as rivers flow from many sources, so too does the Spirit gather us together in Christ.

C: We are one body in Christ.

We are rooted in God's promises.

We are renewed by the Spirit for ministry in this time and place.

GATHERING SONG

“Waterlife“ (ELW No. 457)



1 Be - fore I can re-mem-ber the cov - e - nant was sealed
2 A sim - ple sweet be - gin - ning, a lov - ing place to start:
3 My hope and ex - pec - ta - tion for true com-mun - i - ty



with Fa - ther, Son, and Spir - it, in wa - ter was re-vealed.
Christ be - gan the sing - ing that swells with-in my heart.
be - gins with res - ur - rec - tion, his death and life in me.



The cleans-ing was for cer - tain, with wa - ter and the Word;
His love be-came my call - ing, his life my min - is - try.
His Spir - it fills the Bod - y: his church through wa - ter sees



gen - tle words were spo - ken, in heav - en they were heard.
His name is my a - dop - tion in - to his fam - i - ly.
prom - ise for to - mor - row, his wa - ter-life in me.

Refrain

All



They were sing-ing wa - ter-life, be - gin - ning life, wa-ter-life



all my life, wa-ter-life, Spir - it life, wa - ter - life.

THE SOIL OF OUR LANDS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

L: Beloved in Christ, we are gathered as pastors and leaders of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. We come from many places, many communities, many stories.

Just as rivers flow from many sources, so too does the Spirit gather us together in Christ.

We give thanks for those who have lived and served before us—saints of the church, mentors in ministry, and ancestors in faith—who shaped the soil of our lives and our calling.

We also recognize that the soil we bring from across southeastern Minnesota is Dakota homeland, held sacred since time immemorial. We honor the Dakota Nations, give thanks for their stewardship of this land, and commit ourselves to walk with justice, humility, and respect.

C: We are one body in Christ.

We are rooted in God's promises.

We are renewed by the Spirit for ministry in this time and place.

L: Soil holds memory. It holds what has lived, what has died, and what has been transformed into nourishment for new life.

In this soil rests both death and the promise of resurrection.

Representatives from each conference come forward with soil.

Blue Earth River Conference

Cannon River Conference

Minnesota River Conference

Root River Conference

Zumbro River Conference

L: As this soil is joined together, so too are we joined in Christ — one body, rooted in promise, ready for what the Spirit will grow among us.

C: Together, this soil becomes one. It is a sign of our shared lives in Christ and the common ground of ministry we walk.

L: In this soil lies what no longer serves us, what we have laid down, what the Spirit is transforming. But in Christ, we trust that even in the muddy places, new life emerges.

LIVING STONES GATHERED IN CHRIST

As we sing together "Wade in the Water," we invite you to come forward, take a stone, and place it in the sand at the base of the vessel. Each stone is unique, just as our lives and ministries are; as you place it, reflect on what you bring to God's service—your hopes, prayers, gifts, or burdens.

SONG

“Wade in the Water” (ELW No. 459)

Refrain
All



Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,



wade in the wa - ter, God's a-goin' - a trou-ble the wa - ter.

Leader All



1 See that host all dressed in white,
2 See that band all dressed in red,
3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
4 If you don't be-lieve I've been re - deemed,

God's a-goin' - a trou-ble the



wa - ter; the lead - er looks like the Is - ra - 'lite,
looks like the band that . . Mo - ses led,
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com-ing on me,
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream,

All *Refrain*



God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: WADE IN THE WATER, African American spiritual

READING

Romans 6:3-5

³Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

⁴Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(moment of silence for reflection)

NEW LIFE IN THE WATERS OF BAPTISM

L: Tonight, we also remember that our lives are not only soil, but soil touched by water.

In baptism, the Spirit boldly draws us into a pneumatological estuary — a muddy, transformative font where death and resurrection meet. What no longer serves us is submerged, and from these waters, new life rises.

C: With water and word, God claims us.

