

Confession and Absolution

605 Father Welcomes

- ref Father welcomes all His children
 To His fam'ly through His Son.
 Father giving His salvation,
 Life forever has been won.
- 1 Little children, come to Me,
 For My kingdom is of these.
 Life and love I have to give,
 Mercy for your sin. Refrain
- 2 In the water, in the Word,
 In His promise, be assured:
 Those who are baptized and believe
 Shall be born again. Refrain
- 3 Let us daily die to sin;
 Let us daily rise with Him,
 Walk in the love of Christ our Lord,
 Live in the peace of God. Refrain

Text: Robin Mann, 1949

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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.**

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.

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 91:2, 9–10; antiphon: v. 1

- P** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
C **I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."**

- P** Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge—
C **no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.**
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 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

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.
 Gracious God, our heavenly Father, Your mercy attends us all our days. Be our strength and support amid the wearisome changes of this world, and at life's end grant us Your promised rest and the full joys of Your salvation; 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

Zechariah 9:9–12

⁹Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
 Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
 behold, your king is coming to you;
 righteous and having salvation is he,
 humble and mounted on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
 and the war horse from Jerusalem;
 and the battle bow shall be cut off,
 and he shall speak peace to the nations;
 his rule shall be from sea to sea,
 and from the River to the ends of the earth.
¹¹As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
 I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
¹²Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
 today I declare that I will restore to you double.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Romans 7:14–25a

¹⁴We know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ 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 11:25–30

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁵At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
 the Father Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth
 and of all things visible and invisible.

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
 the only-begotten Son of God,
 begotten of His Father before all worlds,
 God of God, Light of Light,
 very God of very God,
 begotten, not made,
 being of one substance with the Father,
 by whom all things were made;
 who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
 and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
 and was made man;
 and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
 He suffered and was buried.
 And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
 and ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of the Father.
 And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
 whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the Lord and giver of life,
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
 who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
 who spoke by the prophets.
 And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
 I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
 and I look for the resurrection of the dead
 and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**

Sit

524 How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds

- 1 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
 In a believer's ear!
 It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds,
 And drives away our fear.
- 2 It makes the wounded spirit whole
 And calms the heart's unrest;
 'Tis manna to the hungry soul
 And to the weary, rest.
- 3 Dear name! The rock on which I build,
 My shield and hiding place;
 My never-failing treasury filled
 With boundless stores of grace.
- 4 O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend,
 My Prophet, Priest, and King,
 My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
 Accept the praise I bring.
- 5 How weak the effort of my heart,
 How cold my warmest thought!
 But when I see Thee as Thou art,
 I'll praise Thee as I ought.
- 6 Till then I would Thy love proclaim
 With ev'ry fleeting breath;

And may the music of Thy name

Refresh my soul in death!

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.

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Sermon

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

Leslie and I began our pre-marital counseling last week with my Pastor from Hope, Granite City. He uses the Zoe assessment. We answered 300 questions independently, and Zoe analyzed the results, comparing our answers. Zoe has an interesting quirk. It regularly uses the word “sometimes”. For example, “Pastor thinks he interrupts Leslie sometimes when they disagree...” Pastor noted that sometimes really doesn’t add anything. As you know, sometimes is an adverb which describes an infrequent frequency.

You may have noticed that your Pastor often says sometimes in a sermon. Why?

As Romans 7 ends, Paul summarizes our relationship with the Law and Sin. Paul wants to obey the Law, knowing that God has given us the Law as a curb, mirror, and guide. The Law teaches us what is “good, right, and salutary”. Following the Law makes life better. Yet in verse 15 “¹⁵For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.” Can’t we say the same?

Take a moment and look around the room. What do you see? I see a room, not quite as filled as it could or should be, filled with Christians, gathered around God’s Word and Sacrament. A church family gathered by the Holy Spirit to meet Jesus where He has promised to be found. Individuals who love each other. A group that would help each other generously and compassionately at a moment’s notice. You are saints of God. You are God’s redeemed, His prized possession, His family.

