

+DIVINE SERVICE III+  
OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST  
+FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY+ 25 SEPTEMBER 2022+

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## The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

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A member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

902 S. Maple

Inglewood, CA 90301-3824

[tgsicms.org](http://tgsicms.org)

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# The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

“A Church where God gives and we receive.”

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  - ❖ Mr. Jay Rogers, Organist/Music Director
  - ❖ Mr. Leon Tarr, Congregational Chairman
  - ❖ Mr. Greg Griffin, Acolyte

## Welcome to our Divine Service!

*We are pleased that you are with us.*

### +Worship Notes+

*The entire service, including the rubrics of when to sit and when to kneel or stand, and what to say, is printed out in this folder so you may follow along.*

**Welcome to weekly Divine Service at The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church!** We are a congregation that confesses the Holy Bible as inerrant, that justification is by faith according to the Holy Bible and confessed in the 1580 Book of Concord. God bless you.

**To all of you who are visiting our service this morning, we extend a most cordial welcome in Jesus' name. Please introduce yourself to our pastor. It is our hope that you will feel at home in our midst and will be blessed by our message of Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the world. If you are looking for a church home and would like to know about our membership, pastor would love to speak with you!**

### A Note From The Organist:

John Behnkz has created an interesting set of variations on this traditional melody, representing 3 verses of the song:

Variation 1: “Someone’s Praying”

Variation 2: “Someone’s Crying “

Variation 3: “Someone’s Singing”

Variations 1 and 2 are quiet, using flutes and strings. Variation 3 is energetic, played on the rich principal choruses.

# Confession and Absolution

## Hymn of Invocation

## 770 What a Friend We Have in Jesus



1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, All our sins and griefs to bear!  
 2 Have we tri - als and temp-ta-tions? Is there trou-ble an - y-where?  
 3 Are we weak and heav - y lad - en, Cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry Ev - 'ry-thing to God in prayer!  
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged— Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge— Take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; Oh, what need - less pain we bear—  
 Can we find a friend so faith - ful Who will all our sor - rows share?  
 Do thy friends de - spise, for - sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



All be - cause we do not car - ry Ev - 'ry-thing to God in prayer!  
 Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness— Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
 In His arms He'll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a sol - ace there.

Text: Joseph M. Scriven, 1819–86  
 Tune: Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918  
 Text and tune: 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 184

- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**C** **who made heaven and earth.**  
**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,  
**C** **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

*Kneel/Stand*

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

## Confession of Sins

*LSB 184*

- P** O almighty God, merciful Father,  
**C** **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

## Absolution

*LSB 185*

- P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I 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 86:4, 6, 15a, 16; antiphon: vv. 1a, 2b, 3*

Incline your ear, O LORD, and | answer me,\*  
save your servant, who trusts in you—you | are my God.  
**Be gracious to me, | O Lord,\***  
**for to you do I cry | all the day.**  
Gladden the soul of your | servant,\*  
for to you, O Lord, do I lift | up my soul.  
**Give ear, O LORD, | to my prayer;\***   
**listen to my | plea for grace.**  
But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and | gracious,\*  
turn to me and be gra- | cious to me;

give your strength to your | servant,\*  
and save the son of your maid- | servant.

### Gloria Patri

LSB 186



**C** Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost;



as it was in the be-gin-nin-g, is now, and ev-er shall be, world with-out end. A-men.

### Kyrie

LSB 186



**C** Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

### Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 187



**P** Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward



men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



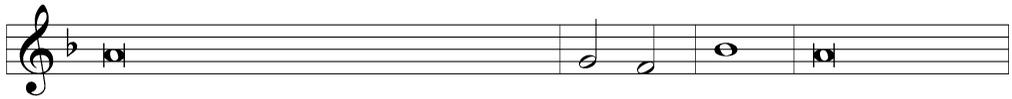
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.



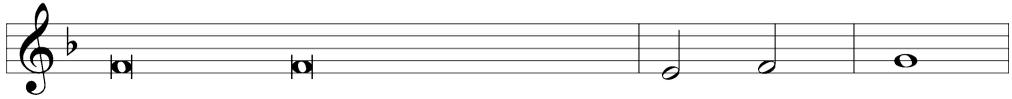
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.



Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-



on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.



Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,



art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

### Salutation and Collect of the Day



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.



**P** Let us pray.

- P** O Lord, we implore You, let Your continual pity cleanse and defend Your Church; and because she cannot continue in safety without Your aid, preserve her evermore by Your help and goodness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

*Sit*

## Old Testament

*1 Kings 17:8-16*

- P** The Old Testament Reading for the Fifteenth Sunday After Trinity is from 1 Kings, chapter 17.

### The Widow of Zarephath

<sup>8</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to [Elijah], <sup>9</sup>“Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to feed you.” <sup>10</sup>So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.” <sup>11</sup>And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” <sup>12</sup>And she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” <sup>13</sup>And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. <sup>14</sup>For thus says the LORD the God of Israel, ‘The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.’” <sup>15</sup>And she went and did as Elijah said. And she and he and her household ate for many days. <sup>16</sup>The jar of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Psalm

*Psalm 146; antiphon: v. 9a*

### Do Not Put Your Trust in Princes

<sup>1</sup>Praise | the LORD!\*

Praise the LORD, | O my soul!

<sup>2</sup>I will praise the LORD as long | as I live;\*

I will sing praises to my God while I have my | being.

<sup>3</sup>Put not your trust in | princes,\*

in a son of man, in whom there is no sal- | vation.

<sup>4</sup>When his breath departs he returns | to the earth;\*

on that very day his plans | perish.

<sup>5</sup>Blessèd is he whose help is the God of | Jacob,\*

whose hope is in the | LORD his God,

<sup>6</sup>who made heaven and earth,

the sea, and all that is | in them,\*

who keeps faith for- | ever;

<sup>7</sup>who executes justice for | the oppressed,\*

who gives food to the | hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

<sup>8</sup>the LORD opens the eyes | of the blind.\*

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

the LORD loves the | righteous.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD watches over the sojourners;

he upholds the widow and the | fatherless,\*

but the way of the wicked he brings to | ruin.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD will reign for- | ever,\*

your God, O Zion, to all generations. | Praise the LORD!

## Epistle

*Galatians 5:25—6:10*

**P** The Epistle is from Galatians, chapter 5.

<sup>25</sup>If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

### Bear One Another's Burdens

<sup>1</sup>Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup>For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup>But let each one

test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. <sup>5</sup>For each will have to bear his own load.

<sup>6</sup>One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. <sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. <sup>8</sup>For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup>And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup>So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

### Alleluia

*LSB 190*



**C** Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

### Holy Gospel

*Matthew 6:24–34*

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



**C** Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus said:] “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

### Do Not Be Anxious

<sup>25</sup>“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup>And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? <sup>28</sup>And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup>yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>But if God so clothes

the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup>For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. <sup>33</sup>But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

<sup>34</sup>"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

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



**C** Praise be to Thee, 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*

**Hymn of the Day**

**756 Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me**



1 Why should cross and tri - al grieve me? Christ is near  
2 When life's trou - bles rise to meet me, Though their weight  
3 God gives me my days of glad - ness, And I will  
4 From God's joy can noth - ing sev - er, For I am  
5 Now in Christ, death can - not slay me, Though it might,



With His cheer; Nev - er will He leave me.  
May be great, They will not de - feat me.  
Trust Him still When He sends me sad - ness.  
His dear lamb, He, my Shep - herd ev - er.  
Day and night, Trou - ble and dis - may me.



Who can rob me of the heav - en That God's Son  
God, my lov - ing Sav - ior, sends them; He who knows  
God is good; His love at - tends me Day by day,  
I am His be - cause He gave me His own blood  
Christ has made my death a por - tal From the strife



For me won When His life was giv - en?  
All my woes Knows how best to end them.  
Come what may, Guides me and de - fends me.  
For my good, By His death to save me.  
Of this life To His joy im - mor - tal!