With water and word, God renews us.

With water and word, God sends us again for the sake of the world.

L: Gracious God, in this soil and in this water, you meet us again. Take what is weary, broken, or spent. Bury what no longer gives life. And by your Spirit, raise up in us courage, clarity, and joy for the days ahead.

C: We go renewed in Christ.

We go rooted in God's promises.

We go sent by the Spirit to bring life to all we meet.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

SENDING SONG

"Baptized and Set Free" (ELW No. 453)

Baptized and Set Free



1 We are peo - ple cre - at - ed, cho - sen by God.
2 We are fed and we're nour - ished, filled and re - freshed.
3 We are nour - ished by wa - ter, all liv - ing things,
4 Now with praise and thanks - giv - ing, we join the song.



Then we're washed, ev - er gent - ly, in mer - cy and love.
Then our hun - ger re - turns and a - gain we are blessed.
and by life that the Spir - it a - bun - dant - ly brings.
All are wel - come! We gath - er to sing loud and strong.



Sin has pow - er no more. Je - sus o - pened the door
For what - ev - er the need, God is great - er in - deed:
As we jour - ney toward home, may your pres - ence be known:
Not en - slaved, but set free! From now on, all will be



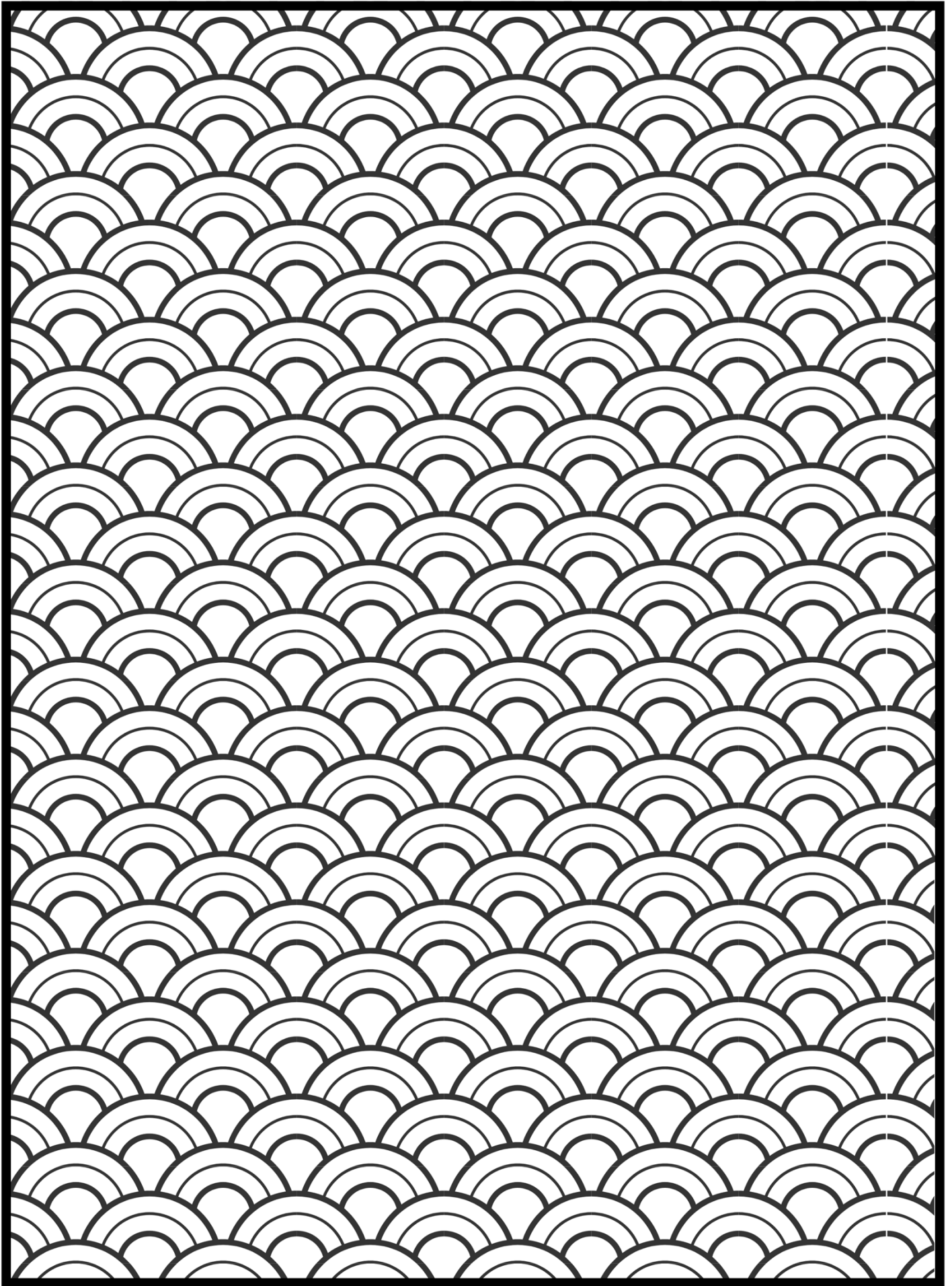
to a foun - tain bring - ing heal - ing, and whole - ness and more.
end - less o - cean, al - ways deep - er than all of our need.
pre - cious riv - er, ev - er - flow - ing, now car - ry us home.
one in Je - sus, one in wa - ter, bap - tized and set free!

