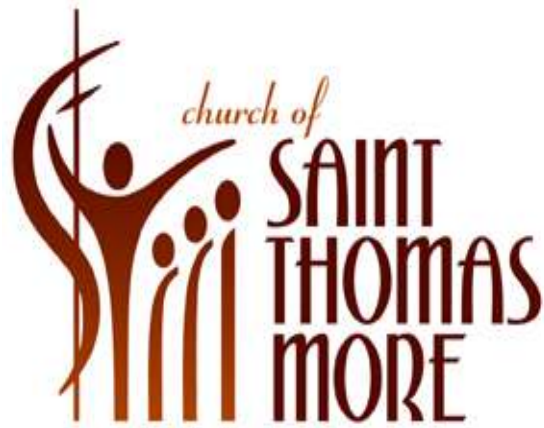


## Acclaim the Gospel

Before we **proclaim** the Gospel each week, we **acclaim** the Gospel. Most of the year, we sing a joyful “Alleluia”, a word with origins in the Hebrew Scriptures that literally means, “Praise God!” or “Praise YHWH!”

No other word or phrase comes close to expressing the joy that Jews and Christians experience in their prayer of praise. This acclamation of rejoicing is found in the psalms, and it eventually became part of the Christian worship service as a song of joy for the celebrations of Easter.



As every Christian liturgical celebration is a proclamation of the resurrection, proclaiming the risen Lord in our midst, “Alleluia” expresses a central emotion of our Christian worship, a joy we cannot suppress, a shout of praise for the Word of God in our midst. It makes sense, then, that “Alleluia” be our song and our expression of faith as we acclaim the public proclamation of the Gospel.

Even in the season of Lent, when we don’t use the term “Alleluia”, our Gospel Acclamation is still a statement of praise, addressed to Christ: “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!” Although other music of the Lenten season may be more solemn, the acclamation before the Gospel retains this feeling of praise.

The role of the Gospel acclamation should be seen in terms of its ritual function; it is *anticipatory* in character, and we sing it with a relentless fierceness, almost like the words are exploding out of us as our excitement builds to hear the stories about and teachings of Jesus. As the final note of our acclamation sounds, the deacon or priest proclaims “The Lord be with you!” and we know we’re about to hear the Good News, the Gospel of the Lord.

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