

# Confession and Absolution

## 760 What God Ordains Is Always Good

*sts. 1–3*

- 1 What God ordains is always good:  
 His will is just and holy.  
 As He directs my life for me,  
 I follow meek and lowly.  
 My God indeed  
 In ev'ry need  
 Knows well how He will shield me;  
 To Him, then, I will yield me.
- 2 What God ordains is always good:  
 He never will deceive me;  
 He leads me in His righteous way,  
 And never will He leave me.  
 I take content  
 What He has sent;  
 His hand that sends me sadness  
 Will turn my tears to gladness.
- 3 What God ordains is always good:  
 His loving thought attends me;  
 No poison can be in the cup  
 That my physician sends me.  
 My God is true;  
 Each morning new  
 I trust His grace unending,  
 My life to Him commending.

Text: Samuel Rodigast, 1649–1708; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.  
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### *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  $\text{†}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

*Stand***Service of the Word****Introit***Psalm 105:2–6; antiphon: v. 1*

- P** Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!
- C** Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!
- P** Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!
- C** Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!
- P** Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,
- C** O offspring of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones!
- 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** Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!

**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 everlasting God, give us an increase of faith, hope, and love, that, receiving what You have promised, we may love what You have commanded; 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

*Deuteronomy 7:6–9*

<sup>6</sup>“You are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. <sup>7</sup>It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, <sup>8</sup>but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. <sup>9</sup>Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.”

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

**C Thanks be to God.**

## Epistle

*Romans 8:28–39*

<sup>28</sup>We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup>For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup>And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup>What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? <sup>33</sup>Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;  
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**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 13:44–52*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the thirteenth chapter.

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

<sup>44</sup>[Jesus said:] “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

<sup>45</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, <sup>46</sup>who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

<sup>47</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. <sup>48</sup>When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. <sup>49</sup>So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous <sup>50</sup>and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

<sup>51</sup>“Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.” <sup>52</sup>And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

**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*

## 760 What God Ordains Is Always Good

*sts. 4–6*

- 4 What God ordains is always good:  
He is my friend and Father;  
He suffers naught to do me harm  
Though many storms may gather.  
Now I may know  
Both joy and woe;  
Someday I shall see clearly  
That He has loved me dearly.
- 5 What God ordains is always good:  
Though I the cup am drinking  
Which savors now of bitterness,  
I take it without shrinking.  
For after grief  
God gives relief,  
My heart with comfort filling  
And all my sorrow stilling.
- 6 What God ordains is always good:  
This truth remains unshaken.

Though sorrow, need, or death be mine,  
 I shall not be forsaken.  
 I fear no harm,  
 For with His arm  
 He shall embrace and shield me;  
 So to my God I yield me.

Text: Samuel Rodigast, 1649–1708; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.  
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## Sermon

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

It is easy to feel God is with us when life is good and our lives are clicking along. Stressful events like illness, deaths, changes of marital status or job changes, especially layoffs and retirement, can upset one's world, leading one into depression, with its feelings of hopelessness and despair. While this is often when we need God the most, God is often the target of our anger, so we turn to other gods instead of turning to the one true God. After all, how could God let something like this happen to me, His beloved child? Doubt creeps in, further straining our side of our relationship with God.

On February 19, 2016 Boeing IT was in a layoff cycle. This was a deep cut, 20% in my department. All the previous layoffs had been deep, but not quite 1 of 5. My only bad review was in November 2015. My manager disagreed on how I was to manage risks on \$75 million project. She wanted me to paint a rosier picture, rosier than the situation was. In my mind, she was effectively telling me to lie or at least not tell the whole truth. It became a matter of ethics. Program Management needed to know all the risks to mitigate them. After 31 years with countless uncompensated hours invested, I would no longer be a Boeing employee. Much of my identity was wrapped up in being a Boeing IT person. I had survived the numerous previous layoffs, but none of that mattered, I would soon be unemployed. According to Pyschcentral.com, losing a job or being laid off is in the top ten most stressful life events. Pyschcentral explains "Losing your job can be a huge source of stress. This could cause financial anxiety — and for many people, a loss of identity. Many people identify with their jobs, and experience shame and depression when they lose that occupation. After being fired, this stress can be compounded by financial worries and the emotional rollercoaster of job hunting."

In verse 31, Paul states <sup>31</sup>"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" What are these things? Chapter 8 begins "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." and ends with the assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. In chapters 5 – 8, Christian Assurance was the primary topic, also concluding with these reassuring last verses of Romans 8. And Romans 8 puts a bow on the first eight chapters of Romans. After the greeting, Paul dove right into the heart of the matter in Romans 1:16 <sup>16</sup>"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Individually and collectively, we need a savior. We inherited sin from our parents, all the way back to Adam and Eve. Because of original sin, we are born sinful and unclean, enemies of God, unable to free ourselves from our sinful condition. We deserved God's present and eternal wrath. Without God's grace and mercy, we would stand condemned. But God has a solution. God solved our sin problem. Jesus's death and resurrection reconciles us to the Father. God has given us faith to believe in and trust Jesus is our Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God. Faith sustains us as we face trials and tribulations in this life. And so, "we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor 5:7). Our final victory is assured. We cling to God's Word and God's promises assured of God's Final Victory and that we will share in that victory as His dear children, His dear heirs.

