

+DIVINE SERVICE II+
OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
+ST. BARNABAS, THE APOSTLE+ 11 JUNE 2023+



The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

902 S. Maple

Inglewood, CA 90301-3824

tgslcms.org

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

“A Church where God gives and we receive.”

- ❖ The Rev. Edward Killian, Pastor (mobile) 424.293.6588
- ❖ Ms. Moira Killian, Secretary (Office) 310.671-7644
 - ❖ Mr. Jay Rogers, Organist/Music Director
 - ❖ Mr. Jose Lopez, 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:

Stephen R. Johnson teaches high school music in New York City and served at on the committee that prepared LSB. He also contributed a number of hymn settings to the hymnal. “Hark! The Voice of Jesus Crying” is a pastoral setting, with some interesting rhythmic variations of the melody in the second half.


Paul Manz's setting of “Lift High the Cross” features the powerful Festival Trumpet. He uses it in massive chords, producing a tremendous mix of overtones.

Confession and Absolution


Hymn of Invocation

837 Lift High the Cross


Refrain



Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro-claim Till




all the world a - dore His sa - cred name.



1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our Cap - tain trod,
 2 Led on their way by this tri - um - phant sign,
 3 All new - born sol - diers of the Cru - ci - fied tree,
 4 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious

Refrain



Our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 The hosts of God in con - qu'ring ranks com - bine.
 Bear on their brows the seal of Him who died.
 As Thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to Thee.

5 Let ev'ry race and ev'ry language tell
 Of Him who saves our lives from death and hell. Refrain

6 So shall our song of triumph ever be:
 Praise to the Crucified for victory! Refrain

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827–1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874–1956, alt.

Tune: Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947

Text and tune: © 1974 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000401

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 167

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 167

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 167

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

C Amen.

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 135:1-3; antiphon: v. 13

Your name, O LORD, endures for- | ever,*
your renown, O LORD, throughout all | ages.

**Praise the LORD! Praise the name | of the LORD,*
give praise, O servants | of the LORD,**

who stand in the house | of the LORD,*
 in the courts of the house | of our God.
Praise the LORD, for the | LORD is good,*
sing to his name, for it is | pleasant!
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
 Your name, O LORD, endures for- | ever,*
 your renown, O LORD, throughout all | ages.

Kyrie

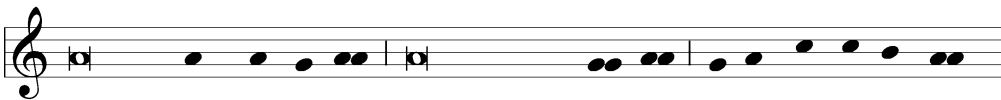
LSB 168



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



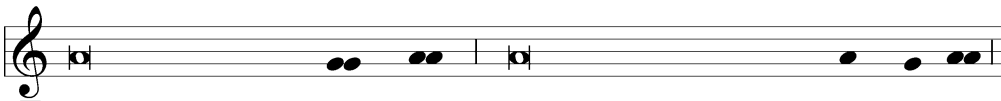
C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove and for our sal-va-tion let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



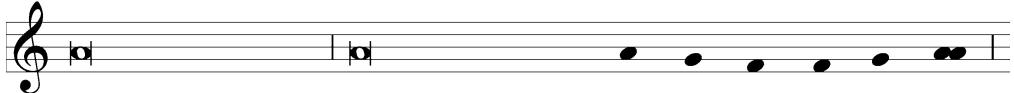
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the uni - ty of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



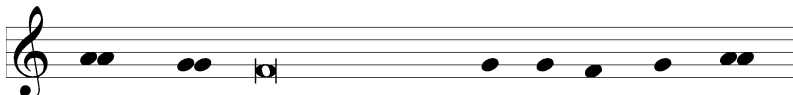
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

This Is the Feast

LSB 171



A This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



C Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,



whose blood set us free to be peo-ple of God.



Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and strength and



hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are His.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le -



lu - ia. Sing with all the peo - ple of



God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:



Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and might be to



God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



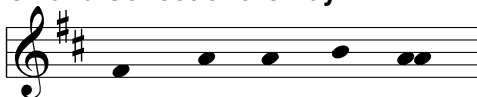
This is the feast of vic - to-ry for our God,



for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun His reign.



Salutation and Collect of the Day



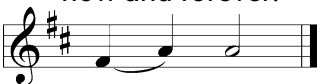
P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, Your faithful servant Barnabas sought not his own renown but gave generously of his life and substance for the encouragement of the apostles and their ministry. Grant that we may follow his example in lives given to charity and the proclamation of the Gospel; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 42:5-12

⁵Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:

⁶"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,

⁷to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,

from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to carved idols.

