

August 2, 2026
The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist
with Children's Chapel



St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church
Seeking God • Building Community • Growing Faith • Reaching Out
5450 Massachusetts Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20816
301.229.2960 StDunstansBethesda.org

Welcome to St. Dunstan's!

Thought for the Day...

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt



Thank you for choosing to worship with St. Dunstan's this morning! We are a community of seekers doing our best to live authentically and faithfully in this challenging and complicated world, and we are delighted that you are sharing the journey with us today.

Children are *always* welcome here; please make yourself and your family at home. Rest assured: We are delighted by the “joyful noise” that children inevitably make, *and* don't worry if you feel you need to take your child out of the service for a few minutes. *To learn more about offerings for children and families, please share your contact information on the clipboard on the Welcome Table.*

Babysitting for children **4 and under** is provided **downstairs in the Youth Room**. **For everyone's safety, registration is required**: Please scan the QR code to sign up.



Restrooms are located in the hallway by the glass doors.

If you find the chairs uncomfortable, feel free to borrow a **cushion** from the basket near the door for use during worship.

Please wear a **name tag**! Permanent name tags are on the board in the entry hall. If you don't yet have a permanent tag, please use a stick-on badge until we can make you an official one. **Please return your name tag to the basket on the Welcome Table at the end of the service; we will hang it back up for you!**

This morning we welcome **Dr. David Palmer** as our **Guest Pianist**,
and **Ketti Muschler** as our **Guest Cantor**.



Please do not throw this bulletin in the trash. Instead, either take it home for reference during the coming week (preferable) or place it in the blue recycling bin as you depart. Thank you!



For Your Prayers

For healing, strength, and protection:

Diane Adams; Joyce Bleby; Phil and Patti Carroll; Terry Conroy;
Steve Cooper; Henry Cox; Traci Dean; Kenny Farnsworth;
Katie Beck Fey; Nick Gilbert; Louisa Greene; Terry Haight; Ben Hull;
Henry Jeanneret; Patricia Mackenzie; Jenna Monroe; Rick Nickles; Linda Rogers;
Curtis Shively; Eva and John Stephens; Nancy Thoreson; Jack Tovornik;
Sandra Walters; David Wheeler; Martha Lou Youngblood; Anne; Ben;
Bill; Christopher; Craig and Robin; Griffin; JW; Karen; Katherine; Lindsay and
William; Marty; Melanie; Michelle; MT; Paola; Patrick; Phyllis; Sherry; *and* Shiloh

For peace in Bolivia, Haiti, the Holy Land, Iran, Lebanon, Sudan and South
Sudan, Ukraine, the United States, and throughout God's world

For refugees and immigrants

For the women and men of our Foreign Service and Armed Forces

For emergency personnel and first responders

For the victims of climate and natural disasters, especially in Venezuela

For missionaries serving throughout the world

+++

The flowers adorning the Altar this morning are given by
Jane and John Chase, to the Glory of God and
in honor of their sister-in-law, **Rebecca Bryant**.

The Holy Eucharist

Prelude

Savior, Like a Shepherd

D. Johnson

David Palmer, *piano*

Please stand, as you are able, and join in singing the hymn.

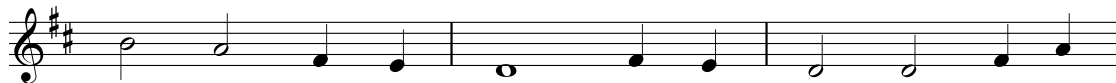
Opening Hymn

“Come, thou fount of every blessing”

Hymnal, 686



1 Come, thou fount of ev - ery bless - ing, tune my
2 Here I find my great - est trea - sure; hith - er,
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly



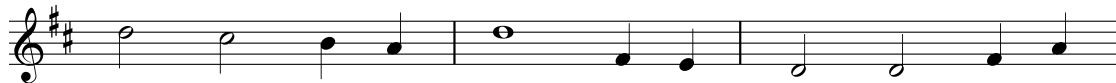
heart to sing thy grace! Streams of mer - cy nev - er
by thy help, I've come; and I hope, by thy good
I'm con - strained to be! Let thy good - ness, like a



ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
fet - ter, bind my wan - dering heart to thee:



Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by
Je - sus sought me when a stran - ger wan - dering
prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to



flam - ing tongues a - bove. Praise the mount! Oh, fix me
from the fold of God; he, to res - cue me from
leave the God I love; here's my heart, oh, take and



on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.
dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Words: Robert Robinson (1735-1790), alt. Music: *Nettleton*, melody from *A Repository of Sacred Music, Part II*, 1813; harm. Gerre Hancock (b. 1934).