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76; (sts. 1–3): tr. Christian Worship, 1993; (sts. 4–5): tr. Stephen P. Starke, 1955  
Tune: Johann G. Ebeling, 1637–76  
Text (sts. 4–5): © 2004 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000401  
Text (sts. 1–3) and tune: Public domain

## Sermon

Pastor Edward Killian

*Stand*

## Offertory

LSB 192



**C** Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

**Offering** *Collected after service in the back of the church.*

## Prayer of the Church

*The proper response is "Lord, have mercy."*

- P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
  
- P** For faith to seek Christ Jesus, who is the kingdom of God and His righteousness, above all things, let us pray to the Lord:
- P** For all pastors and missionaries, that by the Holy Spirit the Gospel of God's kingdom would be heard and believed throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord:

- P** For the families of all Christians, that the heavenly Father from whom all fatherhood on earth is named would bless them with His promises; for parents, that they would be diligent and take delight in their work; for children, that by God's favor they would grow in strength and wisdom; and for all widows, orphans and broken families, that God would comfort them with His mercy and give them joy in the redemption won for them in Christ, let us pray to the Lord:
- P** For our nation, that it would walk in the Lord's ways; for our leaders, that they would have the fortitude to govern in His wisdom and justice with penitent hearts; and for our citizens, that they would be brought to love God and one another, let us pray to the Lord:
- P** For the sick and suffering, and for those who long to be with us but cannot, especially *Alice, Beth, Carmen, Cynthia, Debra, Deneice and her family, Gary, Gloria, Helen, Jane, Jod, Johnathan, Karen, Lynette, Marie, Marion and her family, Royce, Sabrina, Timothy, and William*, that they would know God's comfort and consolation, and that God would heal and restore them according to His good pleasure, let us pray to the Lord:
- P** For all who receive the body and blood of Christ this day, that they may have the peace that surpasses understanding, the gladness that no man can take from them, and the hope that does not fade away, let us pray to the Lord:
- P** For help in every anxiety and worry, that our loving Father, who clothed creation in glorious dress and all the more provides for our every need of body and soul, would lead us to look to Him for every good thing, let us pray to the Lord:
- P** Almighty God, You have forgiven our sins and delivered us from death through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Continue to pour out Your mercy upon us, grant to us all good things needful to this body and life, and keep from us all things harmful. From You, through You and to You are all things, O Lord, holy Father, mighty God; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit is one Lord, one God, now and forevermore.
- C** **Amen.**

## Service of the Sacrament

### Preface

LSB 194



**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And with thy spir - it.

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them up un - to the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.

**C** It is meet and right so to do.

### Proper Preface

**P** It is truly meet, 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. 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 195

**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;

heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



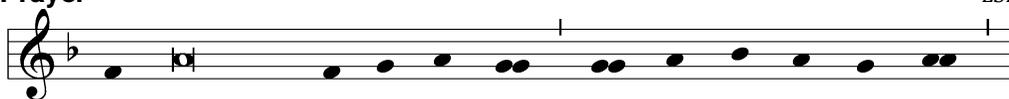
bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

### Lord's Prayer

LSB 196



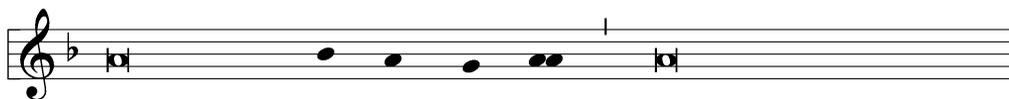
**P** Our Father who art in heav - en, hal - low - ed be Thy name,



Thy king - dom come, Thy will be done on earth as it



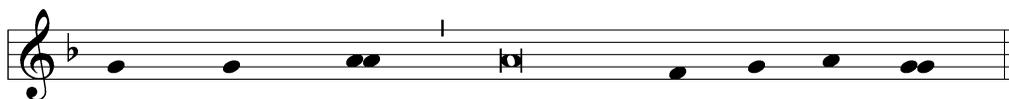
is in heav - en; give us this day our dai - ly bread;



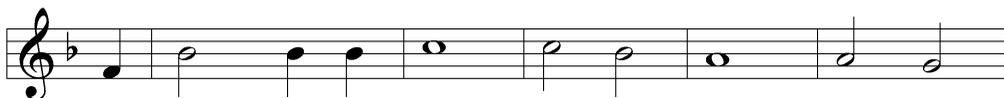
and forgive us our tres - pass - es as we forgive those who



tres - pass a - gainst us; and lead us not in - to



temp - ta - tion, but deliver us from e - vil.



