

# Confession and Absolution

## 709 The King of Love My Shepherd Is

- 1 The King of love my shepherd is,  
Whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am His  
And He is mine forever.
- 2 Where streams of living water flow,  
My ransomed soul He leadeth  
And, where the verdant pastures grow,  
With food celestial feedeth.
- 3 Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,  
But yet in love He sought me  
And on His shoulder gently laid  
And home rejoicing brought me.
- 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill  
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me,  
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,  
Thy cross before to guide me.
- 5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;  
Thine unction grace bestoweth;  
And, oh, what transport of delight  
From Thy pure chalice floweth!
- 6 And so through all the length of days  
Thy goodness faileth never;  
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise  
Within Thy house forever!

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821-77  
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.**

*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  $\text{✝}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

*Stand*

**Service of the Word****Introit***Isaiah 61:10; antiphon: Psalm 146:2*

**P** I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

**C** I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God,

**P** for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,

**C** as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

**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 praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

**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 God, You invite us to trust in You for our salvation. Deal with us not in the severity of Your judgment but by the greatness of Your mercy; 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*

## Old Testament Reading

*Isaiah 25:6–9*

<sup>6</sup>On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,  
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

<sup>7</sup>And he will swallow up on this mountain  
the covering that is cast over all peoples,  
the veil that is spread over all nations.

<sup>8</sup>He will swallow up death forever;  
and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces,  
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
for the LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup>It will be said on that day,  
“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.  
This is the LORD; we have waited for him;  
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

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

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## Epistle

*Philippians 4:4–13*

<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup>Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup>do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup>Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup>What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

<sup>10</sup>I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. <sup>11</sup>Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. <sup>12</sup>I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. <sup>13</sup>I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

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

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## Alleluia and Verse

*LSB 156*

**C** **Alleluia.**

**Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Holy Gospel***Matthew 22:1–14***P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, <sup>2</sup>“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, <sup>3</sup>and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. <sup>4</sup>Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.’ <sup>5</sup>But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, <sup>6</sup>while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. <sup>7</sup>The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. <sup>8</sup>Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup>Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ <sup>10</sup>And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

<sup>11</sup>“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. <sup>12</sup>And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. <sup>13</sup>Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ <sup>14</sup>For many are called, but few are chosen.”

**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***803 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee**

1 Joyful, joyful we adore Thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love!  
Hearts unfold like flow’rs before Thee,  
Praising Thee, their sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
Drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day.

2 All Thy works with joy surround Thee,  
 Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,  
 Stars and angels sing around Thee,  
 Center of unbroken praise.  
 Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
 Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
 Chanting bird, and flowing fountain  
 Call us to rejoice in Thee.

△ 3 Thou art giving and forgiving,  
 Ever blessing, ever blest,  
 Wellspring of the joy of living,  
 Ocean-depth of happy rest!  
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
 Fountainhead of love divine:  
 Joyful, we Thy heav'n inherit!  
 Joyful, we by grace are Thine!

Text: Henry Van Dyke, 1852–1933, alt.

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## Sermon

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

On October 7, 2023 Mayor Cathie Downey presented Max Neunaber with a plaque acknowledging Max's dedication and years of service to Harvel. Cathie's presentation speech included "If you want to know about Harvel's history, ask Max. If you have an issue with your water, ask Max" If you need help with something in Harvel, ask Max". Max knows the secrets of Harvel.

You know experts in their field. If you want to know about how to raise an excellent garden, you know who talk to. He knows the secrets. And he won't just tell you what to do and how to do it, but he'll come along side of you and help you get it done.

Paul knows the secret to contentment. As a master evangelist, Paul freely and readily shares his secret. Mind you, Paul writes this letter from prison, likely in Rome. Do you sense the irony there? It is not often we would turn to someone in prison for their secret of success. Yet, Paul is very upfront about his secret. And for good reason. Like Paul, the Philippians were or were about to encounter persecution.

While we don't want to think about persecution here and now, many are predicting persecution for the church. We live in this age of Relativism, so standing up for a universal truth is counter cultural. As is accepting Genesis 1&2, how God created the universe when scientism purports that this highly organized world and our fearfully and wonderfully made, highly organized, bodies evolved through random chance to be as they are today. Or society's belief that our minds should dictate our physical bodies instead of our physical bodies informing our mind.

Christians are called to live differently. We are called first to be children of God, heirs of eternal life. We are called to live as Christians, knowing that this world is temporary and fleeting. Our time on earth is to prepare for eternity, the eternity pictured by Isaiah today in the Old Testament. After mankind sinned, swallowing the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, God promises to swallow up death, death introduced by man's sin. And instead of having the taste of sin in your mouth, God promises you "rich food, full of marrow" and "well-aged wine, well refined.

Isaiah invites a people far away from home and homeland, exiled into a foreign land, to a banquet like one at home. Their language has been taken away, supplanted by the conqueror's language. Their place to worship God, seek forgiveness and offer sacrifice, demolished. There is little to no hope to return home.