The Liturgy of the Word

Opening Acclamation

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever, Amen.**

The Collect for Purity

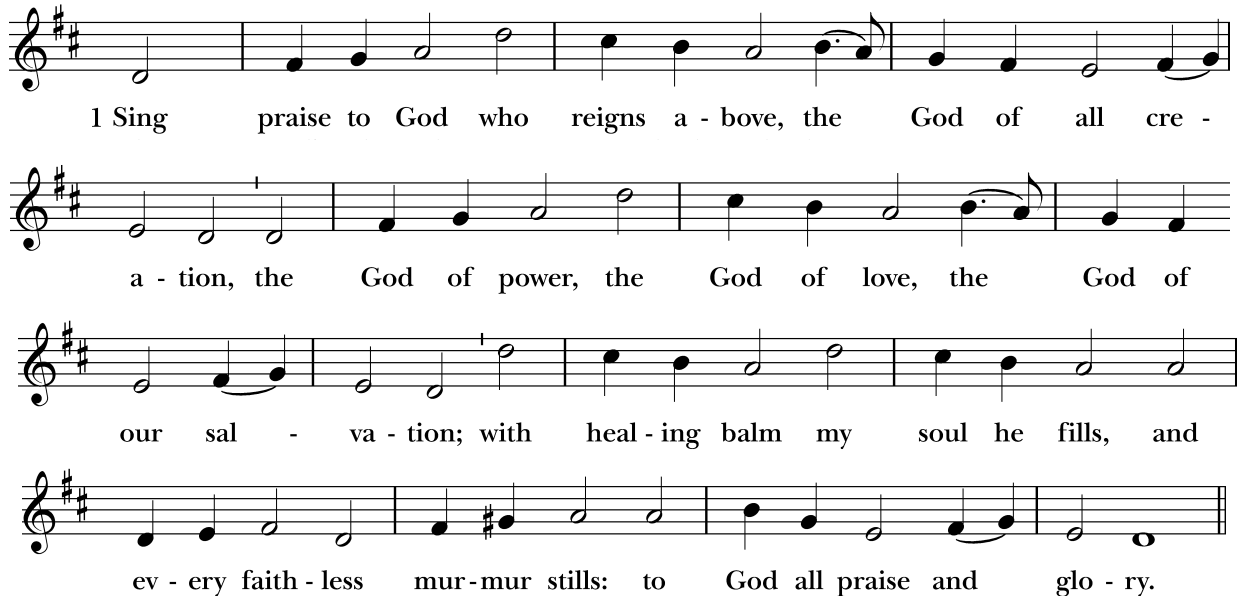
Presider Almighty God,

and People **to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord, Amen.**

The Song of Praise

"Sing praise to God who reigns above," v. 1

Hymnal, 408



1 Sing praise to God who reigns a - bove, the God of all cre -
a - tion, the God of power, the God of love, the God of
our sal - va - tion; with heal - ing balm my soul he fills, and
ev - ery faith - less mur - mur stills: to God all praise and glo - ry.

The Collect of the Day

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray: Let your continual mercy, O Lord, cleanse and defend your Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without your help, protect and govern it always by your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever, **Amen.**

Please be seated. Children are invited to attend Children's Chapel at this time.

The Lesson: Genesis 32:22-31

Lector A Reading from the Book of Genesis:

The same night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Please join in reciting the Psalm responsively.

Psalm 17:1-7, 16

Hear my plea of innocence, O God;
give heed to my cry; *

listen to my prayer, which does not come from lying lips.

