

+DIVINE SERVICE II+  
OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST  
+THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST+ 27 AUGUST 2023+

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## The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

902 S. Maple

Inglewood, CA 90301-3824

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

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# 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:

Leon Boellmann was another promising young composer who was cut down early by tuberculosis. Most of his music is for the organ, but he wrote a few pieces in other genres.

The Suite Gothique is his best known work. We have here the last two movements. The Prayer projects an atmosphere of great serenity, while the Toccata is very dramatic. It incorporates the effect known as “caged rage.” At the beginning, the full swell is played with the shades closed tight, giving a feeling of distance. As the final section approaches, the shades are opened, building up to the dramatic closing measures.

# Confession and Absolution

## Hymn of Invocation

## 537 Beautiful Savior



1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion, Son of  
 2 Fair are the mead - ows, Fair are the wood - lands, Robed in  
 3 Fair is the sun - shine, Fair is the moon - light, Bright the  
 4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions, Son of



God and Son of Man! Tru - ly I'd love Thee, Tru - ly I'd  
 flow'rs of bloom - ing spring; Je - sus is fair - er, Je - sus is  
 spar - kling stars on high; Je - sus shines bright - er, Je - sus shines  
 God and Son of Man! Glo - ry and hon - or, Praise, ad - o -



serve Thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.  
 pur - er, He makes our sor - r'wing spir - it sing.  
 pur - er Than all the an - gels in the sky.  
 ra - tion Now and for - ev - er - more be Thine!

Text: Münsterisch Gesangbuch, 1677, Münster; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823-1904  
 Tune: Silesian, 19th cent.

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 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 2:6-7; 117; antiphon: Psalm 115:18*

But we will | bless the LORD\*  
from this time forth and forevermore. | Praise the LORD!  
**As for me, I have | set my King\***  
**on Zion, my | holy hill.**  
I will tell of | the decree:\*  
The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have be- | gotten you."  
**Praise the LORD, all | nations!\***  
**Extol him, all | peoples!**  
For great is his steadfast | love toward us,\*  
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. | Praise the LORD!  
**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.**

# Kyrie

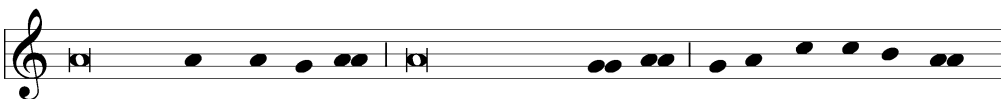
LSB 168



**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.



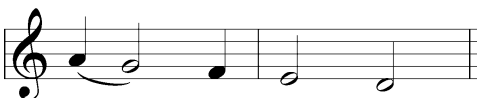
**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



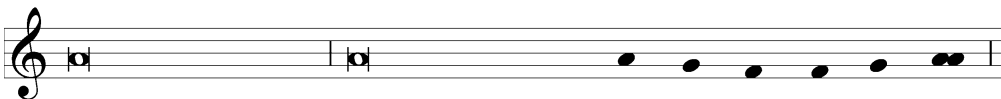
**A** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



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



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



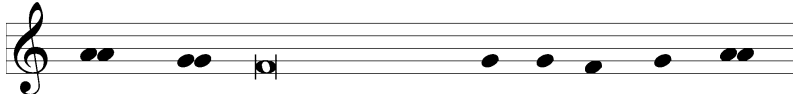
**A** For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise



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.



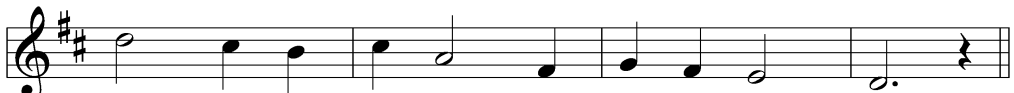
**C** Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,



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.  
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

**Salutation and Collect of the Day**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And al - so with you.

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty and merciful God, by Your gift alone Your faithful people render true and laudable service. Help us steadfastly to live in this life according to Your promises and finally attain Your heavenly glory; 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 Reading

*Isaiah 51:1-6*

### The LORD's Comfort for Zion

<sup>1</sup>“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,  
you who seek the LORD:

look to the rock from which you were hewn,  
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

<sup>2</sup>Look to Abraham your father  
and to Sarah who bore you;  
for he was but one when I called him,  
that I might bless him and multiply him.

<sup>3</sup>For the LORD comforts Zion;  
he comforts all her waste places  
and makes her wilderness like Eden,  
her desert like the garden of the LORD;  
joy and gladness will be found in her,  
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

<sup>4</sup>“Give attention to me, my people,  
and give ear to me, my nation;  
for a law will go out from me,  
and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples.

<sup>5</sup>My righteousness draws near,  
my salvation has gone out,  
and my arms will judge the peoples;  
the coastlands hope for me,  
and for my arm they wait.