Text: Cathy Skogen-Soldner, b. 1956
Music: BAPTIZED AND SET FREE, Cathy Skogen-Soldner
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Monday Worship

This service is adapted from a shared worship practice in Bishop Ortiz's Metro D.C. synod where the host site "travels" from congregation to congregation. It invites varied forms of individual prayer as well as corporate, intercessory prayer and communal reflection around a scripture text.

You will not need this booklet to fully participate as instructions will be given verbally.

GATHERING

Introduction & Instructions

Rev. Leila Ortiz

INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

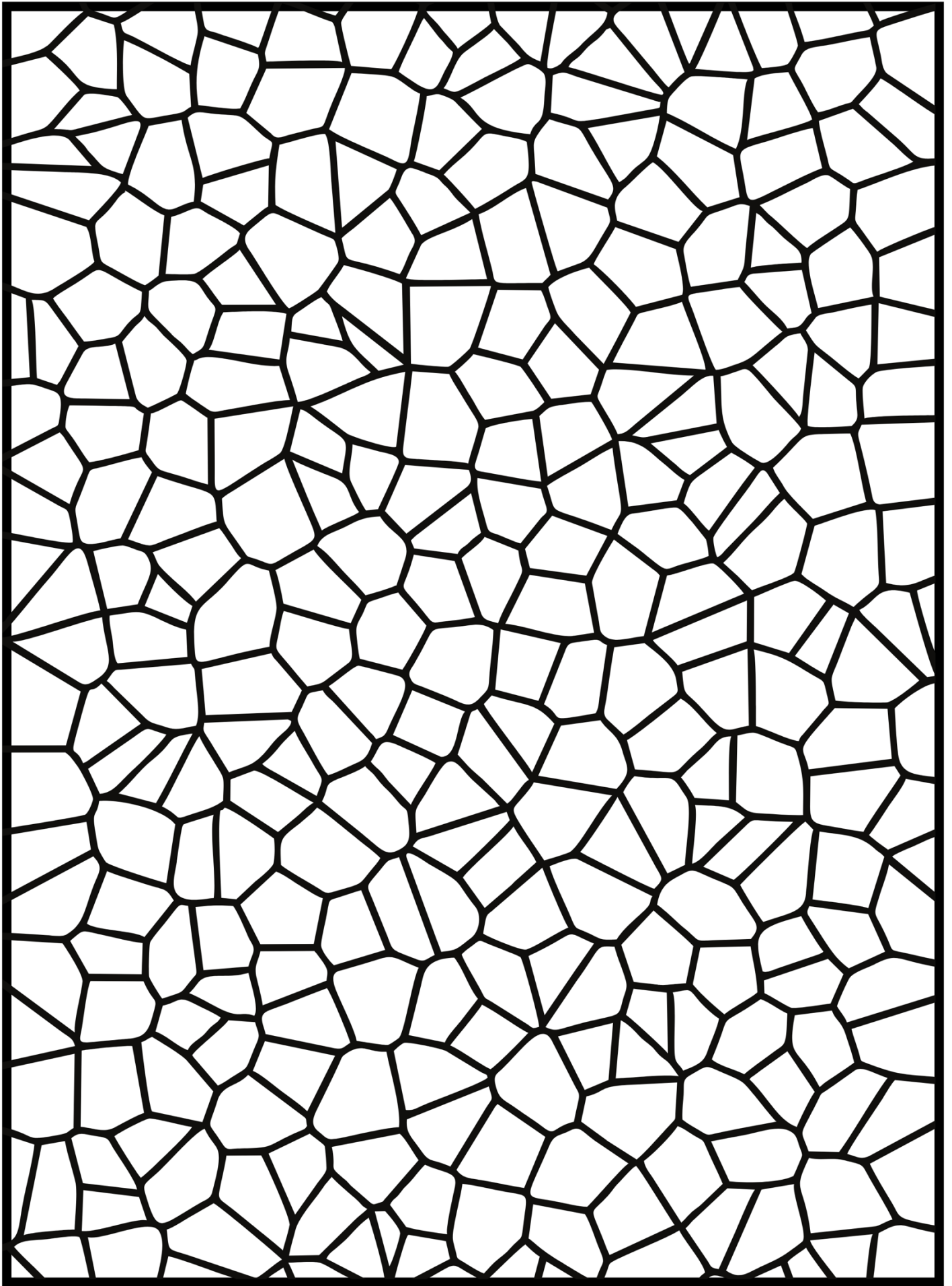
WORD

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

SONG

PEACE

SENDING



Tuesday Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP

Thanksgiving for Baptism (adapted from *Pray, Praise, and Give Thanks*, p. 30)

We praise you, O God, for water—
the Blue Earth, Cannon, Minnesota, Root,
Zumbro, and Mississippi Rivers;
the rain that nourishes the loon and the wild rice;
the water for drinking and washing.
We praise you, O God, for water.

We praise you, O God, for water.

We praise you, O God, for our water stories—
your spirit sweeping over the waters of chaos;
your people nourished with water from the rock;
your healing of Naaman who washed his leprosy away.
We praise you, O God, for water.

We praise you, O God, for water.

We praise you for the waters of Jesus—
his baptism in the Jordan,
the sea which stilled at his command,
the Samaritan woman who will never be thirsty again.
We praise you, O God, for water.

We praise you, O God, for water.

We praise you, O God, for this font,
for you breathe into this water
and birth us each day into your peace and joy.
We praise you, O God, for baptism.

We praise you, O God, for baptism.