Let my vindication come forth from your presence; *
let your eyes be fixed on justice.

Weigh my heart, summon me by night, *
melt me down; you will find no impurity in me.

I give no offense with my mouth as others do; *
I have heeded the words of your lips.

My footsteps hold fast to the ways of your law; *
in your paths my feet shall not stumble.

I call upon you, O God, for you will answer me; *
incline your ear to me and hear my words.

Show me your marvelous loving-kindness, *
**O Savior of those who take refuge at your right hand
from those who rise up against them.**

But at my vindication I shall see your face; *
**when I awake, I shall be satisfied, beholding
 your likeness.**

Please stand and join in singing the Sequence Hymn.

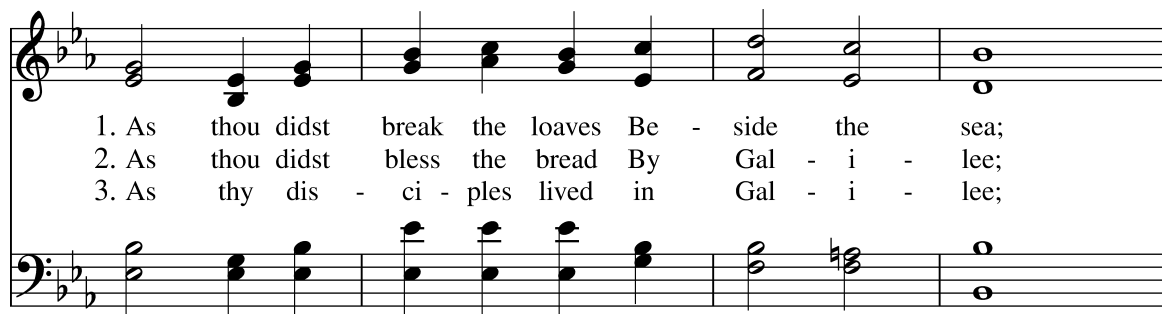
Sequence Hymn

“Bread Thou the Bread of Life”

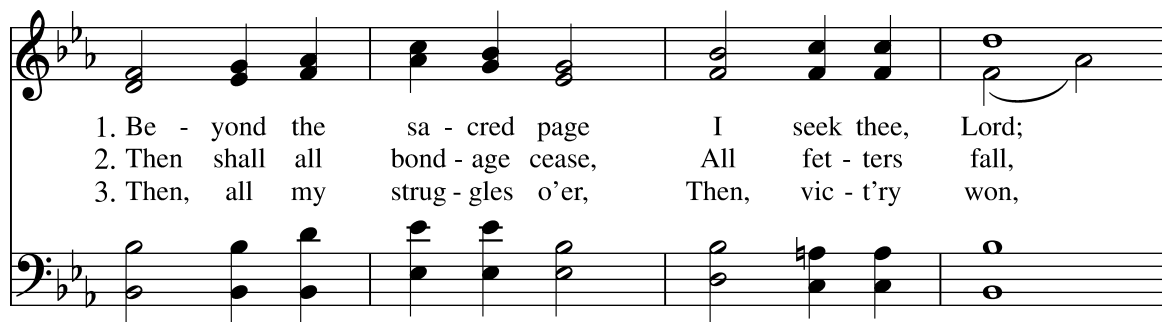
Lift Every Voice and Sing, 146



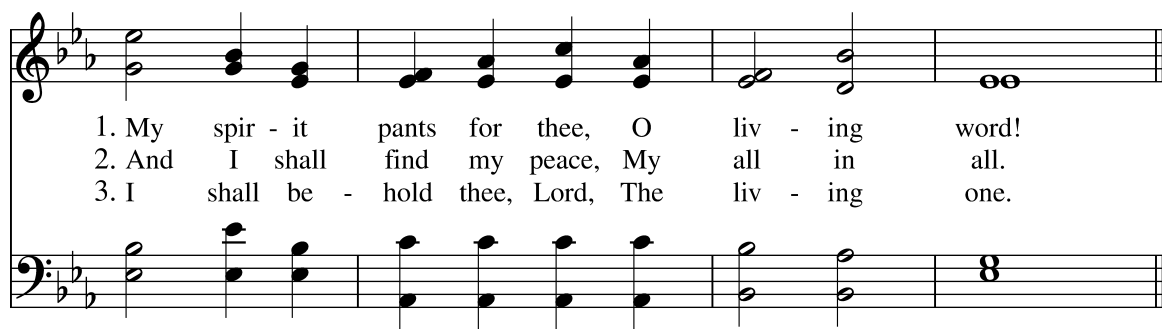
1. Break thou the bread of life, Dear Lord, to me,
 2. Bless thou the truth, dear Lord, To me, to me,
 3. Teach me to live, dear Lord, On - ly for thee,