**C** For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the



glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

### The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197



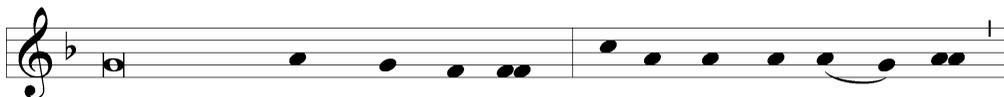
**P** Our Lord Je-sus Christ, on the night when He was be-trayed, took bread,



and when He had giv - en thanks, He broke it and gave it to the



dis-ci-ples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\text{✠}$  bod - y, which is giv-en for you.



This do in re-mem - brance of Me." In the same way al - so



He took the cup after sup - per, and when He had giv-en thanks, He gave it



to them, say - ing: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in



My  $\text{✠}$  blood, which is shed for you for the for-give-ness of sins.



This do, as often as you drink it, in re-mem-brance of Me.”

**Pax Domini**

LSB 197



**P** The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



**C** A - - men.

**Agnus Dei**

LSB 198



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the



world, have mer - cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that



tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the



world, grant us Thy peace. A - - men.

*Sit*

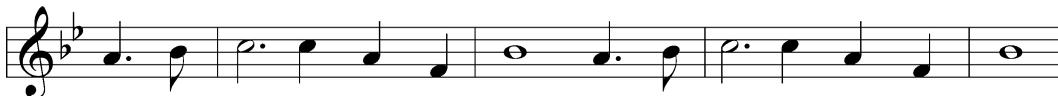
**Distribution**

## Distribution Hymn

## 761 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee;  
2 Not the la - bors of my hands Can ful - fill Thy Law's de - mands;  
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; Sim - ply to Thy cross I cling.  
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, When mine eye - lids close in death,



Let the wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flowed,  
Could my zeal no res - pite know, Could my tears for - ev - er flow,  
Na - ked, come to Thee for dress; Help - less, look to Thee for grace;  
When I soar to worlds un - known, See Thee on Thy judg - ment throne,



Be of sin the dou - ble cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.  
All for sin could not a - tone; Thou must save, and Thou a - lone.  
Foul, I to the foun - tain fly; Wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.  
Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee.

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740–78

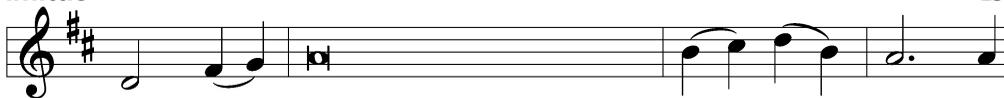
Tune: Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872

Text and tune: Public domain

*Stand*

## Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199



**Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -**



**cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,**



**which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,**

a light to light-en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy

peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and

to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,

is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

### Thanksgiving

LSB 200

**A** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,

**C** and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

### Post-Communion Collect

**P** 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** A - men.

**Salutation**

*LSB 201*



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.

**Benedicamus**

*LSB 202*



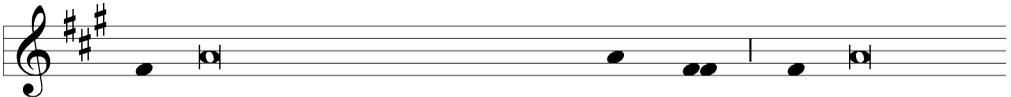
**A** Bless we the Lord.



