

The Social Ministry Committee would like to invite you to participate in our **\$1,000 Challenge for World Hunger**. The bulletin board in the Narthex explains our challenge and gives examples of various ways for you to participate.

Throughout Lent in our Sunday bulletins, we will be sharing stories like the one below describing how the ELCA works to end world hunger around the world .

Thank you for taking the **CHALLENGE!**



**Hatching a reliable protein source**

**MEXICO**  
[ELCA.org/Hunger](http://ELCA.org/Hunger)

In the remote and mountainous community of Amextra in Puebla, the rampant drought in Guerrero, Mexico, poverty and lack of opportunity can make healthy food hard to come by. As a result, children can suffer from malnutrition and slowed growth and development. Marcelina and her daughters, Imelda, 12, and Esmeralda, 10, were among the 100,000 who had a tough time affording enough healthy food. With little income and few options for growing crops, the choices for protein were limited. While Marcelina and her family were able to get eggs to eat three times a week, this was not enough to meet the nutritional needs of growing children.

Now things have changed for this family thanks in part to your gifts to ELCA World Hunger. Working with a local organization, Amextra, the family received six chickens, materials for chicken coops, and training on how to care for the poultry. Now they work to take care of the chickens and have eggs to eat anytime. They can sell the extra eggs at the market for additional income, which can be used to buy food or other essentials such as salt, dried milks, tomatoes and rice.

Through your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, Amextra is helping other families in Llanos de las Piedras make that belief a reality, too. In addition to providing chicken coops, your gifts helped other families in the community start gardens to grow vegetables such as radishes, carrots, cabbage, brussels and carrots, which allows them to supplement the diet and their livelihood. This is the kind of change that can impact the entire community household by household, increasing stability and addressing the root causes of hunger. Thanks to your support, Marcelina and her neighbors can make strides of hunger and episodes of malnutrition a thing of the past!



# Schwarzwald Lutheran Church

Serving and Loving Christ since 1737  
*Join our family, share God's love.*

The people of Schwarzwald - Ministers  
The Rev. Donald C. Simmons - Interim Pastor  
Mrs. Patricia A. Weiser - Director of Music  
Ms. Diane V. Hafer - Office Administrator  
Mrs. Crystal Jordan - Christian Ed. Director  
Mrs. Rochelle Chelius—Youth Minister Leader  
Mrs. Melissa Kerber—Sexton

**THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT**

**MARCH 24, 2019**



**WELCOME!**

**In the name of our Savior Jesus Christ,  
welcome to worship this morning!**

**If you are a visitor**, a special welcome to you, and if you are without a church home, we invite you to join our fellowship. Please fill out the guest card in the pew rack and pick up a welcome packet from the stand in the foyer. If you do not have a Bible at home, please take one from the welcome table.

**For your assistance, comfort and safety**, we have ushers on duty before, during and after worship today. Should you need any help, please look for any of the men and women with an “usher” badge. There will be at least one in the lobby during worship. Our ushers are also instructed to offer help to anyone who appears in distress. Restrooms can be found through the door on the left at the front of the church; either proceed downstairs or to the left into the Fellowship Hall.

**Large print bulletins and hearing receivers** are available in the Narthex. Please see an usher for assistance. Please be sure to turn off the hearing receivers after the worship service.

**For parents with small children**: We are blessed to have so many children in our congregation. Our church family knows that teaching children to worship is simply one of our most important ministries. If there is a need, please take advantage of our nursery room available during worship with a changing table, plenty of toys and audio of our service. Please ask any usher in the foyer to help you find the nursery room. **Children's bulletins** for readers and pre-readers are provided each week. They can be found on clipboards in the marked milk crates in the narthex and vestibule. Storybooks are also provided there for children to enjoy.

