

# Confession and Absolution

## 744 Amazing Grace

*sts. 1–5*

- 1 Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see!
- 2 The Lord has promised good to me,  
His Word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.
- 3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come;  
His grace has brought me safe thus far,  
His grace will lead me home.
- 4 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail  
And mortal life shall cease,  
Amazing grace shall then prevail  
In heaven's joy and peace.
- 5 When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we'd first begun.

Text (sts. 1–4): John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.; (st. 5): A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790, Richmond  
Text: Public domain

*Stand*

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

## Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

## Exhortation

*LSB 151*

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

*Kneel/Stand*

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

## Confession of Sins

*LSB 151*

- P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.  
**C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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.**

## Absolution

*LSB 151*

- P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

*Stand*

# Service of the Word

## Introit

*Psalm 34:1–2, 11, 22; antiphon: Psalm 119:46*

- P** I will speak of your testimonies before kings, [O Lord,] and shall not be put to shame.  
**C** I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.  
**P** My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.  
**C** Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.  
**P** The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.  
**C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**  
**P** I will speak of your testimonies before kings, [O Lord,] and shall not be put to shame.

## Kyrie

*LSB 152*

- A** In peace let us pray to the Lord.  
**C** **Lord, have mercy.**  
**A** For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.  
**C** **Lord, have mercy.**  
**A** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.  
**C** **Lord, have mercy.**  
**A** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.  
**C** **Lord, have mercy.**  
**A** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.  
**C** **Amen.**

## This Is the Feast

*LSB 155*

- C** **This is the feast of victory for our God.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**  
**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.**  
**This is the feast of victory for our God.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**  
**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.**  
**This is the feast of victory for our God.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**  
**Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:**  
**Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**  
**This is the feast of victory for our God.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**  
**For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.**  
**This is the feast of victory for our God.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## Salutation and Collect of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** **And also with you.**  
**P** Let us pray.  
 Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies,

and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

*Sit*

## First Reading

*Revelation 14:6–7*

<sup>6</sup>Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. <sup>7</sup>And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## Epistle

*Romans 3:19–28*

<sup>19</sup>Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup>For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

<sup>21</sup>But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. <sup>26</sup>It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

<sup>27</sup>Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup>For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

*John 8:31–36*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.

**C Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>31</sup>So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, <sup>32</sup>and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” <sup>33</sup>They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup>The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. <sup>36</sup>So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to You, O Christ.**

## Apostles’ Creed

**C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.  
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy Christian Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

*Sit*

## **656 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God**

- 1 A mighty fortress is our God,  
 A trusty shield and weapon;  
 He helps us free from ev'ry need  
 That hath us now o'ertaken.  
 The old evil foe  
 Now means deadly woe;  
 Deep guile and great might  
 Are his dread arms in fight;  
 On earth is not his equal.
- 2 With might of ours can naught be done,  
 Soon were our loss effected;  
 But for us fights the valiant One,  
 Whom God Himself elected.  
 Ask ye, Who is this?  
 Jesus Christ it is,  
 Of Sabaoth Lord,  
 And there's none other God;  
 He holds the field forever.
- 3 Though devils all the world should fill,  
 All eager to devour us,  
 We tremble not, we fear no ill;  
 They shall not overpow'r us.  
 This world's prince may still  
 Scowl fierce as he will,  
 He can harm us none.  
 He's judged; the deed is done;  
 One little word can fell him.
- 4 The Word they still shall let remain  
 Nor any thanks have for it;  
 He's by our side upon the plain  
 With His good gifts and Spirit.  
 And take they our life,  
 Goods, fame, child, and wife,  
 Though these all be gone,  
 Our vict'ry has been won;  
 The Kingdom ours remaineth.

