

A Festival Service of Holy Communion
for the
35th Annual Allegheny Synod Assembly



June 11, 2023
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Altoona, PA

The Allegheny Synod is located on the original and ancestral lands of the Susquehannock, Massawomeck, Shawandasse Tula, Monongahela, and Osage peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to acknowledge and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have called, and continue to call, this land their home.

PRELUDE

Selections by Brass Quartet

WELCOME

The offering received today will be given to Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,
we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

ENTRANCE HYMN

O Zion, Haste ELW 668

Setting by Jamin Morden, in memory of Dawn Morden

1 O Zi - on, haste, your mis - sion high ful - fill - ing,
2 Pub - lish to ev - 'ry peo - ple, tongue, and na - tion
3 He comes a - gain! O Zi - on, ere you meet him,

to tell to all the world that God is light;
that God, in whom they live and move, is love;
make known to ev - 'ry heart his sav - ing grace;

that he who made all na - tions is not will - ing
tell how he stooped to save his lost cre - a - tion
let none whom he has ran - somed fail to greet him,

one soul should per - ish, lost in shades of night.
and died on earth that we might live a - bove.
through your ne - glect, un - fit to see his face.

Refrain

Pub - lish glad tid - ings, tid - ings of peace,

tid - ings of Je - sus, re - demp - tion, and re - lease.

Text: Mary A. Thomson, 1834–1923
 Music: ANGELIC SONGS, James Welch, 1837–1901

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

☐ This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia,

al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. ☐ Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was

slain, whose blood set us free to be peo-ple of God.

☐ This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia,

al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. ☐ Pow-er, rich-es, wis-dom, and

strength, and hon-or, bless-ing, and glo-ry are his.

☐ This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia,

al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. ☐ Sing with all the peo-ple of God, and

join in the hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing, hon-or, glo-ry, and

might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Holy and blessed God, your Son Jesus prayed that his followers might be one. Pour out upon us your one and unifying Spirit, and awaken in every confession of the whole church a holy hunger and thirst for unity in you, so that in peace we may carry to the world the message of your love, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

INSTALLATION OF CONFERENCE DEANS

Newly elected conference deans gather in front of the altar and are presented to the assembly by the Bishop. Incumbent deans stand alongside them, affirming their shared ministry.

St. Paul writes: ⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

Among the duties of a conference dean: care for the development of the church in each conference, act as liaison between the Office of the Bishop and the conference, communicate concerns of the conference and its rostered leaders, assist with transitions in the conference, and represent the conference at Synod events.

Will you assume the office to which you have been elected, and will you endeavor to discharge its duties faithfully, to the glory of God and in service to Christ's body, the Church?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

And you, people of God in the conferences of the Allegheny Synod,
will you support and pray for the deans in their work?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

The office of dean is committed to you in the name of the Father, and
of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

The reading is heard

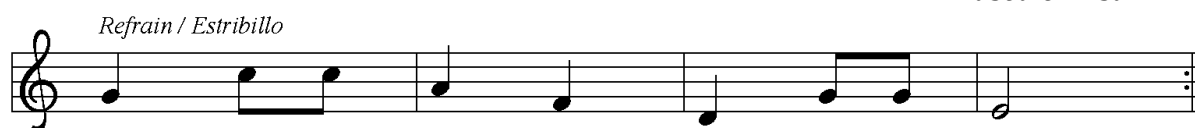
Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY

Behold, How Pleasant ELW 649

Based on Psalm 133



¡Mi - ren qué bue - no, qué bue - no es!
Be - hold, how plea - sant, how good it is!



1 Mi - ren qué bue - no es cuan - do nos reu - ni - mos to - dos jun - tos:
1 How plea - sant and har - mo - nious when God's peo - ple are to - geth - er:
2 How plea - sant and har - mo - nious when God's peo - ple are to - geth - er:
3 How plea - sant and har - mo - nious when God's peo - ple are to - geth - er:



Refrain / Estribillo
es co - mo a - cei - te bue - no de - rra - ma - do so - bre Aa - rón.
fra - grant as pre - cious oil when run - ning fresh on Aa - ron's beard.
re - fresh - ing as the dew up - on the moun - tain of the Lord.
there the Lord God be - stows a bless - ing— life for - ev - er - more.