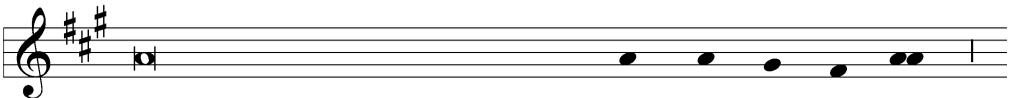
**C** Thanks be to God.

**Benediction**

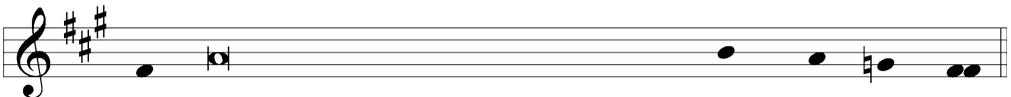
*LSB 202*



**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



**C** A-men, a-men, a - men.

## Hymn to Depart

## 575 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less



1 My hope is built on noth - ing less Than Je - sus'  
2 When dark - ness veils His love - ly face, I rest on  
3 His oath, His cov - e - nant and blood Sup - port me  
4 When He shall come with trum - pet sound, Oh, may I



blood and righ - teous - ness; No mer - it of my  
His un - chang - ing grace; In ev - 'ry high and  
in the rag - ing flood; When ev - 'ry earth - ly  
then in Him be found, Clothed in His righ - teous -



own I claim But whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.  
storm - y gale My an - chor holds with - in the veil.  
prop gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.  
ness a - lone, Re - deemed to stand be - fore His throne!

*Refrain*



On Christ, the sol - id rock, I stand; All oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Text: Edward Mote, 1797–1874, alt.  
Tune: John Stainer, 1840–1901  
Text and tune: Public domain

## Variations of "Kum Ba Yah" 3

*John H Behnke*

## Acknowledgments

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# ✚ THIS WEEK'S NOTES ✚

## Announcements

+ Last Sunday's Attendance: 29

+ Altar Guild Set Up: September 25<sup>th</sup> Gayle

Cleanup for September: Maurine and Nannette

+ Sunday, September 25th - The Films of Georges Melies @ The Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo. Leon has put together a wonderful opportunity for the church members to have some end of the summer fun! We would meet at a nearby restaurant, Slice & Pint, for lunch at 12:45pm and then continue over to The Old Town Music Hall where they will begin showing the films of Georges Melies at 2:30pm. Tickets are \$10 for Seniors and \$12 for general admission. You can reserve seats for the show at <http://www.OldTownMusicHall.org>.

## September Birthdays!

Jod Soraci 26<sup>th</sup>

### An Excerpt from Martin Luther's Sermons

"Now the world cannot conceal its unbelief in its coarse, outward sins, for I see it loves a dollar more than Christ; more than all the Apostles, even if they themselves were present and preached to it. I can hear the Gospel daily, but it does not profit me every day; it may indeed happen, if I have heard it a whole year, the Holy Spirit may have been given to me only one hour. Now when I enjoyed this hour I obtained not only five hundred dollars, but also the riches of the whole world; for what have I not, when I have the Gospel? I received God, Who made the silver and the gold, and all that is upon the Earth; for I acquired the Spirit by which I know that I will be kept by Him forever; that is much more than if I had the church full of money. Examine now and see, if our heart is not a rogue, full of wickedness and unbelief. If I were a true Christian, I would say: The hour the Gospel is received, there comes to me a hundred thousand dollars, and much more. For if I possess this treasure, I have all that is in Heaven and upon Earth. But one must serve this treasure only, for no man can serve God and mammon. Either you must love God and hate money; or you must hate God and love money; this and nothing more." *Excerpted from a sermon in the Church Postil of Martin Luther for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday.*

### **A Snippet From 1517**

*According to the Law, everyone will be judged by their own deeds, on his own work. So, before the judgment of God we only have our own works to boast in and not our neighbor's. But the Gospel shows us a wonderful exception.*

...According to the Law, everyone will be judged by their own deeds, on his own work. So, before the judgment of God we only have our own works to boast in and not our neighbor's. But the Gospel shows us a wonderful exception. The one man whose works are worth anything allows us to be judged based on His works, to boast in them, and so Paul happily concludes, "Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:14). So, under the Law we do bear our own load, an intolerable load, for who could shoulder the burden of their own guilt and carry it on earth, much less to Heaven? But under the Gospel, our Lord Jesus bears our load and frees us to help others with their burdens.