<sup>6</sup>Lift up your eyes to the heavens,  
and look at the earth beneath;  
for the heavens vanish like smoke,  
the earth will wear out like a garment,



and they who dwell in it will die in like manner;  
but my salvation will be forever,  
and my righteousness will never be dismayed.”

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Psalm

*Psalm 138*

### Give Thanks to the LORD

<sup>1</sup>I give you thanks, O LORD, with | my whole heart;\*  
before the gods I | sing your praise;

<sup>2</sup>**I bow down toward your holy temple  
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your | faithfulness,\*  
for you have exalted above all things  
your name | and your word.**

<sup>3</sup>On the day I called, you | answered me;\*  
my strength of soul | you increased.

<sup>4</sup>**All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, | O LORD,\*  
for they have heard the words | of your mouth,**

<sup>5</sup>and they shall sing of the ways | of the LORD,\*  
for great is the glory | of the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>**For though the LORD is high, he regards the | lowly,\*  
but the haughty he knows | from afar.**

<sup>7</sup>Though I walk in the midst of trouble,  
you pre- | serve my life;\*

you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies,  
and your right hand de- | livers me.

<sup>8</sup>**The LORD will fulfill his pur- | pose for me;\*  
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.  
Do not forsake the work | of your hands.**

## Epistle

*Romans 11:33—12:8*

<sup>33</sup>Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

<sup>34</sup>“For who has known the mind of the Lord,  
or who has been his counselor?”

<sup>35</sup>“Or who has given a gift to him  
that he might be repaid?”

<sup>36</sup>For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

<sup>3</sup>For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup>For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup>Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup>if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup>the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

**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

*Matthew 16:13-20*

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

**C** Glo - ry to You, O Lord.



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

### 560 Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed



1 Drawn to the cross, which Thou hast blessed With heal - ing  
2 Thou know - est all my griefs and fears, Thy grace a -  
3 Wash me and take a - way each stain; Let noth - ing  
4 And then for work to do for Thee, Which shall so



gifts for souls dis - tressed, To find in Thee my  
bused, my mis - spent years; Yet now to Thee with  
of my sin re - main. For cleans - ing, though it  
sweet a ser - vice be That an - gels well might



life, my rest, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.  
con - trite tears, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.  
be through pain, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.  
en - vy me, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.

Text: Genevieve M. Irons, 1855–1928

Tune: Joseph Barnby, 1838–96

Text and tune: Public domain

**Sermon**

*Pastor Edward Killian*

## Prayer of the Church

*Proper response is "hear our prayer".*

- P** Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, from You and through You and to You are all things. You have built Your Church on the confession of the Gospel and have promised that the gates of hell will not overcome it. To Your Church throughout the world grant the faith and courage to confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

- P** Lord God Almighty, You transform Your Church by the Holy Spirit so that she does not conform to the world. Draw forth from Your people their proclamation of thanksgiving, that they may tell of all Your wondrous deeds. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** O Lord, grant that the Office of the Keys may be honored among us, in order that we may confess our sin and be absolved in the name of Christ. As You have so graciously forgiven us, grant that we may extend this grace by forgiving others. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** Heavenly Father, care for all families, children, single adults and youth, that they might steadfastly walk in the way that leads to life eternal. Grant an increase in wisdom and grace to all who teach and learn. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** Lord God, grant that all nations and leaders might act for peace; promote godliness; and protect all who live under violence, oppression, injustice and fear, that all people might extol You. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** Heavenly Father, care for all victims of disaster, for those stricken by illness or infirmity, for the aged and infirm, for the grieving and for those near death. *Especially show Your steadfast love to Alice, Cynthia, Gene, Johnathan, Lynette, Marion and her family, and Timothy.* Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** O Lord, lead us to repentance and faith, that we may not think more highly of ourselves than is right, but that we would set our hearts and minds on the things of God. Prepare us to receive the blessed gifts of our Lord's table, that this food may keep us holy and blameless in Christ now and when He comes again. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** From You and through You and to You are all things! To You, O Father, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, be glory now and 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.

**C** 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:

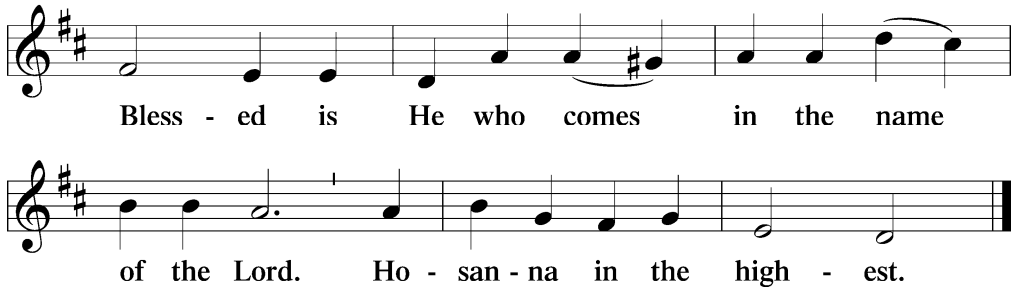
**Sanctus**

*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.