1. As thou didst break the loaves Be - side the sea;
 2. As thou didst bless the bread By Gal - i - lee;
 3. As thy dis - ci - ples lived in Gal - i - lee;



1. Be - yond the sa - cred page I seek thee, Lord;
 2. Then shall all bond - age cease, All fet - ters fall,
 3. Then, all my strug - gles o'er, Then, vic - t'ry won,



1. My spir - it pants for thee, O liv - ing word!
 2. And I shall find my peace, My all in all.
 3. I shall be - hold thee, Lord, The liv - ing one.

Words: Mary A. Lathbury (1841-1913). Music: William F. Sherwin (1826-1888).

The Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you Lord Christ.**

Please be seated at the preacher's invitation.

The Sermon

The Rev. Emily Elder

After a moment of silence, please stand.

The Nicene Creed

Leader and People

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic* and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come, Amen.

**universal*

The Prayers of the People

The Intercessor and People pray responsively.

Let us pray.

Father, we pray for your Church throughout the world;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for *Sarah*, Archbishop of Canterbury; *Sean*, our Presiding Bishop; *Mariann*, our Bishop, and *Eugene*, our Assisting Bishop; *Hosam*, Archbishop in Jerusalem; and for all bishops, priests, deacons, seminarians, and lay ministers;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We remember the President and Vice-President, the members of Congress and the Justices of the Supreme Court, and all those called to serve the common good. We ask your blessing on the women and men of our nation's Foreign Service and Armed Forces, and we pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

We remember all who have been commended to our prayers, especially remembering those named on our Parish Prayer List (*see p. 3*). Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

We pray for those who have died, remembering especially this week *Rebecca Bryant* (sister-in-law of Jane and John Chase). Give her, and all the departed, eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

We pray for our own needs and those of others, either silently or out loud.

Pause for prayers of petition, intercession, and thanksgiving

The Presider concludes

O God, accept our offering of ourselves, of our time and talents. Unsettle our lives and redefine them in you. Renew in us a spirit of justice, compassion, and love. Open our eyes, ears, and hearts to hear and see you already at work in the world. Strengthen our commitment to your vision, through Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

The Confession and Absolution

Deacon Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence

Deacon and People God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will, Amen.

Presider Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life, **Amen.**

The Peace

Presider May the peace of Christ be always with you!

People **And also with you!**

Please greet one another in the Name of Christ and then be seated.

Welcome

The Offertory

Presider

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,
for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Hebrews 13:15, 16

Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church.

If you would like to make an offering this morning, you may place it in the Offertory bag.

*Please also feel free to donate online at <https://stdunstansbethesda.org/support/donate.html>
or mail a check to the Parish Office.*

Offertory Anthem

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts

Ketti Muschler, soprano

H. Purcell (1659-1695)

The Holy Communion

Please stand as the Offering is brought forward and join in singing.

