

# *Twenty-First Week of Pentecost*



## *The Lihu'e Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i*

*Ka Hale Pule 'O Na Lahui Apau . . .*

*Church Of All Peoples . . .*

*. . . Hele Pu Ma'kou me Iesu Kristo*

*. . . Walking Together With Christ*

October 17, 2021

*The Lihue Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i*  
 4602 Ho'omana Road, Lihue, HI 96766

*The Rev. Dr. JP Paxton Tony Kment, Technology*  
*Rhonda Pabo, Organist Liedeke Bulder, Lector*

*Church: (808) 245-2145 Fax: (808) 246-8626*

*E-Mail: staff@lihuelutheran.com Website: lihuelutheranchurch.com*

---

### *Welcome to Our Guests*

It is always a joy to share our faith and worship with people visiting from around the world. Please know your presence and participation in our service is most appreciated. At Lihue Lutheran we celebrate Holy Communion at every service. You are certainly welcome in joining us as our Lord comes to us in this holy meal.

---

### *Prayer Concerns*

Please remember these people in your prayers during the week: The family of Amanda Thayer , Bob & Joann Clash, Sally Rasay, Linda Garrett, Stan Weeks, Ronnie Pacheco, Pagatpatan ohana, Villanueva ohana, Geronimo ohana, David Gragg, Joe Morgan, Zosimo and Virginia Austria, Karen Kinoshita, Jake Whisenhunt, Rick Rentz, Norman Dibble, Kazue Zaima, Virginia Hines-Aflague, John Mattek, Giraldo II (Bobby Giraldo's son), Kristie Schmid (Tony's sister), Lolli Hagen, Abraham Torres, Sr., Kristy Kahananui, Sonny Koerte, Uncle Joe, Mallory Rodriguez, Steve Schantz, Peter Alisna, Tirzah Pope, Pastor Matthew Weber, Joyce Anglemeyer, Stephen Shioi, Peggy Hood, Jason Shimono, Richard Rasay, Nancy Nelson (formely Mandell), Karen & Patrick Pavao, Edward Rasay, Karen Richards (friend of Nancy Mandell), Marcos Larson (Liedeke's son), Dora Jane Rowell, Franklin Parraga, Penny Parraga, Leticia Ancog (Kurt Javinar's sister), Yvonne Shinseki, Al Dressler (Larry's Father), Shirley Hallman (Denese Alcott's Mother), Mercy Ballesteros, Mike LaBerge, Anna Marie & Phil Croghan, Judy Carlson, Caroline Johnson, Sheila Belarmino, Ray Roderick, The Church Council, and leaders in the ELCA. If you have additional prayer requests, please let the church office know. "*Ask it in my name . . .*" Mahalo for your love.

---

### *Remembering Our Military*

As we gather for worship, please remember those serving us in the military, and the families of our Hawai'i National Guard. These names have been given by loved ones and family members: Navy – TJ, Javinar, Kristian Matsumoto, Coast Guard - Brian Rodriguez, Navy - Kiana Alisna, Coast Guard - Ke'ale Renta Army - Jason Lumacad, Levi Fajardo: Air Force - Steven Javinar, Ikaika Fajardo, Army - Brandon Perkinson, Drew Cox, Tony Garton: National Guard - Benji MacKenzie, Eddie Resinto, Fred Casticimo, Philip Kamakea, Anthony Y. Torres, Master Sgt. If you know of someone you would like added to our prayer list, please advise the church office.

---

### *Lihue Lutheran Spotlight*

It is domestic abuse awareness month. If you or someone you know is facing domestic abuse, call YWCA at (808) 245-6362. Hau'oli Lā Hānau to Joy Claypoole, Elise Guirao, Dave Hutchinson (10/4), Elizabeth Hood (10/9) and Jerry Nishek (10/21).