## SERVING AT WORSHIP

Assisting Minister . . . . . Kelly Carr  
Usher Team Captain . . . . . Walt Smithson  
Carillonneur . . . . . Judy Ney  
Acolyte . . . . . Charlie Brumbaugh  
Nursery Attendant . . . . . Sarah Gibson  
Greeters. . . . . Russ and Joan Smith

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**We welcome The Rev. Richard Miller as our supply this morning.**

The **altar flowers** are presented to the glory of God and sponsored 1) by Susan and David Johns in honor and thanksgiving for their grandson, Ben, and in memory of Susan's mother, Ethel Mercer, and 2) by Diane Hafer in honor of the first birthday of her grand-twins, Kenton and Tenley Shaak.

The **bulletins** are presented to the glory of God and sponsored 1) by the Houpp Family in celebration of Ruth and Lawrence Houpp's 73rd wedding anniversary, and 2) by Bill and Doris Jaeger in celebration of the 2nd birthday of their grandson, Koa Wright.

**NEEDED! Bulletin sponsors** (\$14) are needed for March 31 and all of April. **Altar flower sponsors** (\*\$25) are needed for all of April. Please use the sign-up sheets in the Narthex. \*Due to a change in florists (our previous florist is no longer providing fresh flowers), there is an increase in the altar flower sponsorship to \$25. Also, please return the empty vases to the church office, if possible.

**CASH FOR CAUSES**—The Redner's and Giant gift cards will be available for purchase in the Narthex after worship today. Please see Denton Quick.

**SPECIAL GUEST** — **Next Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:15 AM, Attorney Scott Hoh will make a presentation on "The Constitution, the Founding Fathers and Religion." Join us for coffee and buns in Fellowship Hall as we learn about the roots of our nation in the 1700's.**

## **SCHWARZWALD LUTHERAN CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP**

Schwarzwald Lutheran Church will award two \$500 scholarships to applicants (high school seniors only) planning on continuing their education beyond high school. Special consideration will be given to applicants whose faith and service to others has influenced their life and their plans for the future.

The applicant must be a member of Schwarzwald Lutheran Church and may attend any school district or be home-schooled.

Please pick-up an application in the church office. The application, along with your transcript, must be returned by **Monday, April 22, 2019**, either by dropping it off at the church office, Attention: Scholarship Committee, or e-mailing it to: [administrator@schwarzwaldlutheran.org](mailto:administrator@schwarzwaldlutheran.org) and placing "Scholarship Application" in the subject line.

If you have any questions, please call the church office, 610-779-3480.

### **"TOWN HALL" MEETING with Bishop Zeiser**

**Thursday, March 28, 2019 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary**

Desserts and beverages will be available before the event at  
6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall.

The purpose of the meeting is to offer an opportunity to discuss the *Parish Study Report* and to have conversation that will help the Bishop discern the "right" candidate for Schwarzwald.

The Parish Study Report is available electronically or hard copy. Please call Diane in the church office to obtain a copy, 610-779-3480.



SLC Scholarship Fund

**LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICE CALENDAR**

**Wednesdays - March 27, April 3, 10**  
7:00 PM Weekday Evening Lenten Services  
*Holden Evening Prayer Service*

**Sunday, March 31**  
4th Sunday of Lent  
10:30 AM Worship Service with Holy Communion

**Sunday, April 7**  
5th Sunday of Lent  
10:30 AM Worship Service

**HOLY WEEK CALENDAR**

**Sunday, April 14**  
**Palm Sunday**  
10:30 AM Worship Service with Holy Communion  
6:30 PM Second Sunday Coffee House Worship Service  
(Coffee at 6:00 PM)

**Thursday, April 18**  
**Maundy Thursday**  
7:30 PM Holy Communion Service  
Stripping of the Altar

**Friday, April 19**  
**Good Friday**  
**Tenebrae Service**  
7:30 PM Worship Service

**EASTER**

**Alleluia!**  
**He is Risen!**  
**Sunday, April 21**  
**Easter Sunday Festival Worship**  
8:00 AM Early Service with Holy Communion  
9:00 to 10:00 AM Breakfast in Fellowship Hall  
10:30 AM Festival Worship with Holy Communion

The Apr/May/June issue of *Christ in Our Home* is available in the Narthex and vestibule entrances. Please help yourself to these daily devotional guides.