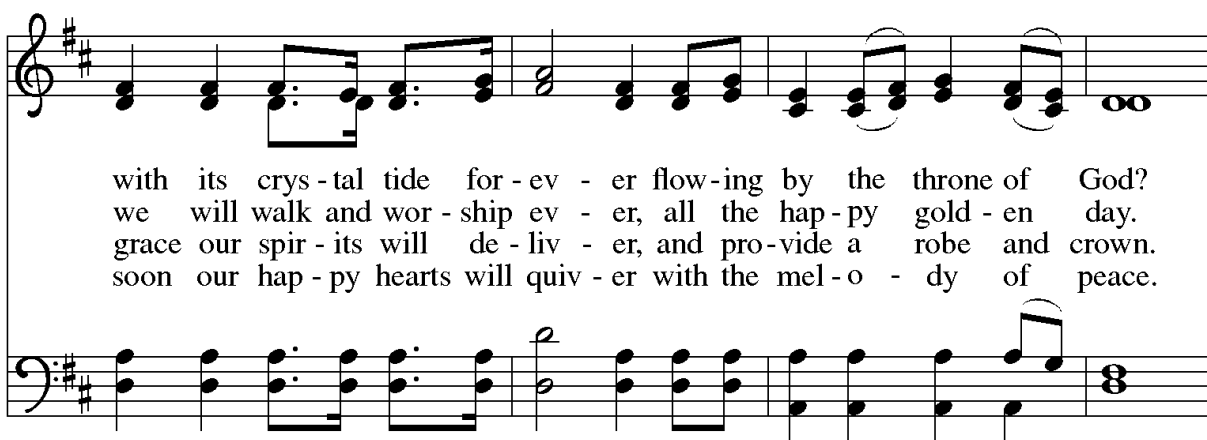
O God, you are the sea of holiness, the spring of life, the cloud of mystery.
To you be all praise and thanksgiving, now and forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG

“Shall We Gather at the River” (ELW No. 423)



1 Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have trod,
 2 On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,
 3 Ere we reach the shin - ing riv - er, lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;
 4 Soon we'll reach the shin - ing riv - er, soon our pil - grim - age will cease;



with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow - ing by the throne of God?
 we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the hap - py gold - en day.
 grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro - vide a robe and crown.
 soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the mel - o - dy of peace.

Refrain



Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, the beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er;



gath - er with the saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

GREETING

L: The kindness of Jesus, the love of our Creator,
and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Springs of Water, Bless the Lord” (ELW No. 214)

Refrain – All

Springs of wa - ter, bless the Lord.

Give God glo - ry and praise for - ev - er.

Leader or All *Refrain*

1 Buried with Christ in death, you are raised with him to life.

2 Bathed in the foun-tain of life, you are born to a liv - ing hope.

3 You are God's work of art, cre - ated in Christ Jesus.

4 You be - long to Christ, in whom you have been bap - tized.

5 All of you are one, u - nited in Christ Jesus.

6 Re-joice, all you bap-tized, called to be chil-dren of God.

Text: *Welcome to Christ*, 1997
Music: Robert Buckley Farlee, b. 1950
Text and music © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

FIRST READING

PSALM

SECOND READING

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“You Belong to Christ” (#212)

