# HARVEST LESSONS AND CAROLS

## WE SING THE SONG OF HARVEST HOME



## ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

884 Newfield Ave. | Stamford, CT 06905 www.stjohnelca.org 203.322.0066

#### We stand.

#### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

#### Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

#### Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

## Silence is kept for reflection.

Adapted from The Franciscan Action Network

Holy God, Creator and Lover of all that is,

we confess to you that we have sinned. We have failed in our care for the land and its creatures, we have been greedy, destructive, and wasteful of the resources you entrusted to us. Polluted air and water, eroded soil and salty earth, birds and animals deprived of habitat, and neighbors left hungry and thirsty by our selfishness: all these cry out against us. We do not know how to restore what we have damaged, and we repent in sorrow and distress. Forgive us, we pray, and have mercy. Give us grace to change our ways, to make amends, and to work together for the healing of the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

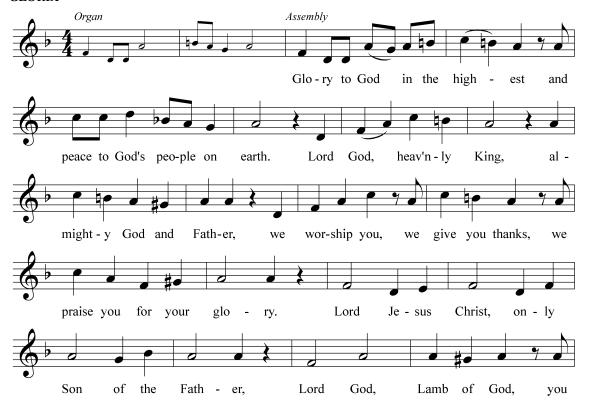
Our Savior died and rose again so that for all who live in him there is a new creation. Therefore I declare to you: your sins are forgiven, through + Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.** 

Send out your Spirit, O Lord. Renew the hearts of your people. Renew the face of the earth. **Amen.** 

#### **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.** 

#### **GLORIA**





#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

ELW "The gifts of agriculture" p. 78

The Lord be with you.

## And also with you.

Let us pray.

God our creator, you have ordered seedtime and harvest, sunshine and rain. Give to all who work the land fair compensation for the work of their hands. Grant that the people of this and every nation may give thanks to you for food, drink, and all that sustains life; may use with care the land and water from which these good things come; and may honor the laborers who produce them; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

#### We sit.

## A HARVEST CAROL SERVICE

We gather to sing the song of harvest home, to thank God for the harvest of our gardens and allotments, our fields and farms, providing food for our tables and meeting many of our physical needs. We celebrate all that is seasonal and local as we enjoy the fruit of the earth at its due season. We give thanks for the earth's fertility and the ingenuity of our hands in discovering new ways to adapt and thrive during difficult times. We remember those who struggle to put food on the table, who go hungry when the harvest fails, and who suffer from extreme and unseasonal weather caused by climate change. We also thank God for the harvest of our community, our shared life, and the harvest of our deepest selves—our growth toward maturity and wisdom. Through hymns, anthems, readings, and prayers, we lift the song of harvest home.

## HYMN Come, ye thankful people, come

- 1 Come, ye thankful people, come; raise the song of harvest home.
  All is safely gathered in ere the winter storms begin.
  God, our maker, does provide for our wants to be supplied.
  Come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.
- 2 All the world is God's own field, fruit unto his praise to yield.
  Wheat and tares together sown, unto joy or sorrow grown.
  First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear.
  Lord of harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be.
- 3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his harvest home. From his field shall in that day all offenses purge away, give his angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast, but the fruitful ears to store in his garner evermore.
- 4 Even so, Lord, quickly come to your final harvest home.
  Gather all your people in, free from sorrow, free from sin, there, forever purified, in your garner to abide.
  Come, with all your angels, come, raise the glorious harvest home

#### SOIL

Harvest begins with the soil. With increasingly sophisticated tools and machinery, and with the use of fertilizers and chemicals, our attention can be deflected from the core of vitality of the soil. We need to rediscover respect for the soil as the basis for sustainable farming for the long term.

READING: Matthew 13:1-9

## God the Sower,

may the good news of your love for us find the good soil of our hearts, that we may embrace the changes needed to care for your creation and for one another. May our harvest be sustainable, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen, as we follow in the steps of your Son, Jesus Christ, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN Open now thy gates of beauty

- 1 Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there, where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer. Oh, how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light, and grace!
- 2 Gracious God, I come before thee; come thou also unto me; where we find thee and adore thee, there a heav'n on earth must be.