Hebrews 13:8 tells us <sup>8</sup>"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Because God has always been faithful to His promises, we trust his promises today and we trust His promises in the future. Throughout the Old Testament, God's people, Israel, turned away from God. Abraham & Sarah thought they needed to help God by lying, or at least not telling the whole truth about their relationship twice. Sarah "helped God out" by

giving her servant to Abraham to bear a child that she thought God had promised. Israel forgot that Yahweh rescued them from slavery in Egypt. When times got tough, like when Pharaoh's chariots were bearing down on them and they were backed up against the Red Sea, or when thirst was running high but water wasn't, Israel complained against Moses and God. Yet, God sent prophets to speak on His Behalf, to deliver God's Word, maintaining a faithful remnant. Even as God punished Adam and Eve for their sin, God pointed forward to Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Genesis 3:15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring<sup>[e]</sup> and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." God's plan from before the creation was to send Jesus as our Savior! Jesus did what Adam didn't – led a perfect life, a life without sin. And so, Jesus walked among us, like us in all things but sin. Although he knew no sin, Jesus became sin, taking the sin of the world on Himself and carrying these sins to the cross to atone for the sin of the whole world.

Often the toughest times, the most miserable times, times when God seemed so far away are turning points in our lives. For me, a conversation with my Pastor came into sharp focus. "If God wants me to be a Pastor, my job won't be in the way. I couldn't walk away from the money and benefits on my own. So, God made it so. God worked all things together for the good of this sinner/saint who sins daily in thought, word, and deed. Who sins by trusting himself instead of fully trusting God. Who doesn't always put the best construction on what others say and do. Who covets what others have but he has not been granted. God has led and guided me through the seminary, to Trinity Harvel, through Linda's illness and death, and will ultimately call me home to be with Him in the new heavens and new earth for all eternity.

While God does truly work all things together for good, being told so in the moment isn't helpful. We can stand at the casket of an older loved one who had been suffering for quite some while and console ourselves with statements like "At least she isn't suffering any more". But for a younger child, death is a tragedy and a travesty. Being told in that moment that somehow God will use even the death of a young child to bring about good is not helpful but in fact hurtful. Good is not visible in that moment. Instead, all that is visible is the ravages of sin and death, dividing our bodies and souls..

How are times right now? Dealing with illness or a death? A relationship that isn't it should be? Is your financial situation not what you expected? Is inflation eating away at your savings? God never promised a life without trials and tribulations. God promised to be with you to the end of the age. God is for us. God is for you. And since God is for us, who can be against us? Respond to God's grace and mercy by loving God and loving your neighbor. Turn from your sinful ways and repent. Turn back to God, seeking Him where He promised to be found, in Word and Sacrament ministry, faithfully administered. You are God's beloved child both here in time and there in eternity. Amen.

And now, may the peace of God which surpasses all understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus to life everlasting. Amen.

*Stand*

## Offertory

*LSB 159*

**C** 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

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

For the Church throughout the world, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ may go forth unhindered and the Holy Spirit bring many into this fellowship of the redeemed, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all God's people, redeemed by the cross and resurrection of Christ, that we may pursue His kingdom with all our hearts, souls, minds and bodies, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those troubled by the memory of past sins, that they may have confidence that Christ has died for their justification and still intercedes for them, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For faithfulness in our vocations, that we would come to see the various offices God has given us as gifts through which we serve Him and our neighbors, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For Joseph, our president; JB, our governor; and all who make, administer and judge our laws, that they would lead with wisdom, seeking what is best for all in accordance with God's will, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those burdened by sickness and affliction, [*especially \_\_\_\_\_,*] that they may await healing and deliverance in the firm conviction that nothing can separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For reasonable weather and rain to break this current drought, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy**

O Lord, it is not for the sake of our numbers or strength or birth that You preserve us, but for the sake of Your faithfulness and steadfast love. As You preserved Your ancient people of Israel for the sake of Your promises, keep Your Holy Church on earth, and also preserve our Synod, we pray, for the sake of Your name. Lead our delegates and members, gathered in convention, according to Your good pleasure and will, that in word and action we may love You and keep Your commandments, confessing Your steadfast love and faithfulness even to a thousand generations; through Christ, the crucified, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

**C** 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.

**761 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me**

- 1 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure:  
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
- 2 Not the labors of my hands  
Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow,  
All for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.
- 3 Nothing in my hand I bring;  
Simply to Thy cross I cling.  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;  
Foul, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Savior, or I die.
- 4 While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyelids close in death,  
When I soar to worlds unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740–78

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