Welcome to long-time Lutherans, Christians from every tradition, and people new to this faith. Welcome to friends new and old. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; every socioeconomic and marital status, political conviction, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners, and questioning believers. Welcome.

Ebenezer Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. You are welcome here.

This worship booklet is digital! Zoom in for larger print.

Please use phones and other devices frequently, to offer and receive encouragement.

Remember to wash your hands and clean surfaces frequently.

Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; but can still be practiced at home!

Children are always welcome in worship at Ebenezer. If there are children in your house, invite them to worship with you.

The mystery of God’s ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God’s mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ’s invitation: “Come to me, all you that are weary.” Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.
Gathering

Consider lighting a candle, or putting a cross in your field of vision.
Throughout the liturgy, you may sit, stand, or kneel as you wish.

Words of Welcome

Prelude Bob Garrett, percussionist

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

Amen.

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God, we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives.

We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts.

We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.

We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.

We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us.

We sin in thought, word, and deed.

By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life.

Amen.

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.

Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope.

For hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Amen.
Gathering Hymn

Come, Bring Your Burdens to God

Gathering Hymn

Come, bring your burdens to God; come, bring your burdens to God, for Jesus will never say no.

text: South African
music: Woza Nomthwalo Wakho arr. Welile Sigobi
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.

Prayer of the Day

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Word

The First Reading Zechariah 9:9-12

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.
As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.
Psalm 145

1 O Lord, you are my God and King, and I will
2 How rich in grace are you, O Lord, full of com-
3 Your works will give you thanks, O Lord; your saints your
ev - er bless your name; I will ex - tol you ev - ery day, and
pas - sion, mer - ci - ful, your an - ger al - ways slow to rise; your
might-y acts will show, till all the peo - ples of the earth your
ev - er - more your praise pro - claim. You, Lord, are greatly
stead-fast love you show to all, for you are good in
king-dom, pow - er, glo - ry know. E - ter - nal is your
to be praised; your great-ness is be - yond our thought; all
all your ways; your crea - tures know your con - stant care. To
king-dom, Lord, for - ev - er strong, for - ev - er sure; while
gen - er - a - tions shall tell forth the might-y won - ders you have wrought.
all your works your love ex - tends; all souls your ten - der mer - cies share.
gen - er - a - tions rise and die, your high do - min-ion will en - dure.

Although this paraphrase of Psalm 145 is abbreviated (the original psalm has a verse for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet), it maintains the tone of praise that characterizes the final six psalms. In fact, the whole book takes its Hebrew name, Tehillim (praises), from them.

TEXT: The New Metrical Version of the Psalms, 1909, alt.
Music Harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)
The Second Reading Romans 7:15-25a

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Jesus spoke to the crowd saying: “To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon Silence for reflection follows.
Hymn of the Day

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

1 What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
2 Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
3 Are we weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care?

What a privilege to carry every thing to God in prayer!
We should never be discouraged—take it to the Lord in prayer.
Precious Savior, still our refuge—take it to the Lord in prayer.

Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bear—
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.

all because we do not carry every thing to God in prayer!
Jesus knows our every weakness—take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he’ll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820–1886
Music: CONVERSE, Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918
Affirmation of Faith  

Though not an historic creed, newer affirmation of faith can help us declare our faith in new ways. This affirmation comes from the community of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco.

We believe in God the Creator,  
by whom every person in heaven and earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God:  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

Amen.

Children’s Message

Prayer

Prayers of Intercession

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Sustain us as we share your word. Embrace us as we struggle to find our common ground. Lift up leaders with powerful and prophetic voices. Free us from stagnant faith. God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the well-being of creation. Protect the air, water, and land from abuse and pollution. Free us from apathy in our care of creation and direct us toward sustainable living. God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.
We pray for the nations (especially the United States and Canada, celebrating their nationhood). Guide leaders in developing just policies and guide difficult conversations. Free us from patriotism that hinders relationship-building. Lead us to expansive love for our neighbor. God, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all in need. For all who are tired, feeling despair, sick, or oppressed (especially). Take their yoke upon you and ease their burdens. Give your consolation and free us from all that keeps us bound. God, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation. Bless pastors, deacons, and congregational leaders. Energize children’s ministry volunteers, church administrators, and those who maintain our building. Shine in this place that we might notice the ways your love transforms our lives. God, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We give thanks for those who have died in faith (especially). Welcome them into your eternal rest and comfort us in our grief until we are joined with them in new life. God, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Lord’s Prayer

You may pray this prayer in these words; or, in language close to your heart.

Our Father in heaven,
    hallowed be your name,
    your kingdom come,
    your will be done,
    on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
    as we forgive those
    who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
    and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
    and the glory are yours,
    now and forever. Amen.

Peace

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

The Ebenezer Choir

Wake Every Breath
by William Billings

Wake every breath and every string,
    to bless the great Redeemer King
whose name through every clime adored!

Let joy and gratitude and love,
    through all the notes of music move,
and "Jesus" sound on every chord.

If you are in Chicago, Ebenezer now offers Holy Communion for outdoor,
socially distanced pick up on Sundays any time from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Delivery by a communion minister may also be available.
Visit ebenezerchurch.org for more information.

Sending

Benediction

May God bless us and keep us. May God’s face shine on us with grace and mercy.
May God look upon us with favor, ☩ and give us peace. Amen.
Sending Hymn  
This Is My Song

Ps. 82:8  
Lloyd Stone, 1934

1 This is my song, O God of all the nations, a song of peace for lands afar and mine.  This is my home, the country where my heart is; here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine; But other hearts in other lands are where as blue as mine. O hear my song, O God of all the

2 My country’s skies are bluer than the ocean, and sunlight, too, and clover, and skies are everywhere beating with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.  Nations, a song of peace for their land and for mine.  

Tune: FINLANDIA 10.10.10.10.10.10.  
Jean Sibelius, 1899  
Arr. for The Hymnal, 1933

These stanzas, published during the period between the two world wars, express a hope for lasting peace among all nations, races, and cultures. Finlandia is derived from a "tone poem" of the same name by Finnish composer Jean Sibelius.
Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Down at the Cross    Dave Wastkowski, guitarist