2 *Miren qué bueno es cuando
nos reunimos todos juntos:
se parece al rocío
sobre los montes de Sión. Estribillo*

3 *Miren qué bueno es cuando
nos reunimos todos juntos:
porque el Señor nos manda
vida eterna y bendición. Estribillo*

SECOND READING

Romans 12:1-8

The reading is heard

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

John 15:1-17

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 15th chapter.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

After the reading of the Gospel:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Silence for reflection may follow the sermon.

The assembly stands for the singing of the hymn.

HYMN OF THE DAY *There's A Wideness In God's Mercy* ELW 587



- 1 There's a wide-ness
- 2 There is wel-come
- 3 For the love of
- 4 'Tis not all we



in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
 for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
 God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
 owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than
 there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing
 and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der -
 great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy



lib - er - ty. There is no place where earth's sor - rows
 in his blood. There is grace e - nough for thou - sands
 ful - ly kind. But we make this love too nar - row
 through the fall. Make our love, O God, more faith - ful;



are more felt than up in heav'n. There is no place
 of new worlds as great as this; there is room for
 by false lim - its of our own; and we mag - ni -
 let us take you at your word, and our lives will



where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
 fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
 fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
 be thanks-giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.

Music: ST. HELENA, Calvin Hampton, 1938–1984

Music © 1977 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

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AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism as we come before God to make public affirmation of baptism into Christ.

Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you that you have made us your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called us to yourself, enlightened us with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished us in the community of faith. Uphold us and all your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ.

Amen.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

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.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ
through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Do you promise to support and pray for one another in your life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence both now and forever.

Amen.

We remember the Rostered Ministers who have died in the last year and give thanks for their faithful ministry among us: The Rev. William Deist, The Rev. John Klingeman, The Rev. Walter Startzel, The Rev. Jack Timm and Synodically Authorized Minister, Mr. Dick Steuernagle.

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Let us pray. O God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come: We give you thanks for all your faithful people who have followed the light of your word throughout the centuries into our time and place.

†The Rev. William Deist
†The Rev. John Klingeman
†The Rev. Walter Startzel
†The Rev. Jack Timm
†Mr. Richard Steuernagle, Synodically Authorized Minister

As we remember these people, strengthen us to follow Christ through this world until we are carried into the age to come, where suffering and death will be no more. Hear our prayer in the name of the good and gracious shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

THE PRAYERS

United with one another and the saints of all ages, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.

*We respond: **Your mercy is great.***

Rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.
Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly stands and greets one another with a sign of peace.

OFFERTORY




Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER


Let us pray. Gracious God, you bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor. Accept the first fruits of time and toil, field and orchard we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.


DIALOGUE



P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.



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



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PREFACE

Wondrous and merciful God, we thank and praise you
because we did not choose you but you chose us.

You destined us to become your friends
from before the foundation of the world.

You showed steadfast love and faithfulness to your covenant people
and remembered your promises in every generation
Greater love hath no one than you, because in Christ
you laid down your life and turned us from servants into friends,
and by your Spirit you raise us up
to be your beloved companions forever.

And so, we gladly thank you, with angels and archangels,
and all who with your and ascended Son sit at your right hand on
high, singing the hymn of your unending praise:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

God of joys and surprises, your Son's apostles were astounded that you sent your Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles and that all the earth was awakening to the praise of your name.

You invite us to join your company through baptism and sustain us in your fellowship through this meal.

Send your Holy Spirit upon your church that it may bear the image of your crucified and resurrected Son.

By the power of that same Spirit, bless this bread and this cup that they may be for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ; who at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread and gave it to them, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup. Again, he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "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. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Overwhelming God, you give your children faith that celebrates your sovereignty. Renew that faith among any who see your Son's continuing crucifixion more evidently than his glorious resurrection.