**WOMEN'S CHOIR REHEARSAL** today at 11:30 AM in the Parlor.

**SCHWARZWALD'S BREAKFAST BUNCH**

BREAKFAST BUNCH will meet on Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 AM at Effie's Charcoal Chef Restaurant.



If you would like to add someone to the prayer list, please use the prayer request cards located in the pew racks or in the Narthex. Please place your completed card in the prayer box in the Narthex. Thank you.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP BOOK**

As we prepare for the coming of a new pastor, it is imperative that we use the worship book that our candidate may be using in his or her parish. You can obtain an envelope in the Narthex or vestibule to make a contribution of one or more hymnals in honor of or in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$25.00 per hymnal. Please mark your envelope as to how you wish the book plate to be printed in the hymnal(s) that you sponsor.

**Schwarzwald Egg Hunt 2019**



The Egg Hunt will take place on Saturday, April 20, at 10:00 AM. **We are in need of candy!** All candy donations should be small enough to fit in plastic eggs. Donations can be dropped off in the church office or given to Crystal Jordan or Linda Strain on a Sunday morning. Also, **we are looking for volunteers to run the flower activity and other craft areas at the egg hunt.** Please let Diane or Crystal know if you are able to help.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Delegates are needed to attend the WBMD Spring Assembly on Tuesday, May 14, at 7:00 PM at Bern Lutheran Church OR the one-day Synod Assembly on Saturday, June 1, at Genetti Inn and Suites in Hazleton. All fees will be paid by SLC. If you are interested in attending, please call the church office.

2nd Sunday Coffee House  
Worship Service

**APRIL 14 6:30 PM**

IN FELLOWSHIP HALL  
ALL ARE WELCOME!

Coffee 'n Chat starts at 6:00 PM



**MARCH 24 through MARCH 31**

Sun 3/24 11:30 AM Women's Choir rehearsal  
11:30 AM Fellowship Hall in use  
8:00 PM AA meeting

Mon 3/25 5:00 PM Sanctuary in use  
5:30 PM Exercise class  
7:00 PM Exeter Community Chorus rehearsal  
8:00 PM AA meeting

Tue 3/26 10:00 AM Bible Fellowship / Action Team  
6:30 PM Prayer Group

Wed 3/27 5:30 PM Exercise class  
6:00 PM Weight Watchers meeting  
7:00 PM Lenten Service

Thu 3/28 6:00 PM Girl Scout Troop #1126  
6:30 PM Dessert and beverages in Fellowship Hall  
7:00 PM "Town Hall" meeting with Bishop Zeiser  
7:00 PM NA Meeting

Fri 3/29 6:30 PM Girl Scout troop #167

Sat 3/30 8:00 AM Exercise class

Sun 3/31 9:15 AM Atty. Hoh's presentation  
9:15 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM Worship Service with Holy Communion  
8:00 PM AA Meeting

**LOOKING AHEAD - Mark your calendar!!**

(Please watch upcoming newsletters and bulletins for additional information.)

**April 3, 10** Lenten Services, 7:00 PM

**April 14** Palm Sunday, 10:30 AM; Second Sunday service, 6:30 PM

**April 18** Maundy Thursday, 7:30 PM

**April 19** Good Friday, 7:30 PM

**April 21** Easter, 8:00 and 10:30 AM; Continental Breakfast served between services from 9:00-10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall

**May 27** Memorial Day (Church Office closed)

**June 9** Confirmation, 10:30 AM

**BLESSING**

P God, who fills the creation with abundance,  
Christ, who spreads his arms in forgiveness,  
Holy Spirit, who draws ever near to us,  
✙ bless you and bring you to life everlasting.