The Doxology

Music: *Hymnal*, 380

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host:
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

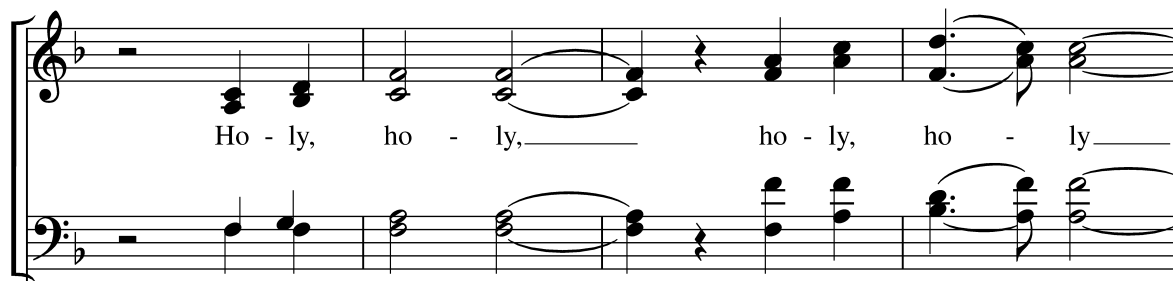
Presider

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

Lift Every Voice and Sing, 255



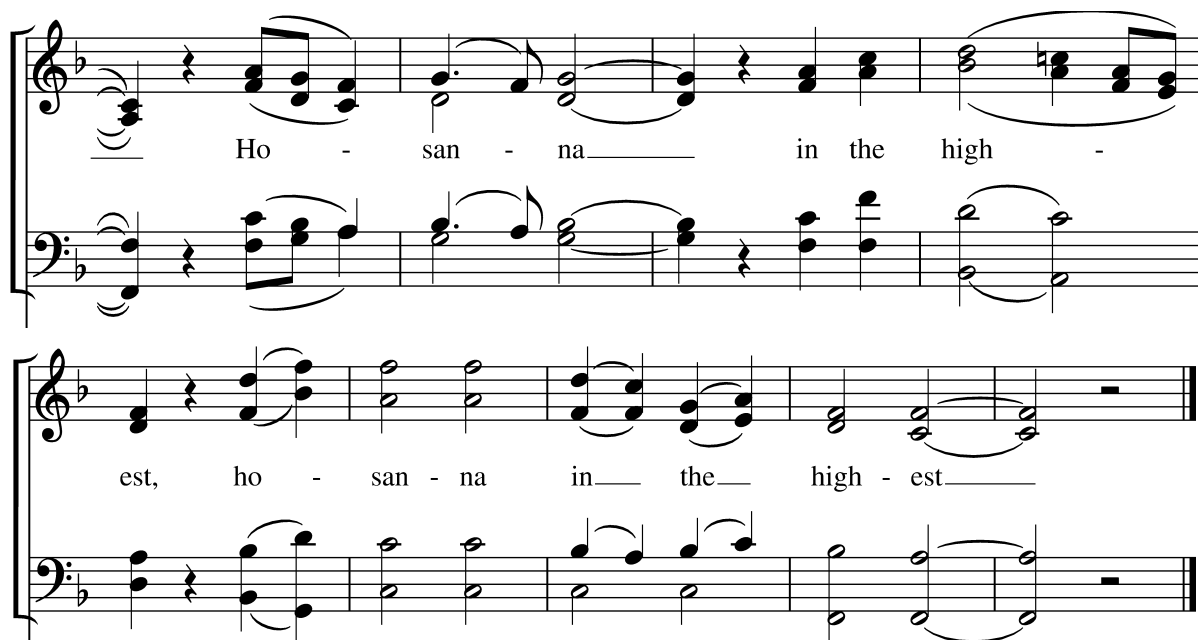
ho - ly Lord God of hosts.

Heav - en and earth are filled with your glo -

ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is He who comes in the name

of the Lord, of the Lord.



Please stand or sit.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, **"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."**

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, **"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."**

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Presider and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Blessed Dunstan, and all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever, **AMEN**.

And now, as our savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

**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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Presider Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

Presider These are the Gifts of God, for you, the People of God, **Amen.**

Please be seated.

The Communion

All are welcome to receive the Sacrament in one or both kinds. Consecrated wine is available by sipping directly from the silver chalice or by dipping your bread gently into the blue chalice; gluten-free Communion bread is available upon request. If you would prefer not to receive, you are invited to come forward for a blessing, the signal for which is to place your hand over your heart when you reach the Altar.

Music during Communion

My God, thy table now is spread

Rockingham

Ketti Muschler, *soprano*

Remaining seated, please join in singing.