Restore and inspire all who, in the face of evil and suffering, feel less like conquerors and more like the conquered.

Walk with those who find your commandments a burden rather than a gift.

Hasten the day when all shall be drawn into the banquet of your kingdom, and you fill heaven and earth the triumphs of your grace, ever one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us

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,

forever and ever. Amen.

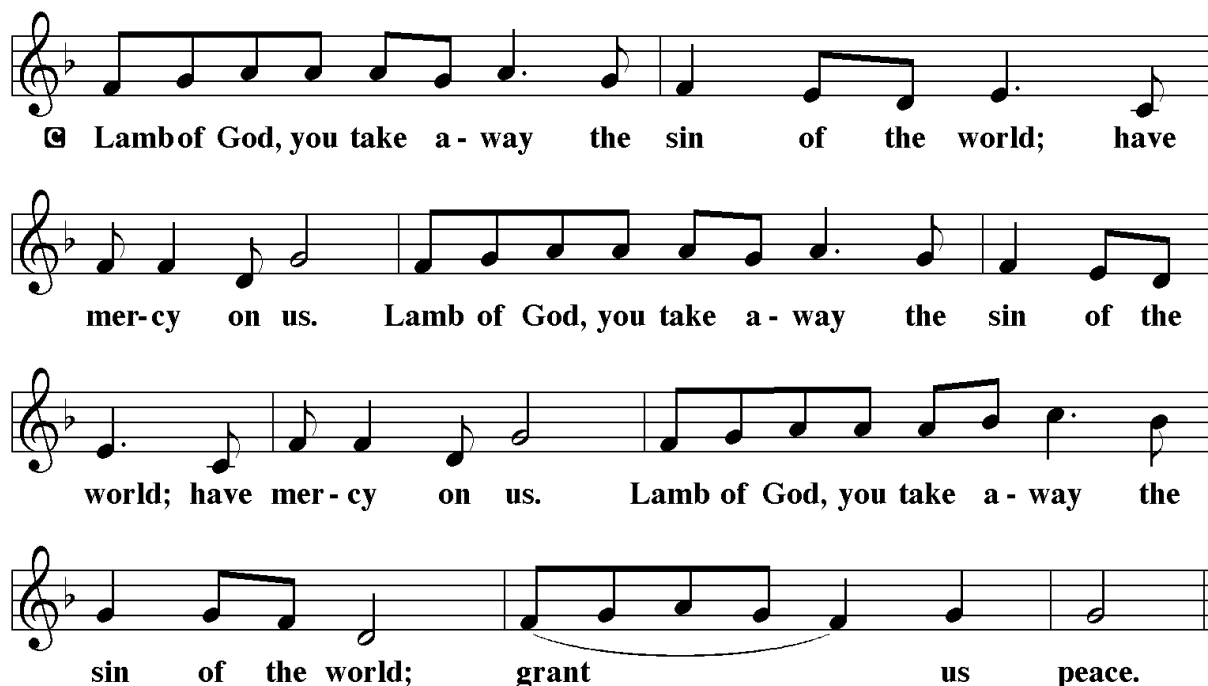
The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Ushers will dismiss each row to come forward by the center aisle. At the head of the aisle, pick up a cup, receive the host and proceed to a cup to receive wine (first cup) or grape juice (second cup). Return to your seats by the side aisles.

If you require gluten free bread, please receive the host from the station on the chancel at the head of the aisle.

COMMUNION HYMN



☐ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

The assembly stands following the distribution.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.