Text: tr. composite; Martin Luther, 1483–1546  
 Text: Public domain

## **Sermon**

Grace, Mercy, and Peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

I became Lutheran as an adult. I was raised Roman Catholic. My maternal Grandmother had been a member of whatever denomination was in the town she lived in. Sometimes, she was Methodist. Sometimes, she was Baptist. Given that, I fell into the trap that good people went to heaven. And being related to me, all those who died were good people. Well, there was Aunt Lily. She was always cranky and cantankerous when I was around. As the Baptist preacher extolled her many virtues, I wondered if I was at the right funeral.

My father-in-law's funeral was tough. He had lost his hearing and learned to read lips. He would turn his head when he was done with the conversation, whether you were or not. He didn't have patience for me or for Linda's housekeeping; his complaints upset me more than her. Like Aunt Lily, I wasn't sure he met the "good people" criteria. But he was an LCMS Lutheran. As I struggled with this, our vacancy Pastor asked "What did he believe?". Well, he was an LCMS Lutheran. He converted as an adult after marrying. He believed, as the epistle said, <sup>28</sup>"For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law." He believed that he had received and possessed <sup>22</sup>"the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe." He clung to Ephesians 2:8-9 <sup>8</sup>"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast." He espoused Ephesians 2:10 <sup>10</sup>"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

Our sinful nature and the world around us want everything that we have and hold precious to come from ourselves. The individual is master of all things, be it happiness, fulfillment, relationships, accomplishments, successes and security.

When we are successful, pride swells and we boast. Paul mentions in verse 27 <sup>27</sup>"Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith." And in Ephesians 2:9 as just read. The sin of the people of Babel wasn't building the tower but trying to make a name for themselves. Instead, God makes a name for Abraham. Abraham heard, trusted, and obeyed. God chose and called Abraham into a relationship with Him. Abraham, responded to God's Grace and Mercy. Trusting that God would return Isaac to him, Abraham obeys. Abraham and Isaac go three days to the place God had instructed him and prepares to sacrifice Isaac. Do you remember the rest of the story? The angel of the Lord stops the sacrifice and provides a ram, caught by its horns, as a sacrifice in Isaac's place. Likewise, God sent Jesus to be sacrificed on our behalf. Like the ram, Jesus is our substitute, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus paid the full sin debt that you and I cannot pay through His selfless voluntary sacrifice on the cross. Jesus takes your sins and gives you His righteousness, his proper relationship with the Father. Jesus's life, death, and resurrection justifies you with the Father. Jesus reconciles you with the Father. Jesus makes you right with the Father.

God provides all that you need. God makes the first move. God comes to you. God sought you out to give you faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit works faith in your heart through God's Word, through the proclamation of the Good News of John 3:16 "For God so loved the world,<sup>[1]</sup> that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John continues <sup>17</sup>"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." Jesus is God's instrument of salvation. Jesus fulfilled God's plan of salvation. Before creation, God knew that mankind would sin. God still created. God knew that mankind's sins would cost Him His Son. Jesus lived the perfect life that you and I cannot live. Jesus went to the cross, carrying the sins of all people. The sinless for the sinful. The perfect for the imperfect. Jesus died for your sins. Jesus died for my sins. God raised Jesus from the dead, proving Jesus's victory over sin, death and the devil.

The Law always accuses. The Law teaches what sin is and creates a desire for sin. Paul explains in Romans 7:7-8 <sup>7</sup>"What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not

covet.”<sup>8</sup> But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.”

You can never completely fulfill the Law. You cannot be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect. Romans 7:5-6 teaches “<sup>5</sup>For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. <sup>6</sup>But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.” Jesus’s death and Resurrection set you free from the Law. You no longer need to be concerned about whether you can and have fulfilled the Law. Instead, you are set free to serve God and neighbor. That’s where Ephesians 2:10 comes in. God has work for you and I to do. You get to join Jesus on His mission. You get to minister to those around us. Those who are like you and those who are not. Remember the Sunday School song “Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight. Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.”