  To my heart, oh, enter thou, let it be thy temple now!
- 3. Here thy praise is gladly chanted, here thy seed is duly sown; let my soul, where it is planted, bring forth precious sheaves alone, so that all I hear may be fruitful unto life in me.
- 4 Thou my faith increase and quicken, let me keep thy gift divine; howsoe'er temptations thicken, may thy word still o'er me shine as my guiding star through life, as my comfort in all strife.
- 5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done indeed; may I undisturbed draw near thee while thou dost thy people feed. Here of life the fountain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

#### SEED

In the face of the environmental crisis, we sometimes feel the problem is too vast for us to make a difference. As individuals, we can often feel overwhelmed and powerless to effect change. However, each of us can make an impact, starting from small beginnings and making small changes in our approach. A handful of seeds reminds us that great things can grow from tiny seeds. What an encouragement to allow the seed of hope to take root and grow and our lives!

READING: *Mark 4:26-32* 

God of the mustard seed,

from tiny beginnings you bring abundant blessing. Give us wisdom to use your gifts well and to understand the impact of our farming practices. Give us the courage to take even small steps in the face of climate change. Give us generous hearts to share with those who go hungry, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus Christ, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN Now the green blade rises

- 1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain, wheat that in dark earth many days has lain; love lives again, that with the dead has been; love is come again like wheat arising green.
- 2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain, thinking that he would never wake again; laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen; love is come again like wheat arising green.
- 3 Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain, he that for three days in the grave had lain; raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen; love is come again like wheat arising green.
- 4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain, your touch can call us back to life again, fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been; love is come again like wheat arising green.

#### **GROWTH**

Water is essential for growth; it is the vector for all life. In recent years, we have seen our climate changing, with a devastating effect on the impact of water, from scarcity to deluge. Times of drought have led to failed crops; times of flood have seen homes inundated where we have built houses on floodplains. Ezekiel's image of the water of life speaks of restored balance, of enough for all, of abundant life – God's vision of a climate in balance, where wounds are healed.

READING: Ezekiel 47:6-12

God of the growing grain,

of the abundant earth, you have blessed us with fruitful lands, providing more than enough for our needs, with plenty to share. Help us to honor you in our care for the land, and in the healing of the nations, that the earth may continue to be fruitful, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen** 

#### HYMN On what has now been sown

- On what has now been sown your blessing, Lord, bestow; the pow'r is yours alone to make it sprout and grow.
   O Lord, in grace the harvest raise, and yours alone shall be the praise!
- 2 To you our wants are known, from you are all our pow'rs; accept what is your own and pardon what is ours. Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive and to your word a blessing give.
- Oh, grant that each of us, now met before you here, may meet together thus when you and yours appear, and follow you to heav'n, our home. E'en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!

#### **GATHERING**

We are sometimes tempted to prioritize short-term profits over long-term sustainability, but the long-term consequences can be devastating for biodiversity. We are beginning to recognize the need to take less, to leave more space for nature to flourish. God calls us to be generous and to look to a longer horizon, as well as to notice what other people need. What is true for sustainable farming is also true for sustainable community and family life.

READING: Ruth 2:1-7

## God of the stranger,

we give thanks for the harvest of our community life. We pray for all who give their time freely to build up our shared life, to contribute to the common good. Help us all to think of others and to act for future generations. May we be like Ruth, working not just for ourselves, but building bridges of trust that crossed the boundaries of difference, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN For the healing of the nations

1 For the healing of the nations, Lord, we pray with one accord, for a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords. To a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word. Help us rise and pledge our word.

2 Lead us forward into freedom; from despair your world release, that, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace. Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase. Fear will die and hope increase.

3 All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned: pride of status, race, or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan. In our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span. May we hallow life's brief span.

4 You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind. For our growing in your likeness, bring the life of Christ to mind that by our response and service earth its destiny may find. Earth its destiny may find.

#### ABUNDANCE

Our planet is rich and fertile, and we have enormous resources to meet our needs, provided we are willing to share. Yet much of our economic life is couched in terms of scarcity and an underlying worry that there might not be enough to go round. The psalmist reminds us of the abundance of nature's provision – enough for everyone and plenty to share.

READING: Psalm 65:9-13

#### Generous God,

in love, you created the universe; in abundance, you provided for our world, and in hope, you called us to know you. Open our eyes to your wonders, open our minds to your mystery, open our hearts to your love, so that we may find the path of thanksgiving as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN O worship the king

1 O worship the King, all glorious above; O gratefully sing his power and his love; our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

2 O tell of his might, O sing of his grace, whose robe is the light, whose canopy space; his chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form, and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.

3 The earth with its store of wonders untold, Almighty, thy power hath founded of old, hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree, and round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

4 Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air; it shines in the light; it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, and sweetly distils in the dew and the rain.

#### **OFFERING**

The act of offering stems from a sense of gratitude and a desire for partnership. We offer something to God and to the water community, to give thanks for all we have received. But are we losing the instinct for offering? What's mine is mine! In a world of self-made individuals, there can be a sense of entitlement, and we may lose sight of the need to give and the importance of giving thanks.