⁹Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them.”

¹⁰Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise from the end of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it,
the coastlands and their inhabitants.

¹¹Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice,
the villages that Kedar inhabits;
let the habitants of Sela sing for joy,
let them shout from the top of the mountains.

¹²Let them give glory to the LORD,
and declare his praise in the coastlands.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Ephesians 4:8b, 11, 12b; 2:19a, c

When he ascended on high he led a host of | captives,*
and he gave | gifts to men.

**He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and | teachers,*
for building up the bod- | y of Christ.**

So then you are no longer strangers and | aliens,*
but members of the house- | hold of God.

Second Reading

Acts 11:19–30; 13:1–3

¹⁹Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. ²⁰But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. ²¹And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. ²²The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast

purpose, ²⁴for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. ²⁵So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

²⁷Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). ²⁹So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. ³⁰And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul. . . .

¹Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ²While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse

LSB 173



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Mark 6:7-13

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



C Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

⁷And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts— ⁹but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. ¹⁰And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. ¹¹And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

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

Hymn of the Day

518 By All Your Saints in Warfare



1 By all Your saints in war - fare, For
2 For Bar - na - bas we praise You, Who
△ 3 Then let us praise the Fa - ther And



all Your saints at rest, Your ho - ly name, O
kept Your law of love And, leav - ing earth - ly
wor - ship God the Son And sing to God the




Je - sus, For - ev - er - more be blest! For
treas - ures, Sought rich - es from a - bove. O
Spir - it, E - ter - nal Three in One, Till



You have won the bat - tle That they might wear the
Christ, our Lord and Sav - ior, Let gifts of grace de -
all the ran - somed num - ber Fall down be - fore the



crown; And now they shine in glo - ry
scend, That Your true con - so - la - tion
throne, As - crib - ing pow'r and glo - ry



Re - flect - ed from Your throne.
 May through the world ex - tend
 And praise to God a - lone.

Text: Horatio Bolton Nelson, 1823–1913, alt.
 Tune: English; coll. and arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
 Text: Public domain
 Tune: Public domain

Sermon

Pastor Edward Killian

Stand

Prayer of the Church

The proper response is "Hear our prayer."

- P** Almighty God, we give thanks for all Your goodness and bless You for the love that sustains us from day to day. We praise You for the gift of Your Son, our Savior, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. We thank You for the Holy Spirit, the Comforter; for Your holy Church, for the means of grace, for the lives of all faithful and just people, and for the hope of the life to come. Help us to treasure in our hearts all that You have done for us, and enable us to show our thankfulness in lives that are wholly given to Your service. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Save and defend Your whole Church, purchased with the precious blood of Christ. Strengthen Your faithful people through the Word and the holy Sacraments, making them perfect in love and in all good works, and establishing in them the faith once delivered to the saints. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Grant Your wisdom and heavenly grace to all pastors and to those who hold office in Your Church that, by their devoted service, faith may abound and Your kingdom increase. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Send the light of Your truth into all the earth. Raise up faithful servants of Christ to advance the Gospel both at home and in distant lands. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** In Your mercy strengthen newly established congregations, and support them in challenging times. Make them steadfast, abounding in the work of the Lord, and let their faith and zeal for the Gospel refresh and renew the witness of Your people everywhere. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Preserve our nation in justice and honor that we may lead a peaceable life with integrity. Grant health and favor to all who bear office in our land. Help them to serve this people according to Your holy will. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** Take from us all hatred and prejudice, give us the spirit of love, and order our days in Your peace. Prosper the labor of those who work to bring peace and justice to the nations of the world that mutual understanding and common endeavor may be increased among all peoples. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Sanctify our homes with Your presence, and bless them with joy. Keep our children in the covenant of their Baptism, and enable their parents to bring them up in lives of faith and devotion. Unite the members of all families in a spirit of affection and service that they may show Your praise in our land and in all the world. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** By Your Word and Holy Spirit comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity especially uphold *Alice, the family of Carmen Miller, Cynthia, Debra, Dolores, Gene, Jane, Jod, Johnathan, Karen, Lynette, Marion and her family, Megan, Naomi, Sabrina, Steven, Suzanne, and Timothy*. Be with those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those to whom death draws near. Bring consolation to those in sorrow, and grant to all a measure of Your love, taking them into Your tender care. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served You in Your Church on earth, who now rest from their labors. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joys of Your heavenly kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** 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.
- C** Amen.