Despite our sins, God desires to save us and bless us. Paul writes in 1 Timothy 2:4 "who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Today's Gospel also speaks of a wedding banquet, but has strange twists and turns, ending on a different note. No one would pass up a feast given by the king. Angering your king was bad idea. Angering your king could cost you your life. Filling the banquet hall with strangers is also strange. So is not being properly dressed. Lastly, "14For many are called, but few are chosen." How do we reconcile these? God is the implied subject. But there is a step in between. Mankind, individually, can reject God's good gifts, God's grace, and mercy. And while God continues to call the sinner, the sinner can continue to reject. And so, the sinner can die outside of the grace of God, lost in sin for all eternity. The sinner has excluded himself or herself from being chosen.

Back to Paul. What is Paul's secret? Philippians 4:12-13 "12I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Paul relies on Jesus, his Savior and your Savior, Paul's God and your God. Jesus who comes along side of you in good times and difficult times. Paul talks about his persecution and its effects in 2 Corinthians 1:8-9 "8For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, [b] of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. 9Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead." As the Philippians face persecution, they must have faith in Jesus and rely on Jesus. The Holy Spirit does give strength for the moment. The Holy Spirit provides the words needed. Luke writes in Luke 12:11-12"11 And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

Paul calls the Philippians and you to live differently, as God's children, who know God's love and mercy given to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus died for your sins and the sins of the whole world. Whether your sins be great or small. Whether your sins are treating this life as if there is no eternity, living for pleasure and to avoid pain. Failing to keep Jesus in the center of your life, on the throne of your heart, as your foundation. Being too busy for Bible Study and prayer and worship. Listening to the world instead of God. Following the world instead of God. Coveting instead of being content. Chasing things of this world instead of things of eternity. Failing to care for those around you and God's creation. Failing to put the best construction on everything your neighbor does and says.

Can you keep a secret? What is harder to keep than a secret? Often you just need to tell someone. To the world, Jesus is a secret. Many today have no exposure to God or Jesus. Without Jesus, life is hard and full of sin, about seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Without Jesus, this life is all there is. Without Jesus, the world is bleak, dark and hopeless. But with Jesus, there is much to celebrate. You have the forgiveness of sin. Sins forgiven, you serve God and each other. You have life and salvation. Each day is a gift of God, bringing something to rejoice in. Each day, God's mercies are new. Each day you have hope for your resurrection and for living in God's kingdom forever. You see God's gracious hand giving you all that you need for this life and all eternity. You treat others better. You turn to God in prayer, praying more and worrying less. Your sins are forgiven and you forgive others. Life is no longer about you but about God and those around you.

Rejoice that you know the secret, Jesus. Jesus who comes along side of you in good times and difficult times. You are God's own dear child. Give thanks to God for all God gives you especially for his Grace and Mercy. When you sin, and you do all too frequently, the Holy Spirit leads you to repent and confess your sins and receive forgiveness. Instead of being separated from God and each other, your sins are separated from you as

far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). You are reunited with God and those around you. Reunited, live in the sure hope that you will spend all eternity with God in His kingdom which has no end. Amen.

May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding 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.**

## Prayer

Gracious heavenly Father, we thank You for the blessings of married life. On this day we rejoice with Ivan and Sally as they observe their 55th wedding anniversary. Bless them in the years to come so that they may remain faithful to You and devoted to each other. By Your presence gladden each day that You graciously grant them; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## Prayer of the Church

In peace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the Church purchased with Christ's precious blood, that God would preserve her in the pure teaching of His Word, in the right use of His Sacraments and in the unity of the faith, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the proclamation of the Gospel, that by it God would gather many, however evil they may be, to repent and believe in Christ, and so take their seat at His eternal feast, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the homes in which our people dwell; for husbands and wives, especially Ivan and Sally who are celebrating their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary that they may fulfill their vocations to one another; for children; and for all who teach and learn the faith, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace that passes understanding and a constant readiness for the coming of Christ, that under the fleeting powers of this world, we may live in continual godliness for His sake, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For Charlie Ruyle's family and friends and all who weep here, that the Lord of hosts, who at last will wipe away all tears, would comfort them as they await full restoration at His heavenly banquet, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who have wandered from the faith, that the Holy Spirit would stir up in them the desire to return to church where Jesus has promised to meet us in His Word and Sacrament, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Heavenly King, give us such joy in pursuing what is true, just, pure and worthy of praise that, spurning the temptations of this world, we would suffer no anxiety. Let our trust be placed fully in Christ and let our hope rest in the life of the world to come; 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*

**P** 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.

**C** Amen.

## 917 Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise

- 1 Savior, again to Thy dear name we raise  
With one accord our parting hymn of praise;  
Once more we bless Thee ere our worship cease,  
Then, lowly bending, wait Thy word of peace.
- 2 Grant us Thy peace upon our homeward way;  
With Thee began, with Thee shall end, the day.  
Guard Thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,  
That in this house have called upon Thy name.
- 3 Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the coming night;  
Turn Thou for us its darkness into light.  
From harm and danger keep Thy children free;  
For dark and light are both alike to Thee.
- 4 Grant us Thy peace throughout our earthly life,  
Our balm in sorrow and our stay in strife;  
Then, when Thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,  
Call us, O Lord, to Thine eternal peace.

Text: John Ellerton, 1826–93

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