READING: Leviticus 23:9-14

God of our first fruits,

Give us thankful hearts in this time of gathering. Grant us a generosity of spirit to provide for those who go hungry. May we offer you the first fruits of our lives, the very best that we have, that we in turn may become a blessing, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN For the fruit of all creation

- 1 For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
  For these gifts to ev'ry nation, thanks be to God.
  For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping, future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.
- In the just reward of labor,
   God's will is done.
   In the help we give our neighbor,
   God's will is done.
   In our worldwide task of caring
   for the hungry and despairing,
   in the harvests we are sharing,
   God's will is done.
- 3 For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
  For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
  For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us, most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

#### **SHARING**

When is enough enough? The gap between the highest earners and those on low wages or benefits has never been greater. We live in a world of billionaires and beggars. But such evident inequality leads to resentment and social instability. Can there be another way - a way of sharing resources so that there is enough for all?

#### READING Matthew 14:13-21

God of abundance and plenty,

where we create scarcity and need through our narrow self-interest and greed, break us open, to find in you a generosity of spirit and willingness to share, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN For the beauty of the earth

1 For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies, for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:

#### <u>Refrain</u>

Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

2 For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night, hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light: *Refrain* 

- 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight, for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight: *Refrain*
- 4 For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child, friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild: *Refrain*
- 5 For each perfect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n; for thyself, best gift divine, to our world so freely giv'n: Refrain

#### FEAST

God's vision for humanity is not one where some have everything, living with lavish excess, while many go hungry. In God's Kingdom, there is provision for everyone, with restoration and healing for all who have been excluded or forgotten. Can we make our harvest festival a foretaste of that kingdom?

#### READING Isaiah 25:1-10

#### God of the feast,

give us eyes to see your kingdom in our midst, a table prepared for all, rich food and wine, with oil to gladden the human heart, where all are included, where none are left outside, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 

## HYMN Joyful, joyful, we adore thee

- 1 Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
  God of glory, Lord of love!
  Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,
  praising thee, their sun above.
  Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
  drive the gloom of doubt away.
  Giver of immortal gladness,
  fill us with the light of day.
- All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heav'n reflect thy rays, stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.

  Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea, chanting bird, and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.
- 3 Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest, wellspring of the joy of living, ocean-depth of happy rest!

  Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine; teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine!

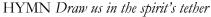
#### **BREAD**

Jesus shared bread with all sorts of people as a sign of God's acceptance and love. He asked us to remember him every time we break bread. God is in the business of making bread, the bread of community. We are the yeast, the leaven in the lump. The way we live can change the world if we dare to believe that God is with us.

## READING John 6:30-40

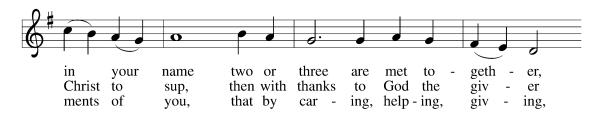
Loving God, you provide enough for everyone:

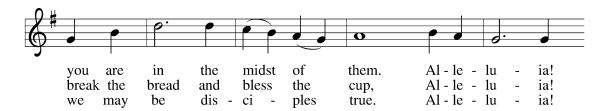
this earth is fertile, fruitful, and abundant, but we are sometimes greedy, wasteful, and selfish. Many go hungry despite our plenty, and many are left outside while we enjoy a feast. Lord Jesus, bread of life, break us open to your promised kingdom, give us hearts to gather and share, as we follow in the footsteps of your son, Jesus, Lord of the Harvest. **Amen.** 





- Draw in Spir-it's teth - er, us the for when hum bly As dis ci ples used to gath - er in the of name
- 3 All our meals and all our liv ing make as sac ra -







God of the harvest,

bless the labors of our hearts and hands, bless the fruits of our cooperation and community, bless the gathering of neighbors and strangers. Awaken us to your longing for a different world, where all are welcomed, valued, and appreciated. Give us grace to discern your presence in one another and in the invitation of your Son, Jesus Christ, that, together, we may come to the eternal harvest of your grace. **Amen.** 

## We stand.

**CREED** 

Apostles'

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.

#### PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.** 

#### We sit.

#### **GREETINGS**

#### MEAL

#### OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

O God, beyond all praising

LUTHERINGS

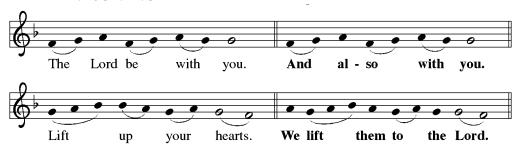
We stand.