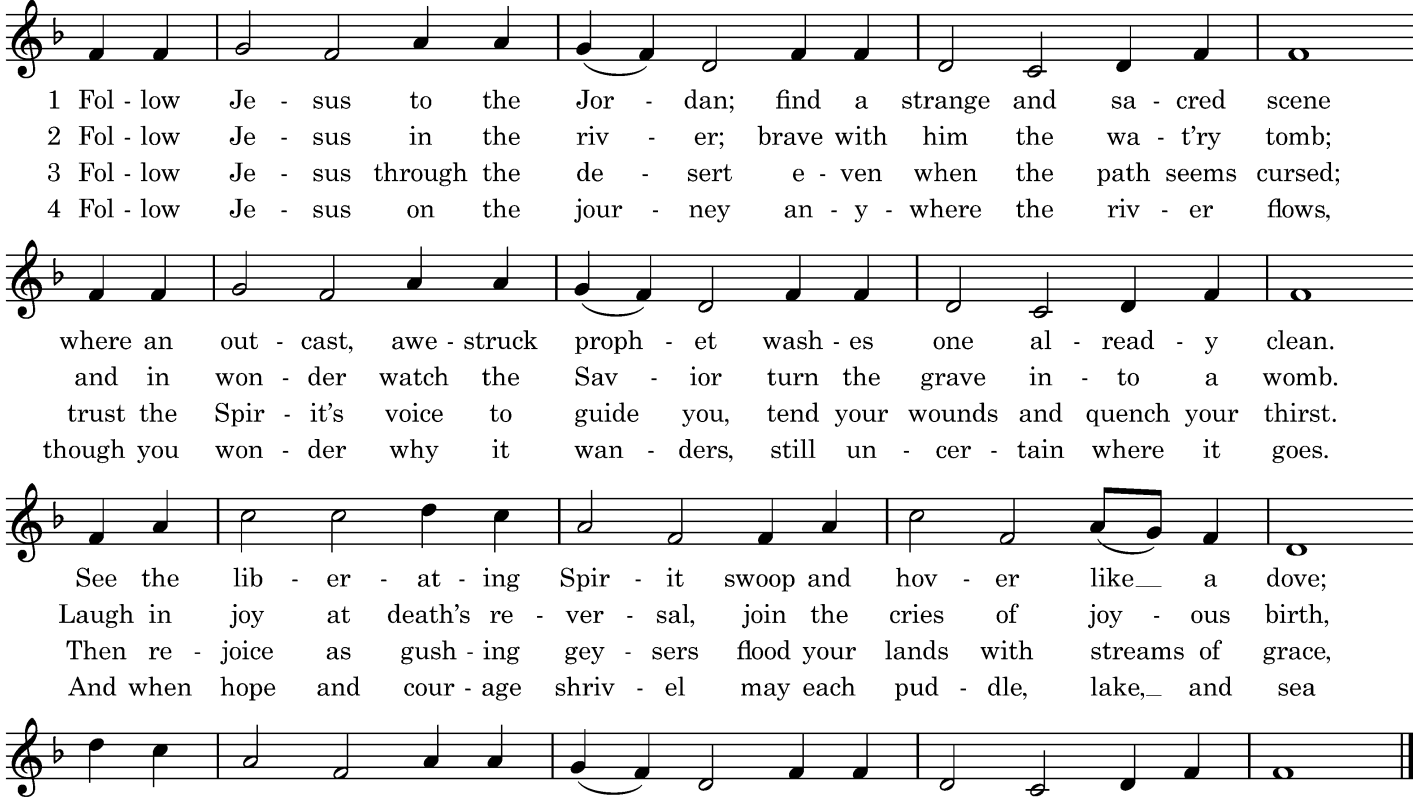
You be - long to Christ, in whom you have been bap - tized.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Text: *Holy Baptism and Related Rites*, Renewing Worship 3
Music: Robert A. Hobby, b. 1962
Text © 2002 and music © 2003 Augsburg Fortress

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Follow Jesus to the Jordan” (Words © 2024 GIA Publications, Inc.)



1 Fol - low Je - sus to the Jor - dan; find a strange and sa - cred scene
 2 Fol - low Je - sus in the riv - er; brave with him the wa - t'ry tomb;
 3 Fol - low Je - sus through the de - sert e - ven when the path seems cursed;
 4 Fol - low Je - sus on the jour - ney an - y - where the riv - er flows,

where an out - cast, awe - struck proph - et wash - es one al - read - y clean.
 and in won - der watch the Sav - ior turn the grave in - to a womb.
 trust the Spir - it's voice to guide you, tend your wounds and quench your thirst.
 though you won - der why it wan - ders, still un - cer - tain where it goes.

See the lib - er - at - ing Spir - it swoop and hov - er like a dove;
 Laugh in joy at death's re - ver - sal, join the cries of joy - ous birth,
 Then re - joice as gush - ing gey - sers flood your lands with streams of grace,
 And when hope and cour - age shriv - el may each pud - dle, lake, and sea

hear a voice sound from the heav - ens, “Heed my cher - ished child of love.”
 as new life cas - cades like foun - tains o - ver ev - 'ry inch of earth.
 as each scarred and sa - cred per - son grows in God's im - mense em - brace.
 ech - o God's “You are be - lov - ed,” drown your fears, and set you free.