## Introduction

Today's gospel starts with disciples obsessing over who will be closest to Jesus, leading to Jesus teaching his followers about God's take on importance and power. Here Jesus makes it explicit that the reversal of values in God's community is a direct challenge to the values of the dominant culture, where wielding power over others is what makes you great. When we pray "your kingdom come" we are praying for an end to tyranny and oppression. We pray this gathered around the cross, a sign of great shame transformed to be the sign of great honor and service.

## Overview

### Sharing in Your Glory: Success or Service?

"Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." Like James and John, we too are quick to assume that following Christ leads to success, power, and glory. Like James and John we ask for what we know and think we want—and we know that this world rewards success, power, and glory with even more of the same, and we want it! Yet Jesus turns our lust for success, power, and glory on its head: "Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all." This servant leadership that finds power in self-giving is to be a hallmark of Christian community. For this servant-leadership is both modeled on and empowered by the living Jesus himself. His greatness is exactly in his humility, his strength is in his weakness, and his whole life is given a ransom for our sake. Indeed, Isaiah reminds us that "The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous." Those who end up sitting at his right and left hand in his glory will not be the privileged and powerful, or even the disciples, who shrink back from sharing in his cup of suffering. Those at his right and left hand will be condemned criminals, crucified alongside him as he offers himself as a ransom for many. Likewise, those who will be great among us will be servants, finding Christ's strength in their weakness and giving of themselves fully, following their Lord through failure, weakness, and shame into true and eternal glory.

## Theological Reflection

Knowing that the words of Psalm 91 were used by Satan to test Jesus (though in Matthew, not Mark), it's hard to take the psalm's praise seriously. Evil *did* befall Jesus; he was afflicted (v. 10) so thoroughly that he was crucified. Yet the evil one still failed in his attempt to use scripture to distract Jesus, and was even doubly foiled because God eventually raised Jesus to eternal life in a dwelling place with the Most High (v. 9) in fulfillment of the original promises. This is worth remembering, too, when *human beings* similarly manipulate scripture's power.

# *Announcements and Weekly Events!*

## *Welcome, Check-In, and Announcements*

*In the Facebook chatbox share something good God is doing in your life.*

### *Announcements*

- ◇ Reformation Renovation in the Youth Room!
- ◇ All Church Workday—**Saturday, October 16**
- ◇ **Sign up for Trunk-or-Treat** or **Trick-or-Treat** in the Grave Yard! **Saturday, Oct 30**
- ◇ **Operation Christmas Child**—Michelle Dressler

#### **Packing parties**

Sunday, October 24 after church in the fellowship hall, \$10 donation

Monday, October 25 with the Ghetto Sweet Tarts

### *Weekly Events*

- ◇ Youth Group
  - Sunday, Oct 17**, Reformation Renovation Pizza Planning Party! 5:30-7pm
- ◇ Ghetto Sweet Tarts (Taco Tuesday, on a Monday!)
  - Monday, Oct 18**, 5:30-7pm in the Fellowship Hall
- ◇ BOBS Bible Study—The Forgotten Luther (6-week study)
  - Tuesday, Oct 19**, @ 5:30-7pm in the fellowship hall
- ◇ Centering Prayer with Liedeke Bulder
  - Saturday, Oct 23**, @ 9-10am via zoom <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9079773456>

# Twenty-First Week of Pentecost

## Order for Worship

### \*Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

**C Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
Most merciful God,

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P God our comforter:

**C like lost sheep, we have gone astray. We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity. We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression. We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed. Free us from our sin, gracious God. Listen when we call out to you for help. Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as our selves. Amen.**

P All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. By the gift of grace in ☩ Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous. Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins.

**C Amen.**



### \*Gathering Song

### As We Gather at Your Table

1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,  
2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit - ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;  
3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum - mon oth - er guests to share that feast

help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
 send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.  
 where tri - um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.

Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;  
 Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;  
 There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,

teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.  
 may we still be - hold your im-age in the world you died to save.  
 as we join with saints and an-gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

### *\*The Apostolic Greeting*

**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.**

## \*Kyrie

*Refrain*

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

### All Sing

For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all;  
 For this holy house, for all who worship and praise,  
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor;  
 That we may live out . . . truth and justice and grace.  
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

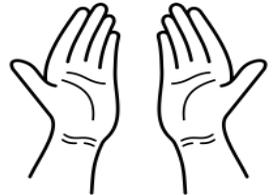
For peace in our hearts . . . For peace in our homes . . . For friends and family.  
 For life and for love . . . For our work and our play,  
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

For your Spirit to guide, that you center our lives in the water and the word;  
 That you nourish our souls . . . With your body and blood,  
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

## \*Prayer of the Day

**P** Let us pray. Sovereign God, you turn your greatness into goodness for all the peoples on earth. Shape us into willing servants of your kingdom, and make us desire always and only your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C** Amen.



## First Reading

## Isaiah 53:4-12

*This reading is from the last of four passages in Isaiah that are often called “servant songs.” Christians are probably most familiar with this servant song. In light of Christian faith, the servant’s healing ministry and redemptive suffering are understood to be fulfilled in the life and death of Christ.*

<sup>4</sup>Surely he has borne our infirmities  
and carried our diseases;  
yet we accounted him stricken,  
struck down by God, and afflicted.  
<sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the punishment that made us  
whole,  
and by his bruises we are healed.  
<sup>6</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have all turned to our own way,  
and the LORD has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

<sup>7</sup>He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is  
silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.  
<sup>8</sup>By a perversion of justice he was taken away.  
Who could have imagined his future?  
For he was cut off from the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people.

### A The Word of the Lord

<sup>9</sup>They made his grave with the wicked  
and his tomb with the rich,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

<sup>10</sup>Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him  
with pain.  
When you make his life an offering for sin,  
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong  
his days;  
through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.  
<sup>11</sup>Out of his anguish he shall see light;  
he shall find satisfaction through his  
knowledge.  
The righteous one, my servant, shall make  
many righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.  
<sup>12</sup>Therefore I will allot him a portion with the  
great,  
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;  
because he poured out himself to death,  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors.

### C Thanks be to God.

## Psalm

## Psalm 91:9-16

You have made the LORD your refuge, and the Most High your habitation. (*Ps. 91:9*)

<sup>9</sup>Because you have made the LORD your refuge,  
and the Most High your habitation,  
<sup>10</sup>**no evil will befall you,  
nor shall affliction come near your dwelling.**  
<sup>11</sup>For God will give the angels charge over you,  
to guard you in all your ways.  
<sup>12</sup>**Upon their hands they will bear you up,  
lest you strike your foot against a stone.**  
<sup>13</sup>You will tread upon the lion cub and viper;

you will trample down the lion and the ser-  
pent.

<sup>14</sup>**I will deliver those who cling to me;  
I will uphold them, because they know  
my name.**

<sup>15</sup>They will call me, and I will answer them;  
I will be with them in trouble; I will rescue  
and honor them.

<sup>16</sup>**With long life will I satisfy them,  
and show them my salvation.**

## Second Reading

## Hebrews 5:1-10

*Using imagery from scripture and from Jewish worship practices, Jesus is presented as the great high priest who was obedient to God's saving plan. Through his suffering and death he has become the source of eternal salvation.*

<sup>1</sup>Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup>He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; <sup>3</sup>and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. <sup>4</sup>And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

<sup>5</sup>So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

“You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you”;

<sup>6</sup>as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

<sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, <sup>10</sup>having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

**A** The Word of the Lord

**C** Thanks be to God.

### \*Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing Word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

## Holy Gospel

## Mark 10:35-45

*On the way to Jerusalem the disciples ask Jesus to grant them seats of honor. Jesus responds by announcing that he and his followers will “rule” through self-giving service.*

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the tenth chapter.