☩ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - jice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. O God, in this holy communion you have welcomed us into your presence, nourished us with words of mercy, and fed us at your table. Amid the cares of this life, strengthen us to love you with all our heart, serve our neighbors with a willing spirit, and honor the earth you have made; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING



☩ Almighty God, Father, † Son,
and Holy Spirit, bless you . . . and for - ever. ☩ **A - men**

SENDING HYMN

A Mighty Fortress ELW 504

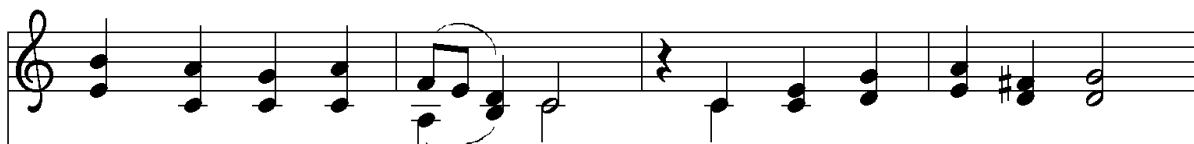
Setting by Michael Burkhardt



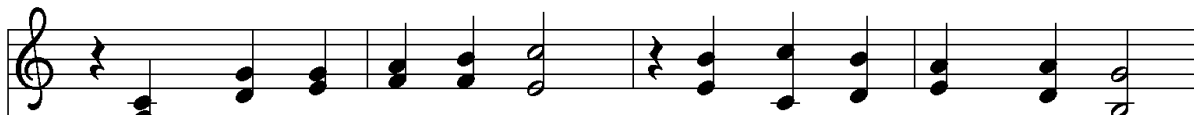
1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -
 2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -
 3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land all threat-'ning to de -
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, no thanks to foes, who



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom
 vour us, we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; they
 fear it; for God him - self fights by our side with



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe
 God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be?
 can - not o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage;
 weap - ons of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house,



has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dread - ful might
 The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,
 in bat - tle we'll en - gage! His might is doomed to fail;
 goods, hon - or, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched a - way,



he arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
 God's on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
 God's judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
 they can - not win the day. The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Selections for Organ

+ + +

Worship Participants

Preaching

The Rev. Paula Schmitt
Bishop of the Allegheny Synod

Presiding

The Rev. Barry Folmar
Pastor of First Lutheran, Altoona

Assisting Minister

Ms. Laura Waltermire
Candidate for Ordination in the Allegheny Synod

Ushers

Ms. Shelley Clinich
Mr. David Hess II
Ms. Dee Kalbach
Mr. Fred Reigh
Members of First Lutheran, Altoona

Reader

Mr. Ted Williams
Vicar at St. Mark, Pleasant Gap and Candidate for Ordination in the Allegheny Synod

Crucifer

Ms. Kristen Opalinski
Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Manager for the ELCA
and the Churchwide Representative to our Synod Assembly

Communion Assistants

Deans of the Allegheny Synod

The Rev. David Wright, Bedford Conference
The Rev. Traci Marriott, Blair/Huntingdon Conference
The Rev. Vicki Beilfuss, Clearfield Conference
The Rev. Mark Fischer, Johnstown Conference
The Rev. Tyler Graham, Laurel Highlands Conference
Deacon Alicia Anderson, Nittany Conference

Musicians

Mr. Claude Fabinyi, Organist

Members of the Ensemble at First Lutheran, Altoona

Sacristan

Ms. Joyann Powell

Member of First Lutheran, Altoona

Flowers

The Altar Flowers were graciously donated by the Allegheny Synod Women's Organization

Photographer

The Rev. Dick Henry

UCC Pastor serving Zion, Petersburg and St. Matthew, Marklesburg

Thank you to First Lutheran for hosting this Synod worship event.

Please join us for light refreshments following worship on the covered patio. Thank you to Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries for providing the refreshments.

You are invited to attend two Zoom Bible studies ahead of our Synod Assembly. Tuesday, June 13 and Thursday, June 15 at 6:00 pm hosted by our ELCA Churchwide Representative, Kristen Opalinski. Zoom links can be found on the Allegheny Synod's website in the Synod Assembly tab.

Synod Assembly will begin at 8:30 am at the Blair County Convention Center. Doors open at 7:30 am.



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

701 Quail Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602
814-942-1042
www.alleghenysynod.org