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

Offertory

LSB 176



C What shall I ren - der to the Lord for all His ben - e-fits to



me? I will of - fer the sac - ri - fice of thanks - giv - ing and will



call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-



va-tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my



vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo - ple, in the



courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je-ru - sa - lem.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 177



P The Lord be with you.



G And al-so 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 (Abbreviated)

LSB 177

P It is truly good, right, and salutary . . . evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 178



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of



pow'r and might: Heav'n and earth are full of Your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is He who comes in the name



of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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.**

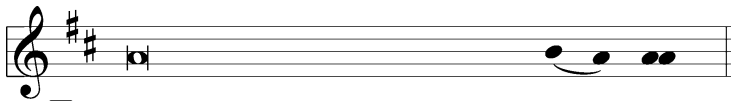
- P** O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final 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 180



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



C A - men.

Agnus Dei

LSB 180



C Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the



sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of



God, You take a - way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sit

Distribution



Distribution Hymn

617 O Lord, We Praise Thee



1 O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and a - dore Thee,
 2 Thy ho - ly bod - y in - to death was giv - en,
 3 May God be - stow on us His grace and fa - vor



In thanks - giv - ing bow be - fore Thee. Thou with Thy
 Life to win for us in heav - en. No great - er
 That we fol - low Christ our Sav - ior And live to -



bod - y and Thy blood didst nour - ish Our weak souls that
 love than this to Thee could bind us; May this feast there -
 geth - er here in love and u - nion Nor de - spise this



they may flour - ish: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 of re - mind us! O Lord, have mer - cy!
 blest Com - mu - nion! O Lord, have mer - cy!



May Thy bod - y, Lord, born of Mar - y, That our
 Lord, Thy kind - ness did so con - strain Thee That Thy
 Let not Thy good Spir - it for - sake us; Grant that



sins and sor - rows did car - ry, And Thy blood for us plead
 blood should bless and sus - tain me. All our debt Thou hast paid;
 heav'n - ly - mind - ed He make us; Give Thy Church, Lord, to see



In all tri - al, fear, and need: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 Peace with God once more is made: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 Days of peace and u - ni - ty: O Lord, have mer - cy!

Distribution Hymn

637 Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord



1 Draw near and take the bod - y of the Lord,
 2 He who His saints in this world rules and shields,
 3 Come for - ward then with faith - ful hearts sin - cere,



And drink the ho - ly blood for you out - poured;
 To all be - liev - ers life e - ter - nal yields;
 And take the pledg - es of sal - va - tion here.



Of - fered was He for great - est and for least,
 With heav'n - ly bread He makes the hun - gry whole,
 O Lord, our hearts with grate - ful thanks en - dow



Him - self the vic - tim and Him - self the priest.
 Gives liv - ing wa - ters to the thirst - ing soul.
 As in this feast of love You bless us now.

Text: Latin, 7th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.
 Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Thank the Lord

LSB 181



C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev - 'ry-one what



He has done. Let ev - 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re -



joice and proud - ly bear His name. He re - calls His prom - is -

es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy with shouts of thanks -
 giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

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.

Benediction

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 A - men.



Hymn to Depart

826 Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying



1 Hark, the voice of Je - sus cry - ing, "Who will go and work to - day?
2 If you can - not speak like an - gels, If you can - not preach like Paul,
3 If you can - not be a watch - man, Stand - ing high on Zi - on's wall,
4 Let none hear you i - dly say - ing, "There is noth - ing I can do,"



Fields are white and har - vests wait - ing— Who will bear the sheaves a - way?"
You can tell the love of Je - sus, You can say He died for all.
Point - ing out the path to heav - en, Of - f'ring life and peace to all,
While the mul - ti - tudes are dy - ing And the Mas - ter calls for you.



Loud and long the Mas - ter call - eth; Rich re - ward He of - fers thee.
If you can - not rouse the wick - ed With the judg - ment's dread a - larms,
With your prayers and with your boun - ties You can do what God com - mands;
Take the task He gives you glad - ly, Let His work your plea - sure be;



Who will an - swer, glad - ly say - ing, "Here am I, send me, send me"?"
You can lead the lit - tle chil - dren To the Sav - ior's wait - ing arms.
You can be like faith - ful Aar - on, Hold - ing up the proph - et's hands.
An - swer quick - ly when He call - eth, "Here am I, send me, send me!"