☐ Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

<sup>35</sup>James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” <sup>36</sup>And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” <sup>37</sup>And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” <sup>38</sup>But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” <sup>39</sup>They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; <sup>40</sup>but to sit at my

right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

<sup>41</sup>When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. <sup>42</sup>So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. <sup>43</sup>But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup>and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup>For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

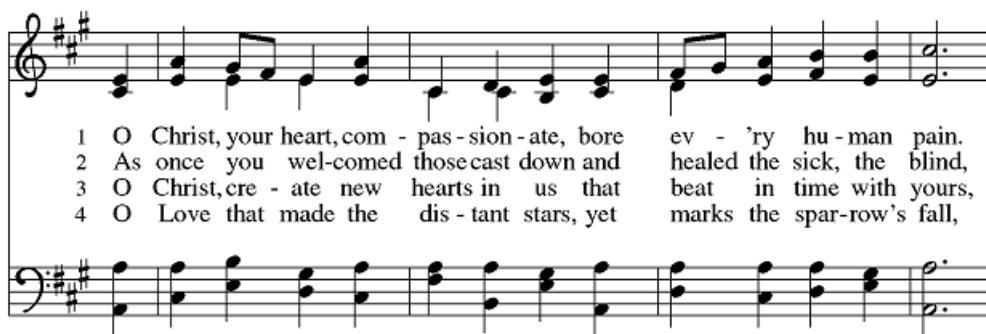


☐ Praise to you, O Christ.

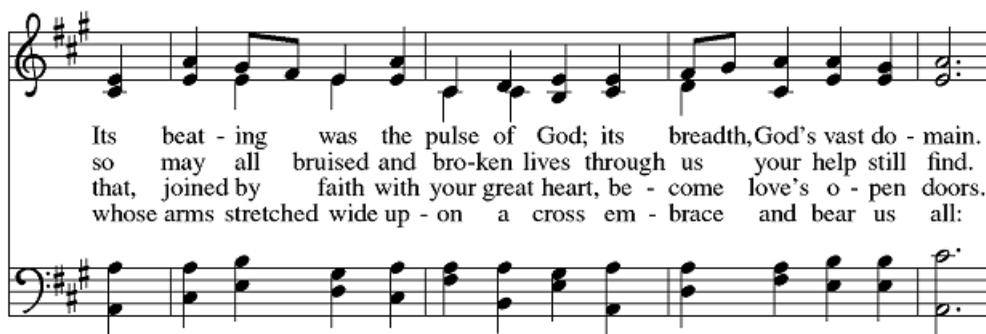
## Keiki Sermon

## Sermon

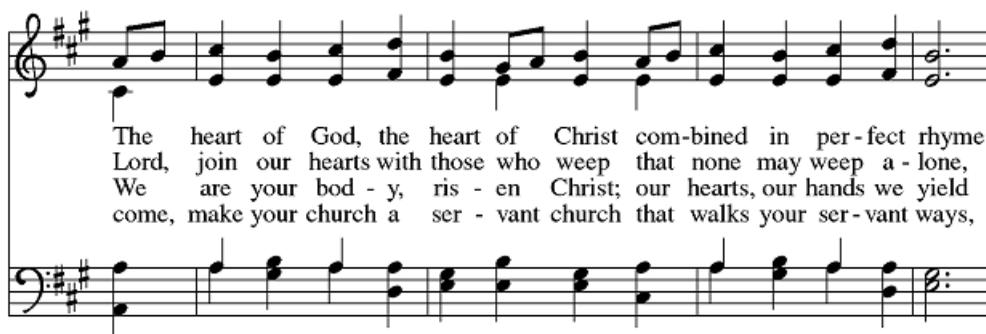
*\*Hymn of the Day      O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate*