“Taste and See”

Lift Every Voice and Sing, 154

Taste and see. Taste and see the good - ness

of the Lord. O Taste and see. Taste and

see the good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord. **Fine**

1. I will bless the Lord at all times.
2. Glo - ri - fy the Lord with me.
3. Wor - ship the Lord all you peo - ple.

1. — His praise — shall al - ways — be on my
 2. — To - geth - er — let us all — praise His
 3. — You'll — want for noth - ing — if you

1. lips; — my soul — shall
 2. name. — I called — the
 3. ask. — Taste — and

1. glo - ry — in the Lord; — for
 2. Lord — and He an - swered me; — from
 3. see — that God is good; — in

1. He _____ has been _____ so good to me. _____
 2. all _____ my trou - bles _____ He set me free. _____
 3. Him _____ we need _____ put all our trust. _____

Words: Psalm 34. Music: James E. Moore, Jr. Copyright © 1992 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. Chicago, IL All Rights Reserved.

Please stand.

The Prayer after Communion

Presider Let us pray:

and People **Eternal God, heavenly Father,
 you have graciously accepted us as living members
 of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
 and you have fed us with spiritual food
 in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
 Send us now into the world in peace,
 and grant us strength and courage
 to love and serve you
 with gladness and singleness of heart;
 through Christ our Lord, Amen.**

The Blessing

Presider

Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold fast that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil. Strengthen the fainthearted. Support the weak. Help the afflicted. Honor all persons. Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you and all those you love, from this day forth and forevermore, **Amen.**

Please join in singing the Closing Hymn (next page).

Closing Hymn

“Savior, like a shepherd lead us”

Hymnal, 708



1 Sa - vior, like a shep - herd lead us; much we need thy
 2 Ear - ly let us seek thy fa - vor, ear - ly let us

ten - der care; in thy plea - sant pas - tures feed us;
 learn thy will; do thou, Lord, our on - ly Sa - vior,

for our use thy folds pre - pare. Bless - ed Je - sus!
 with thy love our bos - oms fill. Bless - ed Je - sus!

Bless - ed Je - sus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.
 Bless - ed Je - sus! Thou hast loved us: love us still.

Words: *Hymns for the Young*, ca. 1830, alt. Music: *Sicilian Mariners*, Sicilian melody, from *The European Magazine and London Review*, 1792.

Please be seated following the hymn.

Announcements

Please stand.

Dismissal

Deacon Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord!
People **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

Come, Thou Fount

D. Palmer

David Palmer, *piano*

+++

Announcements

Today at St. Dunstan's:

- **Welcome, Visitors!** We are delighted that you are here, and we hope you will stay for a few minutes after worship so that we can greet you properly. To learn more about St. Dunstan's, please fill out a **visitor form**, found on the **Welcome Table**, and help yourself to a **welcome bag** as a token of our gratitude that you have joined us today.
- **Fellowship Time:** All are welcome to **Founders' Hall** for a cup of coffee or tea and a snack following the service!
- Remember to pick up a couple of **blessing bags** after worship! Keep them in your car for those times when you would like to help someone seeking assistance but would prefer not to hand out money. This is a tangible way to share God's love.



This Week:

- **Tuesday, August 4:**
 - + **11 a.m.: What Now?!** (*Parish Hall*)
- **Wednesday, August 5:**
 - + **10:30 a.m.: Midweek Bible Study on The Gospel of Luke** (*Zoom*)
- **Thursday, August 6:**
 - + **12 Noon: Prayers for Peace and Healing** (*Zoom*)
- **Saturday, August 8:**
 - + **9 a.m.: Men's Group Meeting** (*Kitchen/Parlor*)
 - + **10 a.m.: Soul Sisters** (*Zoom*)
- **Next Sunday, August 9:**
 - + **10:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist** (*Parish Hall*). Seminarian **John Froemming** will preach, and **David Palmer** will conclude his service among us. Thank you, David, for the gift of your beautiful music this summer!

Save the Dates!