A Liturgy of Joyous Rebellion: A Rite for Rededication to the Cause (adapted from *Liturgies from Below*, p. 344)

Family in the struggle, gathered together in the Spirit of Joyous Rebellion, I invite you to confess your commitment to the Liberation of all people and the restoration of the planet; and to renounce all obstacles that stand in the way.

Do you renounce greed, the love of wealth, and all of capitalism's empty promises?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce oppression, structural and internal, and all the forces that keep us from living liberated lives, dedicated the liberation of all?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce the fear that dwells in you, all its insecurities—those things that draw you away from confronting your own oppression, loving your own neighbor, and building power for the sake of a liberated world?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce all answers to the cry of the oppressed that would belittle and chastise, like the saying, “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps,” knowing that when we’ve been stripped of our boots, the answer is never isolated, individual acts, but structural, communal, and organized change; and knowing that, together, we are never alone?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce all the ideologies that would claim that some deserve to thrive while others, based on culture, class creed, or nation of origin, deserve a prison or a grave, a deportation or a desert wall?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce the destruction of the earth and its resources, the devaluation of nature, and the denial of climate change, as the planet is sacrificed for human greed, leading to pending and unimaginable calamity?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce racism and nationalism?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce sexism and ableism?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce xenophobia and elitism?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce the structural manifestations of all these things, promising to fight them within and all around us?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce any society or economy structured around the purpose of benefiting a few, while the many at the bottom are sacrificed for a bottom line?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce all these things?

We renounce them!

With all your heart, soul, strength, and mind?

We renounce them!

As we march toward liberation and life for all of Creation?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce them?

We renounce them!

Do you renounce them?

We renounce them!

DO YOU RENOUNCE THEM?

WE RENOUNCE THEM!

Then in the Spirit of Joyous Rebellion, and in the presence of one another, may we work together as a collective to fight oppression in all its forms, to build power with each other in configurations and coalitions yet unimagined. May we fight together, for one another, never alone. May we end oppression, empower the powerless, and lift the lowly in Love so that together we might tear the tyrants from their thrones and create a world where the earth is alive, and all people are able to eat. Amen.

PRAYERS

PEACE

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. The money received will go towards acute needs in South Sudan. Find details and additional ways to give on page 8.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should always and everywhere give thanks and praise to you, Almighty and Ever-living God, through Christ, our Life. And so with the church on earth and the host of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

“You Are Holy” (ELW #525)

1*



Du är he - lig, du är hel. Du är all - tid myck-et mer
You are ho - ly, you are whole. You are al - ways ev - er more

än vi nån - sin kan för - stå, du är nä - ra än - då.
than we ev - er un - der - stand. You are al - ways at hand.

Väl - sig - nad va - re du som kom - mer hit just nu,
Bless - ed are you com - ing near. Bless - ed are you com - ing here



väl - sig - na - de vår jord, blir till bröd på vår jord.
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.



Du är he - lig, du är hel - het,
You are ho - ly, you are whole - ness,



du är när - het he - la kos - mos lo - var dig!
you are pres - ent. Let the cos - mos praise you, Lord!



Ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na,
Sing ho - san - na in the high - est!



ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na vår Gud.
Sing ho - san - na! Sing ho - san - na to our God!

** May be sung in canon.*

Holy God,
you alone are holy,
you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise:
beyond the stars;
beneath the sea;
within each cell;
with every breath.
We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness:
through the water;
by night and day;
across the wilderness;

out of exile;
into the future.
We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son:
at the heart of human life;
near to those who suffer;
beside the sinner;
among the poor;
with us now.
We thank you, O God.

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 his love for us
on the way,
at the table,
and to the end,
we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit:
in our gathering;
within this meal;
among your people;
throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks
to you, holy God,
through Christ Jesus,

by your Spirit,
in your church,
without end.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION

Communion will be served by intinction at stations near the four corners. Make your way to one near you and at your own pace; ushers will not be dismissing you. If you need to commune without moving to one of the stations, let one of the distribution teams know and they will bring communion to you. All of the bread is gluten-, egg-, and dairy-free.