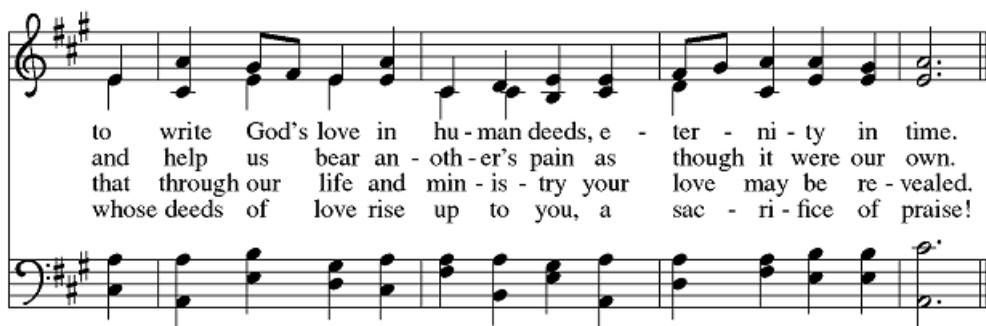
1 O Christ, your heart, com - pas - sion - ate, bore ev - 'ry hu - man pain.  
 2 As once you wel - comed those cast down and healed the sick, the blind,  
 3 O Christ, cre - ate new hearts in us that beat in time with yours,  
 4 O Love that made the dis - tant stars, yet marks the spar-row's fall,



Its beat - ing was the pulse of God; its breadth, God's vast do - main.  
 so may all bruised and bro - ken lives through us your help still find.  
 that, joined by faith with your great heart, be - come love's o - pen doors.  
 whose arms stretched wide up - on a cross em - brace and bear us all:



The heart of God, the heart of Christ com - bined in per - fect rhyme  
 Lord, join our hearts with those who weep that none may weep a - lone,  
 We are your bod - y, ris - en Christ; our hearts, our hands we yield  
 come, make your church a ser - vant church that walks your ser - vant ways,



to write God's love in hu - man deeds, e - ter - ni - ty in time.  
 and help us bear an - oth - er's pain as though it were our own.  
 that through our life and min - is - try your love may be re - vealed.  
 whose deeds of love rise up to you, a sac - ri - fice of praise!

## \*Apostles' Creed

P Let us join together in reciting the Apostles' Creed

A **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.**



**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## \*The Prayers of the Church

P Set free from sin and death and nourished by the word of truth, we join in prayer for all of God's creation.

A Holy One, for the gift of the church handed down through the ages and for all who carry on the servant ministry of Jesus, we praise you. Send your Holy Spirit upon all who are discerning calls to ministry in its many forms and equip them with your gifts. Hear us, O God.

**C your mercy is great.**

A Creating One, for the lush and abundant habitat you provide for all your creatures, we praise you. Provide healing for the earth so that waterfowl, reptiles, wild horses, dolphins, and all living things flourish as you intend. Hear us, O God.

**C your mercy is great.**

A Suffering One, for all who work toward peace and who lead nations with a servant's heart, we praise you. Bring justice for all who suffer violence, persecution, discrimination, hunger, poverty, and homelessness, and create places of refuge for all people. Hear us, O God.

**C your mercy is great.**

A Merciful One, for all who do the work of healing in mind, body, and spirit, we praise you. Surround and comfort all who struggle with depression, anxiety, cancer, diabetes, dementia, or any illness, that all may be healed. Hear us, O God.

**C your mercy is great.**

A Sustaining One, for all who volunteer for the vitality of this congregation, we praise you. Strengthen and encourage greeters, ushers, office volunteers, bakers, counters, committee and group leaders, teachers, students, evangelists, singers, builders, nurturers, and all who serve with generous hearts. Hear us, O God.