**C Amen.**

**SENDING SONG, *Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer***  
LBW #343 (please use green hymnal)

**DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Remember the poor.

**C Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE, *Postludium in G.* . . . . . Stainer**

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**Schwarzwald Lutheran Church**

**Mission Statement:**

We are a family of faith called to do God's will by inspiring Christian life through teaching and sharing His unconditional love for all.

**Vision Statement:**

To encourage growth of our faith family through community outreach and engaging youth to serve God.

**Schwarzwald Lutheran Church**  
250 Church Lane Road  
Reading, PA 19606  
Church Office Phone 610-779-3480  
Church Office Fax 610-779-2777  
Website [www.schwarzwaldlutheran.org](http://www.schwarzwaldlutheran.org)  
E-mail [administrator@schwarzwaldlutheran.org](mailto:administrator@schwarzwaldlutheran.org)  
Emergency 610-914-8257

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Seeking the grace, mercy, and love of almighty God, we offer our prayers for the church, for people in need, and for all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

*After each petition of the prayers:*

A Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

### Members:

Connie Brewer	Zena Burkert	June Collison
Delores Conrad	Diane Dinkelocker	Emmy Faber
Janet Griesemer	Marcia Holbrook	Cynthia Lott
Steve Marquard	Judi Merkel	Greg Pomian
Joann Rosales	Katie Rosales	Noelle Rutherford
Jeremy Schaeffer	Bob Schmehl	Ron Slepceki
Geraldine Wagner		

### Family, friends and loved ones:

Julianne Arnold	Justin Baylor	Marilyn Becker
Jeannie Crass	Linda Dean	Jon Dillon
Bob Dries	Breanna Elison	Larry Galloway
Pearl Garman	Donald Gotshall	Emma Herb
Wilbur Herb	Elaine Lutz	Patsy Pierce
Joe Plank	Lucile Reynolds	Lou Rothermel
Bob Rutherford	Dick Sassaman	Elisabeth Scollick
Joan Sehl	Joseph Smith	
The family and friends of Judy Dorner in their grief		

*The prayers conclude:*

P Reveal your will as you receive our prayers, and conform our ways to your ways; through the saving work of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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**

## WORSHIP SERVICE

### HYMNS ON THE CARILLON

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEMPLE TALK . . . . . Peg Gumpert on World Hunger

PRELUDE, *Allegro* . . . . . Marcello  
Harry Brumbaugh, cello solo

### CALL TO WORSHIP—RINGING THE BELLS

*Please stand.*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us,  
anoint us, and make us new.

C **Amen.**

P In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin,  
and receive God's promise of mercy.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P God at the margins,

C **We have wandered far from your home;  
again and again, we lose our way.  
We turn inward, afraid of the world around us.  
We forget that you have saved your people before  
and promise to do so again.  
Do not remember the deeds of our past,  
but turn our faces toward the future,  
where your forgiveness is sure,  
your welcome is clear,  
and your love overflows.  
Amen.**

P Like a hen who gathers her chicks,  
God embraces you in tender care.  
Like manna in the desert,  
God feeds you with surprising mercy.  
Like a loving parent,  
God runs to meet you again this day,  
forgiving your sins for the sake of ☩ Christ,  
leading you from death into life.

C **Amen.**

**HYMN, *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross***

1 Je - sus, keep me near the cross, there's a pre - cious foun - tain:  
 2 Near the cross, a life - giving soul, love and mer - cy found me:  
 3 Near the cross, O Lamb of God, bring its sacri - ce for me:  
 4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hop - ing, trust - ing ev - er,

tree to all, a heal - ing stream flows from Cal - vary's moun - tain.  
 there the bright and mor - ning star sheds its beams a - round me.  
 help me walk from day to day with its shad - ow o'er me.  
 all I reach the gold - en strand just be - yond the riv - er.

*Repeat*

In the cross, in the cross be my glo - ry ev - er,  
 till my ran - somed soul shall find rest be - yond the riv - er.