- **Saturday, August 29:**

- + **10 a.m.-4 p.m.: Children's Choir Camp ~ "A Mary Poppins Musical Adventure"** (*St. Dunstan's*)

- **Saturday, September 12:**

- + **10 a.m.-5 p.m.: Adult Choir Camp** (*St. Dunstan's*)

*Please contact Minister of Music **Diane Atherton** for more information about our choir program.*



Reaching Out

Refugee Ministry

- + Our Afghan friends Syed, Elyas, and Erfan urgently need help finding new housing by **August 31**. They would like to find an affordable rental in or near Bethesda, but they're open to Montgomery County, PG county, or Northwest DC. A three-bedroom home or apartment would be ideal, but a two-bedroom arrangement could also work since Elyas and Erfan will both be in college during the school year. If you know of a possible rental, have an available guest house or guest rooms, or have suggestions for people or organizations to contact, please reach out to St. Dunstan's parishioner **Fred Bentley** at **202-215-8340** or fbentley14@gmail.com.
- + The Episcopal Diocese of Washington's **Refugee Response Team (RRT)** needs household items for a family that has recently moved into an apartment. Please email **Deacon Jessica** (deacon@stdunstansbethesda.org) if you can provide any of the below items:
 - Sofa bed
 - Coffee maker
 - Blender
 - Air fryer
 - Other kitchen items - dishes, cutlery, etc.
 - Vacuum cleaner

Cooking Oil for San Mateo

- + **Iglesia Episcopal San Mateo** in Hyattsville is asking for donations of **24 or 40 oz. plastic bottles of cooking oil** to distribute to local families impacted by our country's current immigration policies. Please bring your bottle(s) of oil to St. Dunstan's **by next Sunday, August 9**. Thank you!

Serving this Morning

Presider and Preacher:	The Rev. Emily Elder
Deacon:	The Rev. Jessica Ault
Musicians:	Ketti Muschler and David Palmer
Altar Guild:	Marsha Barnes and Ann Johnson
Flower Guild:	Julie Anderson and Anne Tager
Greeter:	Donna Alvarez
Children's Chapel:	Julie Anderson and Fielder Valone
Lector:	Madeleine Johnson
Psalm Leader:	Leo Bouma
Intercessor and Lay Eucharistic Minister:	John Froemming
Usher:	Marsha Barnes
Hospitality:	Elin Botha, Karen Edwards, and Fred Smoak
Vestry Member of the Day:	Fred Atwood

Attributions

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On the Cover*:

Jacob Wrestling (Mixed media liturgical art by Sue Carroll)

The Scripture Readings:

The New Revised Standard Version Bible, © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

The Psalm:

The Saint Helena Psalter: A New Version of the Psalms in Expansive Language,
© 2018, Church Publishing, Incorporated

The Collect after the Prayers:

Banquet of Praise © 1990, Bread for the World

The Confession:

Enriching Our Worship 1, © 1998, Church Publishing, Incorporated

The Blessing:

Adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1892, 1928

***Artist's Reflection**

Jacob had a lot to wrestle with. He was about to try to reconcile with his brother – whom he'd cheated out of the family fortune – and was afraid of his brother's army. So he probably wrestled with guilt, and fear. But this story in Genesis tells us he wrestled with an angel, all night, until the angel agreed to bless him. Jacob later claimed he'd actually wrestled with God. (Potato, po-tah-to – he was somehow wrestling with the Divine.) He walked with a limp ever after, changed by the encounter. And, he was able to reconcile with his brother.

My interpretation of the story reflects a quote from the great biblical scholar Amy Jill Levine. She was asked if it was proper to say we should "submit to the text" when reading scripture, as is taught in some very conservative Christian traditions. They say we should not try to interpret scripture but accept it as having one fixed meaning. "NO!" she insisted. "Submit yourself to GOD! Wrestle with the text!" Here the gold ribbon stands in for the Divine, and the beat-up paper for humanity. On the paper between them is text from the book of Genesis, the story of Abraham being told to sacrifice his son – certainly a story to wrestle with.

~ Sue Carroll, *Liturgical Artist-in-Residence*

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