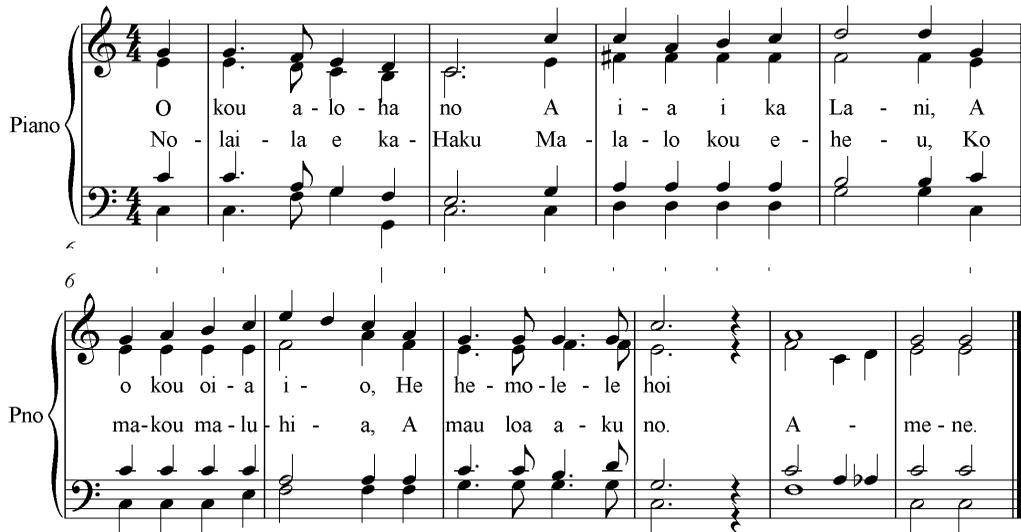
**C your mercy is great.**

**Here other intercessions may be offered.**

- A Risen One, we thank you for those who have shaped your church and shared your gospel. Through the witness of your saints, continue to inspire us with hope until we all are gathered at your eternal feast. Hear us, O God.
- C your mercy is great.**
- P Confident that you hear us, O God, we boldly place our prayers into your hands; through Jesus Christ, our truth and life.
- C Amen**

## \*The Queen's Prayer

Piano



O kou a - lo - ha no A i - a i ka La - ni, A  
No - lai - la e ka - Haku Ma - la - lo kou e - he - u, Ko

o kou oi - a i - o, He he - mo - le - le hoi  
ma - kou ma - lu - hi - a, A mau loa a - ku no. A - me - ne.

### English Translation

- O Lord thy Loving Mercy,  
Is high as the Heavens.  
It tells us of thy truth.  
And 'tis filled with holiness
- For thy grace I beseech thee.  
Bring us 'neath thy protection.  
And peace will be thy portion  
Now and forever more. Amen

## The Sharing of the Peace

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C And also with you.**
- P Let us share the peace of the Lord with those here locally and those joining us online via Facebook live! As the ushers come forward, take a minute to share "Aloha" with those joining us online!



## Offertory Word

If God puts it on your heart to give, donations can be given here today, mailed in, or given online our website [here](#) or you can copy and paste the weblink below @



[https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco\\_ver3.vps?a\\_pver3=tYgT1GfNxRUIIdiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpo0mld6BrVzd2nG0p8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3](https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?a_pver3=tYgT1GfNxRUIIdiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpo0mld6BrVzd2nG0p8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3)

## Offertory Response

## Lord of Aloha

God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,

5 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

9 Auth - or of mer - cy, Giv - er of grace, Bles - sed Re - deem - er who died in our place, Fath - er of one O

14 ha - na are you, Lift - ing our voic - es we sing "Al - le - lu" Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

19 God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,

23 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

27 Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

## *\*Offertory Prayer*

- P Let us pray. God of abundance, you cause streams to break forth in the desert and manna to rain from the heavens. Accept the gifts you have first given us. Unite them with the offering of our lives to nourish the world you love so dearly; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C **Amen.**

## *Invitation to Communion*

All who are hungry and thirst, come. The table is ready.