Look again. What do you see? I see a married couple whose words weren’t as kind to each other as they should have been this morning. A pastor who hasn’t always taken the best care of the temple of his body. I see someone who is distracted, struggling to focus on the sermon because of all the other things that need to get done today. Someone struggling with their relationship with a family member. Someone who rationalizes that their sins are somehow less than others, patting themselves on the back saying “Chief of sinners though I be, so and so is worse than me”. I may even see someone who has become so comfortable with one’s sin that one no longer believes it to be sin. I may even see someone who rationalizes their sin away, after all, “everyone does it”. “It is legal”. Or “The world accepts it.”

And that is where sometimes comes in. Some sins we can all agree that we all do. We all break the First Commandment. At some point, we put something other than God on His throne in our hearts. In the Small Catechism, Luther intentionally begins Commandments 2-10 explanations with “We should fear and love God”. What is the explanation of the First Commandment? “We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.” Each time we break Commandments 2 – 10, we break the First Commandment. But sins against commandments 2 -10, those are harder to say each of us commits on a regular basis, not sometimes.

Sermons are difficult. Sermons properly discern Law and Gospel. Sermons apply the Law to convict hearers of their sins, sins they cannot free themselves from. What did Paul say? Verse 19 “¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.” And verses 24-25 “²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Without the stinging accusation of the Law, you do not need the gospel. If you can do it yourself, you don’t need a savior. Maybe a pep-talk on Sunday morning. Maybe a few words of encouragement. Maybe just an hour of quiet. But certainly not being brought down and told that you are a sinner. But when you feel the sting of the Law’s accusations, the Gospel become sweeter, becomes even more important.

There are two ways to articulate Law and Gospel. One way is the generic we. As a preacher, it is easier to make blanket statements, to include everyone in the room with the regal “we”, and drive home that sin in our collective problem. Romans 3:23 is true “²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”. And that all includes the preacher who is just as or more guilty of sins that the Law accuses us of. But the old adage rings true “When everyone is responsible, no one is responsible”.

The second way is to use the second person singular, you. This can be uncomfortable for both the preacher and the hearer as the hearer envisions the preacher wagging his finger at the hearer, sounding “holier than thou”. But the accusations of the Law are driven home. And the pronouncement of the Gospel is also driven home. Sin becomes personal. The Gospel becomes personal. Yes, you are a sinner. Yes, Jesus died for you. There is no denying it. You can’t dodge the truth that your sins are forgiven any more than you can deny the sacrament is given for you when you approach for communion. “Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.” “Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.” Yes, Jesus died for your sins. Satan’s accusations “You’ve sinned one too many times to be forgiven” are silenced. Jesus died for you. While Jesus died for all, Jesus died for you. Jesus’s death brings you salvation. Pastors are called to proclaim that Jesus’s death and Resurrection reconciled you to God. Pastors are called to proclaim the Good News and rightly administer the Sacraments, combining God’s Word and ordinary elements for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Pastors stand “in the stead and by command of my Lord Jesus Christ” to speak to you on God’s behalf.

You are saints and sinners at the same time. Sometimes, you are a sinner whose sins separate you from God and from one another. Sinners who can sometimes see the speck in your brother’s eye but not the log in your own (Matthew 7:1-5). Sinners who sometimes “have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.” (Romans 7:18). Sinners who sometimes “do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.” (Romans 7:19). Sinners who always need a savior. Sinners for whom Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and became Man. Sinners for whom Jesus died to make you his saint. Saints redeemed by Jesus’s innocent bitter suffering and death. Saints who struggle with sin, in a loving, joyful response to God’s Grace, Mercy and Love. Saints who love God and love one another. Saints who gather around the Good News that Jesus died for your sins and the sins of the whole world. Saints who gather to hear God’s Word and receive God’s Sacraments. Saints who practice the forgiveness they receive by forgiving others. Saints who cling to God’s Promises and look forward to eternal life, set free from this body of death and the Law which clings so closely.