COMMUNION SONGS

"Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth"



1 Moth - er - ing God, you gave me birth in the bright
2 Moth - er - ing Christ, you took my form, of - fer - ing
3 Moth - er - ing Spir - it, nur - t'ring one, in arms of



morn - ing of this world. Cre - a - tor, source of ev - 'ry
me your food of light, grain . . . of life, and grape of
pa - tience hold me close, so that in faith I root and



breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun.
love, your ver - y bod - y for my peace.
grow un - til I flow'r, un - til I know.

Text: Jean Janzen, b. 1933; based on Julian of Norwich, c. 1342–c. 1413
Music: NORWICH, Carolyn Jennings, b. 1936
Text © 1991 Jean Janzen, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Music © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

“O Spirit All-Embracing” (ACS #944)



1 O Spir - it all - em - brac - ing and coun - sel - or all - wise,
 2 O Beau - ty ev - er blaz - ing in flow - er, field, and face,
 3 Come, pas - sion's pow - er ho - ly, your in - sight here im - part,



un - bound - ed splen - dor grac - ing a shore - less sea of skies:
 you show your - self a - maz - ing in un - ex - pect - ed place.
 and give your ser - vants low - ly an un - der - stand - ing heart



un - fail - ing is your trea - sure, un - fad - ing your re - ward;
 We see you and re - mem - ber what once our dreams had been;
 to know your care more clear - ly when faith and love are tried,



sur - pass - ing world - ly plea - sure, the rich - es you af - ford.
 you fan the glow - ing em - ber and kin - dle hope with - in.
 to seek you more sin - cere - ly when false i - deals have died:



Come, stream of end - less flow - ing, and res - cue us from death;
 Come, fire of glo - ry gra - cious, bless all who trust in you;
 for vi - sion we im - plore you, for wis - dom's pure de - light;



come, wind of spring - time blow - ing, and warm us by your breath.
 un - dy - ing flame te - na - cious, burn in your church a - new.
 in prayer we come be - fore you to wait up - on your light.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

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POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

May this meal of our Friend, Jesus Christ,
 strengthen you and keep you in his love.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Our Birth, our Bread, our Breath: we give thanks to you for nourishing us through this gift of life. By your Spirit, send us forth into the world, renewed in faith, hope, and love, through Jesus Christ, our Food.

BLESSING (from *Liturgies from Below*, p. 122)

God take you by the hand and leads you safely through the deep waters;
in the silent depth of the sea you can lay the burden of your labor and failures;
the light of God shows you the way to the surface;
and the living Spirit will meet you on the other side,
filling your lungs with a breath as wide as the new life
in God, with God, and for God;
from now on you are a living witness ✚ of the power of life in the midst of death.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“The Lord Now Sends Us Forth” (#538)

En - via - do soy de Dios, mi ma - no lis - ta_es - tá
The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give,
pa - ra cons - truir con él un mun - do fra - ter - nal.
to make of all the earth a bet - ter place to live.
Los án - ge - les no son en - via - dos a cam - biar
The an - gels are not sent in - to our world of pain
un mun - do de do - lor por un mun - do me - jor;
to do what we were meant to do in Je - sus' name;
me ha to - ca - do_a mí ha - cer - lo rea - li - dad.
that falls to you and me and all who are made free.
A - yú - da - me, Se - ñor, a_ha - cer tu vo - lun - tad.
Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will to - day.

DISMISSAL (*Liturgies from Below*, p. 55)

Go forth!

Agitated, yet blessed!

Challenged, but determined!

Energized, but also fatigued!

Gifted too! Hallelujah!

Thanks be to God!

Liturgies and hymns used and adapted from sundaysandseasons.com.

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