Text (sts. 1–2, 4): Daniel March, 1816–1909, alt.; (st. 3): unknown, alt.
Tune: Joseph Barnby, 1838–96
Text and tune: Public domain

Life High The Cross

Paul Manz (1919-2009)

Acknowledgments

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✠ THIS WEEK'S NOTES ✠

Announcements

+ **Last Sunday's Attendance: 38**

+ **Altar Guild Set Up:** June 11th Marie
June 18th Jill

Cleanup for June: Marie and Susie

+ **Ushers for June:** Jose Lopez and Johnathan Raoelison

+ If you would like to make a pledge to support Gayle in her LWML Walk, there is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. The last day to collect pledges is next Sunday, June 18th.

+ **Join us for Wednesday Evening Virtual Bible Study at 7pm on Zoom.**

June Birthdays

Gary Machzgal 8th

Margaret Medhus 11th

Nannette Griffin 12th

Onja Davidson 27th

A Snippet From 1517 ***"Mordor And Evangelism"***

Mordor is a scary place. There really isn't much more to say about it. It's the land of Sauron—with that ever-searching eye, hordes of orcs, trolls, giants, ring wraiths, and an insanely large spider. It's a land filled with the stench of decay and death. It's a land where goodness, truth, and beauty are forsaken for evil, falsity, and ugliness. Mordor stands in stark contrast to high-elven society, bucolic hobbit villages, austere Rohan vales, and the mechanical mines of the dwarfs, overcoming the differences of Middle-earth's inhabitants through pure fear.

Mordor's bleak existence and the successful salvific mission of Frodo and Samwise is what makes Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* such a psychologically enjoyable epic. It taps into that deep mythic desire we all have for an orderly and just world. A world where the good guys win and the bad guys pay. Much has been written about the psychological and mythic archetypes weaving their way through Tolkien's trilogy. I seek not to add directly to that

literature. Instead, I want to make two comments on how Mordor psychologically affects the evangelistic and apologetic task. Reason one will be discussed below with reason two being taken up next month.

...The vagaries of human interaction often trigger various gestalt leaps between evangelism and apologetics. I understand evangelism as the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins to the sinner. It is the declaration of the Word applied to the sinner sitting in front of you, often for the first time.

This proclamation is often met with resistance from the sinner and a rejection, via various reasons, of that Word. In listening to the sinner boldly pronounce his God-given right to refuse the Word, one finds precisely where apologetics becomes necessary to the evangelistic task. Apologetics thus becomes an attempt to remove those reasonable (and often unreasonable) obstacles.

Mordor deeply affects the evangelistic task in two fundamental ways. First is the very fear of Mordor itself—the sort of fear that gives even elves pause. The evangelistic task is a messy affair. It requires conversing with people who are not necessarily like me, often diametrically opposed to what I know is good, true, and beautiful. Yet, I am called into this darkness just as Frodo and Samwise were called into Mordor. I cannot avoid it.

Oswald Bayer discusses the nature of the Christian life as radical discipleship through struggle. I am called to leave wife, children, parents, and friends, everything that is stable in my life to follow Jesus. Where does Jesus lead me? He leads me into the depths of darkness; He leads me into Mordor.

This is a fearful proposition. Mordor and its inhabitants are hell-bent on destroying me, yet I must meet them on their turf. I must meet them in their heart of darkness, as that is the only place the cross makes alive again. What makes me able to do this? Here is where the psychology of Mordor truly becomes frightening. I am Mordor. That stench of decay and death as well as the love of evil, falsity, and ugliness is my nature. I share with the unbeliever a common human nature that willingly rejected the Garden in favor of a volcanic wasteland.

I am working with the reverse of the more familiar notion of being able to stand before God because of Christ's blood covering our hearts. Just as Christ is pure, I am pure before the Lord. However, just as my fellow human stands before me condemned by their sins, I stand before my fellow human condemned by sin, two dark souls traveling toward death. This is the common ground I share with Mordor and its inhabitants, making me more than well-qualified to descend into Mordor bringing the only message with the power to turn Mordor—to turn me—inside-out. There is nothing in my words that makes the evangelistic task easier or less frightening. My words, however, ought to prompt that sense of urgency to share the message of Christ with others. To join Frodo and Sam in what truly is a mission of utmost importance, bringing the light into the heart of darkness. It is a light that burns bright even when I lose my way in Mordor, succumbing to the fear and ultimately death entailed by life. *Daniel Dean, May 21, 2018, found on 1517.org*