**GREETING**

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

**KYRIE**

Leader

1 O God, Father in heav - en, have mer - cy up - on us.  
 2 O Son of God, redeemer of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.  
 3 O God, Holy Spir - it, have mer - cy up - on us.

All

Your heart, O God, is grieved, we know, by ev - 'ry  
 Your arms ex - tend, O Christ, to save from sin of  
 O lay - ish Jew - er, come to and the chil - dren

**SHARING THE PEACE**

P The peace of our Lord be with you always.  
 C **And also with you.**

*The minister and congregation greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these words: **Peace be with you.***

*Please be seated.*

**OFFERING, *Lead Me, Lord***..... Wesley

**ANTHEM, *Seek Ye the Lord***..... Roberts  
 Cynthia Mohr, vocal soloist

*Please stand.*

**OFFERTORY**

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right spir -  
 it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take  
 not your Hu - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the  
 joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

**PRAYER INTRODUCTION**

P Let us pray...

Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing. Lord, send your Spir - it in this place:  
 Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

**VERSE**



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.  
 Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is under-stood.  
 When my heart is hard, break the stone a-way. When my heart is cold,  
 warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.  
 Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

*Please be seated.*

**SERMON**.....The Rev. Richard Miller

*Please stand.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**, *Jesus, Still Lead On* - LBW #341 (please use green hymnal)

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**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.**



e - vil, ev - 'ry woe, up - on your cross - fur -  
 death and grasp of grave: your scars be - fore the  
 that your word has made. Now make us grow and  
 sak - en Son our death is laid, and peace is won.  
 Fa - ther move his heart to met - ey at such love.  
 help us pray: bring joy and com - fort. come to stay.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** Let us pray...

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen

*Please be seated.*

**CHILDREN'S CIRCLE**..... The Rev. Richard Miller

**FIRST READING, Isaiah 55:1-9**

<sup>1</sup>Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
 come to the waters;  
 and you that have no money,  
 come, buy and eat!  
 Come, buy wine and milk  
 without money and without price.  
<sup>2</sup>Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?  
 Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,  
 and delight yourselves in rich food.  
<sup>3</sup>Incline your ear, and come to me;  
 listen, so that you may live.  
 I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
 my steadfast, sure love for David.  
<sup>4</sup>See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
 a leader and commander for the peoples.  
<sup>5</sup>See, you shall call nations that you do not know,  
 and nations that do not know you shall run to you,  
 because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
 for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD while he may be found,  
 call upon him while he is near;  
<sup>7</sup>let the wicked forsake their way,  
 and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
 let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,  
 and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
 nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.  
<sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
 so are my ways higher than your ways  
 and my thoughts than your thoughts.

A The word of the Lord.  
 C **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 63:1-8** (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>O God, you are my God, I seek you,  
 my soul thirsts for you;  
 my flesh faints for you,  
 as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.  
<sup>2</sup>**So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
 beholding your power and glory.**  
<sup>3</sup>Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
 my lips will praise you.  
<sup>4</sup>**So I will bless you as long as I live;  
 I will lift up my hands and call on your name.**  
<sup>5</sup>My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,  
 and my mouth praises you with joyful lips  
<sup>6</sup>**when I think of you on my bed,  
 and meditate on you in the watches of the night;**  
<sup>7</sup>for you have been my help,  
 and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.  
<sup>8</sup>**My soul clings to you;  
 your right hand upholds me.**

**SECOND READING, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

<sup>1</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup>and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup>and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup>and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup>Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." <sup>8</sup>We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup>We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup>And do not complain as some of them did, and

were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup>These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup>So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup>No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

A The word of the Lord.  
 C **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and  
 mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in  
 stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter.  
 C **Glorify to you, O Lord.**

**HOLY GOSPEL, Luke 13:1-9**

<sup>1</sup>At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup>[Jesus] asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?" <sup>3</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup>Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?" <sup>5</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

<sup>6</sup>Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup>So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' <sup>8</sup>He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. <sup>9</sup>If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

P The Gospel of the Lord.  
 C **Praise to you, O Christ.**