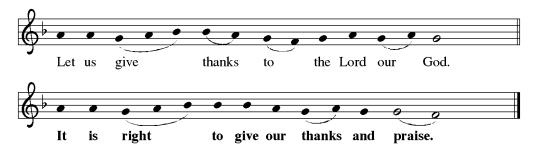
#### HYMN AT THE PRESENTATION

HYMN 188

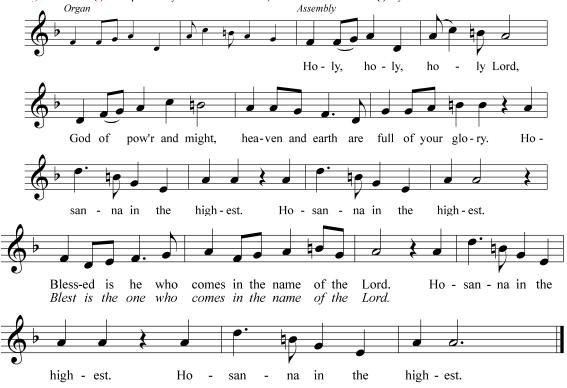
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

#### GREAT THANKSGIVING





It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father,... Here the minister continues with the preface for the day, concluding: we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



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.

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.

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith: 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 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 forever.

Amen.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,



## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

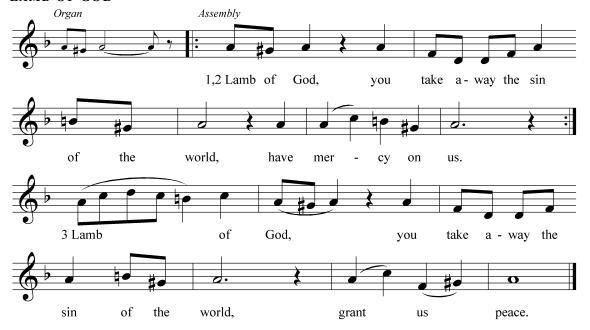
The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

All who believe that Jesus is present in the bread and wine, forgiving sins, and promising eternal life, are welcome at the Table of the Lord. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

## We sit.

#### LAMB OF GOD



#### MUSIC AT THE DISTRIBUTION

VOLUNTARY

## We stand.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Almighty God,

you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life.

Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

## **SENDING**

#### BLESSING

Adapted from "Faith and Worship" - John Birch

Bread of Life, you feed us through word and sacrament.

The bread we share, a remembrance of your presence with us.

Strengthen us for service, that seeds we sow in fertile places might grow and flourish, that food we share in fellowship might nourish and revive,

that words we share in our daily walk might glorify your name.

Bread of Life, you feed us through word and sacrament that we might feed others.

Blessed be your name!

#### HYMN AT THE PROCESSION Now thank we all our God

1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices, who wondrous things has done, in whom his world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given, the Son and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore; for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore. 2 O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us, to keep us in his grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills of this world in the next.

#### DISMISSAL

Let us bless the Lord.



#### **POSTLUDE**

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Holy Feast Mass by Larry Long

Lord's Prayer, Traditional Afrikaan's, arr. Marnus Lively-Greyling

## Worship Leaders Today

Celebrant & Preacher The Rev. Nick Sollom

Organist Cantor Nathan K. Lively-Greyling

Worship Assistant Pat Fisher

Reader Peter Coffin, Irene Hendricks, David

Hendrickson, Jennifer Leffers

Communion Assistant Lois Coffin, Jennifer Leffers

Acolyte

Usher

Altar Committee Janet Segerdell

Counters Noel Bartels, David Hendrickson

Little Free Pantry Cathy & Mike Mahler

Coffee Hour The OWLS

**This week we pray for . . .** Pastor Emeritus Dennis Albrecht, Pr Martha, Andrew, Beryl, Brita, Cat, Diane, James, Lee, Marie, Ron, Sandra, Shirley and Toby.

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

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## Sunday, October 12

5:00 pm Evensong

## Wednesday, October 15

12:00 noon - Midweek Eucharist - Chapel

4:30 pm - Confirmation Class - Sweden Room

6:00 pm - Bells | 7:00 Choir

## Saturday, October 18

Oktoberfest - 5:00 pm Luther Hall

## UPCOMING EVENTS

## Sunday, October 19

8:30 am & 10:30 am Worship

9:30 am Sunday School

## Wednesday, October 22

12:00 noon - Midweek Eucharist - Chapel

4:30 pm - Confirmation Class - Sweden Room

6:00 pm - Bells | 7:00 pm Choir

## WE NEED YOU!

**ACOLYTE SIGN-UP** 



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS, COMMUNION ASSISTANTS, READERS, USHERS, COFFEE HOUR, AND LFP SIGN-UP



# CHORAL EVENSONG Feast of St. Francis



Sunday, October 12 | 5pm