## *\*The Words of Institution*

*(All are welcome to share in this meal with us. The sacraments are provided in accordance to synodical guidelines in collaboration with CDC, state, and local precautions. If you do not have sacraments, please raise your hand and an usher will bring them to you.)*

## *\*The Lord's Prayer*

- P Let us pray the prayer our Lord taught us to pray...
- 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 for give 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.**



## *\*The Post-Communion Blessing*

- P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in His grace.
- C **Amen.**

## \*The Prayer After Communion

P Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

## Announcements

### \*The Blessing

P People of God, you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The Holy Trinity, ✝ one God, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

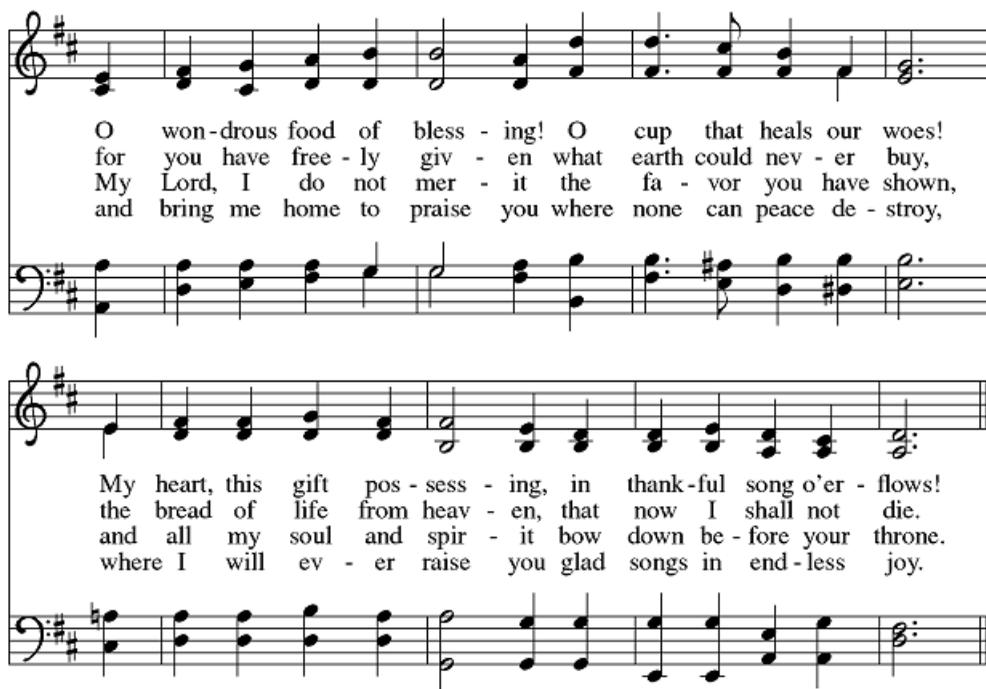
### \*The Sending Song

### O Living Bread From Heaven

1 O liv - ing Bread from heav - en, how well you feed your guest!  
 2 My Sav - ior, you have led me with - in your ho - liest place,  
 3 You gave me all I want - ed; this food can death de - stroy.  
 4 Oh, grant me then, well - strength - ened with heav' - n - ly food, while here

The gifts that you have giv - en have filled my heart with rest.  
 and here your - self have fed me with trea - sures of your grace;  
 And you have free - ly grant - ed the cup of end - less joy.  
 my course on earth is length - ened, to serve you, free from fear;

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'O Living Bread From Heaven'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line. The first system contains four verses of the hymn. The second system contains the concluding lines of the hymn.



O won-drous food of bless - ing! O cup that heals our woes!  
 for you have free - ly giv - en what earth could nev - er buy,  
 My Lord, I do not mer - it the fa - vor you have shown,  
 and bring me home to praise you where none can peace de - stroy,

My heart, this gift pos - sess - ing, in thank - ful song o'er - flows!  
 the bread of life from heav - en, that now I shall not die.  
 and all my soul and spir - it bow down be - fore your throne.  
 where I will ev - er raise you glad songs in end - less joy.