So, look around the room again. See yourself for what you and those around you for what y’all are – sinners and saints loved by God, redeemed by Jesus’s death, and gathered into the church by the Holy Spirit, called to repent, confess your sins, and receive God’s forgiveness that you may be kept in the one true faith to life everlasting. Amen.

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

Stand

Prayer of the Church

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

For deliverance from anxiety and worry, that we would hold fast to the conviction that, for Jesus’ sake, we are of more value than birds and lilies to our Creator, who knows what we need, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For this congregation, that the Lord would enkindle the gifts of His Holy Spirit and give us mutual encouragement by each other’s faith, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For our homes, that our heavenly Father would be the companion of those who are alone, the strength of husbands and wives, and the blessing of parents as they catechize their children; and that He would preserve our families from every plague and evil, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For peace and protection, that God would bless our nation's leaders with integrity and wisdom to defend against evil, until at last He cuts off the war horse and the chariot forever, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who are incarcerated, that God would foster in them repentance and trust in His grace, preserve them from greater evil, and enable them by such forgiveness to bear their sentence as a joyful custody of hope, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For comfort to those weary and heavy-laden with tribulations or illnesses, [*especially Christi, Gert, and Cheryl*_____], that they would be blessed with the knowledge of His easy yoke and light burden and find rest from their Lord, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who receive Christ's Sacrament, that with penitent hearts and a common confession of faith, they may be freed by the blood of His eternal covenant, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all the saints who have gone before us, seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness above all else, let us give thanks to the Lord; and that God would preserve us in repentance and faith until we stand before Him in glory, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. **Amen.**

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.**

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 160

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface (Full)

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this day overcame death and the grave and by His glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 161

C Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.

**Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

LSB 161

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Proclamation of Christ

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

Pax Domini

LSB 163

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

LSB 163

C Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Sit

Distribution

618 I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table

- 1 I come, O Savior, to Thy table,
 For weak and weary is my soul;
 Thou, Bread of Life, alone art able
 To satisfy and make me whole: Refrain
- ref Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood
 Be for my soul the highest good!
- 2 Thy heart is filled with fervent yearning
 That sinners may salvation see
 Who, Lord, to Thee in faith are turning;
 So I, a sinner, come to Thee. Refrain
- 3 Unworthy though I am, O Savior,
 Because I have a sinful heart,
 Yet Thou Thy lamb wilt banish never,
 For Thou my faithful shepherd art: Refrain
- 4 Weary am I and heavy laden;
 With sin my soul is sore oppressed;
 Receive me graciously and gladden
 My heart, for I am now Thy guest. Refrain
- 5 What higher gift can we inherit?
 It is faith's bond and solid base;
 It is the strength of heart and spirit,
 The covenant of hope and grace. Refrain

Text: Friedrich Christian Heyder, 1677–1754; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, abr.

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763 When Peace, like a River

- 1 When peace, like a river, attendeth my way;
 When sorrows, like sea billows, roll;
 Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
 It is well, it is well with my soul. Refrain
- ref It is well (It is well)
 with my soul, (with my soul),
 It is well, it is well with my soul.
- 2 Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
 Let this blest assurance control,
 That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate
 And hath shed His own blood for my soul. Refrain
- 3 He lives—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
 My sin, not in part, but the whole,
 Is nailed to His cross, and I bear it no more.
 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! Refrain
- 4 And, Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight,
 The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
 The trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
 Even so it is well with my soul. Refrain

Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828–88, alt.

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Stand

The Dismissal

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

C Amen.

Thank the Lord

LSB 164

C **Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name.
He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

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.

707 Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways

- 1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep His statutes still!
Oh, that my God would grant me grace
To know and do His will!
- 2 Order my footsteps by Thy Word
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear.
- 3 Assist my soul, too apt to stray,
A stricter watch to keep;
And should I e'er forget Thy way,
Restore Thy wand'ring sheep.
- 4 Make me to walk in Thy commands—
'Tis a delightful road—
Nor let my head or heart or hands
Offend against my God.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

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