This is the picture of the Christian community we are shown, reaching back to Pentecost (the season we are currently in) and the formation of the New Covenant people of God. The image chosen to describe the moral life of the believer is a graphic one. Each is carrying a burden (1:2), and the burden is the obligation of the holy Law of God, or more precisely it is our inability to keep His Law. One of the criticisms Jesus made of those who interpreted the Law of God for the people of His day was this, "You load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers" (Luke 11:46). So, you imagine people staggering and stumbling under this moral weight. From the times of the Old Testament stumbling has been an image to describe peril, especially moral peril (cf. Isaiah 59:10; Proverbs 4:16). Therefore, it is for each of us as we go our way: There is a danger we will crumble under a weight which is too much for us to bear and fall into peril of our souls. Law. Sin. Inability. It is all right there.

Then comes the invitation of Jesus: "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-29).

As Christians, we find ourselves still staggering under the Law, failing and falling. Then what? This is the next point for Paul. We need someone to help us to our feet. The lesson says we do it for each other. It is extraordinary that the Lord should have arranged it this way, but here it is. When one Christian topples under the weight, and falls into sin, then another believer, tottering in unstable equilibrium under the same burden, should be the one to help them up. How is it done? We all know enough of the principles of mechanics to see how the one who acts as a crane to hoist up another must be strong. They must stand on solid ground, the moral high ground. Only from there could one venture to lift another. So, our text tells us everyone must find, "his reason to boast in himself alone and not in his neighbor." They must be up to the task and must test their own work. But you know this is impossible. Mechanics must give way to theology. Which of us could deem

ourselves strong enough to be able to rescue another? We know if we even tried to point out the moral speck in our neighbor's eye, we would be prevented by the mote in our own. Inevitably there is no boast in ourselves. That was "law talk" reminding us we stand or fall on the merits of our own lives in God's judgement. Stand or fall? We all fall if we rely on our own virtues under God's verdict.

We have nothing to boast about, except one thing. Like Saint Paul, we can boast only in the Cross of Jesus. If you wanted something to boast of, what could be greater than this. As we look to the Cross on which the Son of God gave His life, we know He did it for me. I did nothing for Him.

So long as the boast is only in Him and in His cross, God has a use for us. Despite the law of mechanics, God can use us to help one another in our weakness and stumbling. "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong" (1 Corinthians 1:27). When one sinner falls under the burden of temptation, of a law which is too much for their frailty, whom should God appoint to aid them but another sinner. Would you rather not be helped up by a fellow sinner who knows what it is to stumble?

The New Testament letter to the Hebrews makes a telling analogy. "Every high priest chosen from among men," it says, "is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness" (Hebrews 5:1-2). We will come to the point of this analogy in a moment, but that is the help I would want in my moment of weakness – one who can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, "since he himself is beset with weakness" (5:2). And so, St. Paul says in the opening words of our text, "If anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness" (Galatians 6:1). You are qualified for the job precisely because you have no qualifications for it – no moral greatness, nothing to boast about, except, of course, the Cross of Christ.

The point of the Hebrews' analogy about the high priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses is Jesus, our great High Priest, also walked this earth and faced its temptations. In every way He was tested as we are, only in His case without sinning (Hebrews 4:15). But the point is not left there. Did you admit earlier, too, how in the case of your own collapse you likewise would desire the helping hand of a fellow sinner? God gives you just that. A righteous and holy Messiah in Heaven who is impervious to our temptations is no use to us in our mire. We need one who will enter it with us and for us. "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

We look as much to be pulled up as to pull another to their feet. We reach upwards to the helping hand before reaching down to offer one. We also look to the fellowship of the Church, to one another, to help us in our weakness. This, too, is part of the consequences of Pentecost. *John Bombaro, 2022*