## *Dismissal*

**P** Go in peace, the Living Word dwells in you.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Obedience No Matter How Hard

Hebrews 5:8 has always been a bit of enigma to me, “He learned obedience through what He suffered.” What does that mean? What does the text imply? How do we make sense of the verse to get an idea if or in what way(s) this may mean something to me? These are questions I’m commonly asked myself when reading through Hebrews.

After taking a deeper look at a few commentaries, there is consensus on *how* to interpret and understand the meaning of this text. When Hebrews says, “Jesus learned obedience,” what the text is not saying is that Jesus, at some point in time, had be disobedient (and therefore needed to learn obedience). The focus is on *what* Jesus learned about obedience and *how* this experience deeply shaped Him, not *how* Jesus learned to obey.

When read this way, the text powerfully speaks to us and teaches us one way we can make sense of both suffering and suffering when it relates to obeying God (doing the right thing according to the character and core values of God). If we take a look at Jesus’ experience of suffering, we can think of His suffering as a challenging AND transformative experience that formed who He was. If we look back to last week, this is why Hebrews 4:15-16 says, “We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize.” Jesus knows, intimately, what it means to follow and obey God; He knows this because of what He has suffered to follow and obey!

I think this leaves us with a few invitations. The first is to know God more we need to obey God. Obedience to God (may) bring about suffering, but it might also bright about another experience that relates to challenge, difficulty, endurance, and/or perseverance. IN THAT experience, whether it is suffering or challenge or difficulty or endurance or perseverance, the experience will serve as the teacher to teach us about what it means to follow God, or be a disciple. Therefore, it is IN OBEYING we are given experiences that teach us about what it means to be a disciple and walk with God.

My hope and prayer, for all of us, is that we would be brought to (repentance and) obedience SO THAT we could have deeply transformative experiences about what it means to walk with and follow God (be a disciple). And IN THESE EXPERIENCES, my prayer is that we would learn to walk more closely with God and one another.

# For Further Reflection

## **Theological Reflection**

One of the Bible's most brutal passages is part of the semicontinuous first reading for this week—God's crushing response to Job's truly bottomless grief. With such comforting words as "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 38:2) and "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding" (38:4), this excerpt spits in the face of what most pastors preach about God's love and care for humanity. Even the tentative "good news" of this passage—that God does indeed respond to prayer—is almost completely negated by the brutal inscrutability of God's response. But the sad fact remains that, even in the face of Job's screams, there are some questions that always remain unanswered. And this text helps to give us that sober, but precious, reminder.

## **Let the Children Come**

In this week's gospel we are encouraged to take a good, hard look at how we organize ourselves and distribute power. Discuss what it means to be at someone's right hand and at someone's left hand. Today we are roughly half a year from Holy Week 2022. Would the children be surprised to learn that when Jesus was on the cross, there were two criminals with him, one on his right and one on his left (Luke 23:32-33)? Jesus doesn't play favorites with James and John and doesn't permit bickering over positions of authority and power. How can we help children see the command to serve as a gift?

## **Connections with Creation**

Many know of Kenyan environmentalist Wangari Maathai (1940–2011) for her work in the Green Belt Movement planting trees and managing forests, her persistence for justice and democracy in her country, and her fight for the rights of women. All of these endeavors contributed to her being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. What is not so well known is that her conversion to Catholicism at age eleven led to her involvement with the Legion of Mary, whose members attempt "to serve God by serving fellow human beings." In other words, serving was a foundational value in Maathai's life. She served her Kenyan sisters and brothers, the cause of justice, and the earth itself. She is a wonderful illustration of Jesus' teaching in today's reading from Mark 10: "Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant" (v. 43).

# Worship Reflection

What biblical texts stood out to me and why?

---

---

---

What do I feel God is trying to say to me in and through this sermon?

---

---

---

Is the Holy Spirit prompting me to change something in my heart or life? If yes, what is it? What is one step I can take to make a positive change in my life this week?

---

---

---

Where did I see/hear God in the sermon?

---

---