Confession from the Service of Compline captures the problem well. “Holy and gracious God, I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You, God.” Sin is so deeply engrained that you sin without realizing you sinned. Sin is so pervasive that you can’t always identify and list your sin. That is why God’s grace is so important. You can’t stop sinning. You can’t even remember all the sins that you committed in a day. Thanks be to God that, although you are not good enough to get into heaven, your faith will get you into heaven, faith in Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior.

God gives you His Grace. God has mercy on you. God calls you into his family, the church, to love and encourage each other and to love and serve God and neighbor. God calls you to confess your sins and receive forgiveness. Sins forgiven, rejoice that by God’s Grace, you have been given Faith in Jesus Christ, to lead you to serve God and one another. By Faith, cling to the Promises of God that you will be with Him for all eternity in the new heavens and the new earth. Your sins are forgiven. You are righteous and holy before God. Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting. Amen.

*Stand*

## Offertory

*LSB 159*

**☞ What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?**

**I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord.**

**I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.**

**I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,  
in the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.**

*Stand*

## Prayer of the Church

For the Church, that God would deliver her from error and preserve in her the proclamation of the Gospel, and that all would fear the Lord and give Him glory, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all ministers of the Word, that by their preaching of the Law all would be held accountable to God without excuse, and that by their proclamation of the Gospel all would know Jesus Christ as their Savior, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who are blind to the bondage of their sin, that God would open their eyes by the words of Jesus and grant them the true freedom of sonship through a permanent place in His household, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For our homes and families, that God would keep us in His Word and so make us truly His disciples, freed from errors and at peace; and especially for all fathers, that God would preserve and encourage them for their godly task to bring up children who fear Him, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the civil authorities, especially our president; Congress; and all who make, administer and judge our laws, that God would protect them from the temptations that beset their offices and grant them wisdom and courage to serve with integrity, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who cry to God for healing of body and soul, [*especially \_\_\_\_\_,*] that He would grant them release from their afflictions according to His will and sustain their hope until the day of Christ's appearing, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who come to Christ's altar seeking the forgiveness of sins, that with repentant hearts they may receive His gifts, seek to amend their lives, and by His Spirit be aligned with His will and purpose, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Mighty Fortress, Rock of refuge, we give You thanks for all Your servants who have departed this life in faith. We especially bless You today for the great reformers of Your Church who call us back to the Gospel and to the righteousness we have in Christ alone. Keep us in fellowship with them, and bring us at last to our heavenly home and the joy of seeing our Redeemer face to face; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## 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.**

## Prayer

Almighty God, grant to Your Church Your Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes down from above, that Your Word may not be bound but have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, so that in steadfast faith we may serve You and, in the confession of Your name, abide unto the end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

## Benediction

*LSB 166*

**☩** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**☩ Amen.**

## 549 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

1 All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem  
And crown Him Lord of all.

- Bring forth the royal diadem  
And crown Him Lord of all.
- 2 Crown Him, ye martyrs of our God,  
Who from His altar call;  
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod  
And crown Him Lord of all.  
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod  
And crown Him Lord of all.
- 3 Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,  
Ye ransomed from the fall,  
Hail Him who saves you by His grace  
And crown Him Lord of all.  
Hail Him who saves you by His grace  
And crown Him Lord of all.
- 4 Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line,  
Whom David Lord did call,  
The God incarnate, man divine,  
And crown Him Lord of all.  
The God incarnate, man divine,  
And crown Him Lord of all.
- 5 Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget  
The wormwood and the gall,  
Go, spread your trophies at His feet  
And crown Him Lord of all.  
Go, spread your trophies at His feet  
And crown Him Lord of all.
- 6 Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe,  
On this terrestrial ball  
To Him all majesty ascribe  
And crown Him Lord of all.  
To Him all majesty ascribe  
And crown Him Lord of all.
- 7 Oh, that with yonder sacred throng  
We at His feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song  
And crown Him Lord of all.  
We'll join the everlasting song  
And crown Him Lord of all.

Text (sts. 1-5): Edward Perronet, 1726-92, alt.; (sts. 6-7): A Selection of Hymns, 1787, London, alt.  
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