### 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

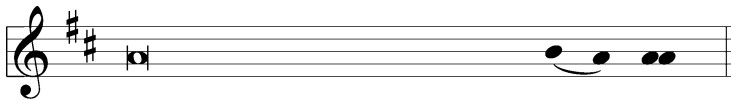
**C** **Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses**



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;



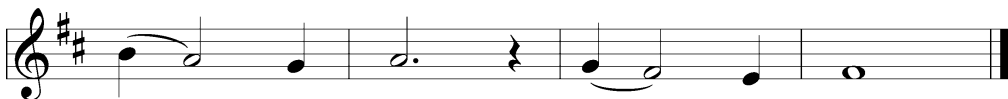
have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the



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.

## Distribution

### Distribution Hymn

### 638 Eat This Bread

*Refrain*



Eat this bread, drink this cup, Come to Him and nev - er be hun - gry.



Eat this bread, drink this cup, Trust in Him and you will not thirst.

*Cantor or Choir*



1 This is His bod - y giv - en for you; this is His blood that was shed for you.



2 As of-ten as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show His death un-til He comes a-gain.



3 Eat His flesh and drink His blood, and Christ will raise you up on the Last Day.



4 An - y - one who eats this bread will live for - ev - er.



5 If we be-lieve and eat this bread, we will have e - ter - nal life. *Refrain*

Text (sts. 1–2): Stephen P. Starke, 1955; (sts. ref, 3–5): Robert J. Batastini, 1942; (sts. ref, 3–5): Taizé Community

Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923–94

Text (sts. 1–2): © 1998 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000401

Text (sts. ref, 3–5) and tune: © 1984 Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, Taizé Community, France, admin. GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000401



## Distribution Hymn

## 616 Baptismal Waters Cover Me



1 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me As I ap -  
 2 I look to Christ up - on the tree, His bod - y  
 3 Lord, may Your wound - ed hand im - part Your heal - ing  
 4 From Your own mouth comes forth a word; Your shep - herd  
 5 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me; Christ's wound - ed



proach on bend - ed knee; My Fa - ther's mer - cy  
 bro - ken there for me; I lay be - fore Him  
 to my bro - ken heart; Your love a - lone can  
 speaks, but You are heard; Through him Your hand now  
 hand has set me free. Held in my Fa - ther's



here I plead, For griev - ous sins of thought and deed.  
 all my sin, My dark - est se - crets from with - in.  
 form in me A heart that serves You joy - ful - ly.  
 stretch - es out, For - giv - ing sin, de - stroy - ing doubt.  
 strong em - brace, With joy I praise Him for His grace.

Text: Kurt E. Reinhardt, 1969

Tune: Sammlung alter und neuer . . . Melodien, 1742

*Stand*

## Thank the Lord

LSB 181



☐ 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**

*LSB 183*

**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

## 525 Crown Him with Many Crowns



1 Crown Him with man - y crowns, The Lamb up - on His throne;  
2 Crown Him the vir - gin's Son, The God in - car - nate born,  
3 Crown Him the Lord of love. Be - hold His hands and side,  
4 Crown Him the Lord of life, Who tri - umphed o'er the grave  
5 Crown Him the Lord of heav'n, En - throned in worlds a - bove,



Hark how the heav'n-ly an - them drowns All mu - sic but its own.  
Whose arm those crim-son tro - phies won Which now His brow a-dorn:  
Rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, In beau - ty glo - ri - fied.  
And rose vic - to - rious in the strife For those He came to save.  
Crown Him the king to whom is giv'n The won-drous name of Love.



A - wake, my soul, and sing Of Him who died for thee, And  
Fruit of the mys - tic rose, Yet of that rose the stem, The  
No an - gels in the sky Can ful - ly bear that sight, But  
His glo - ries now we sing, Who died and rose on high, Who  
Crown Him with man - y crowns As thrones be - fore Him fall; Crown



hail Him as thy match-less king Through all e - ter - ni - ty.  
root whence mer - cy ev - er flows, The babe of Beth - le - hem.  
down-ward bend their won-d'ring eyes At mys - ter - ies so bright.  
died e - ter - nal life to bring And lives that death may die.  
Him, ye kings, with man - y crowns, For He is king of all.

Text (sts. 1-3, 5): Matthew Bridges, 1800-94, alt.; (st. 4): Godfrey Thring, 1823-1903  
Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816-93  
Text and tune: Public domain

## Toccata from Suite Gothique

*Leon Boellmann*

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# ✝ THIS WEEK'S NOTES ✝

## Announcements

+ **Last Sunday's Attendance: 28**

+ **Altar Guild Set Up:** August 27<sup>th</sup> Susie  
September 3<sup>rd</sup> Marie

**Cleanup for August:** Nannette and Gayle

**Cleanup for September:** Onja and Sydney

+ **Ushers for August:** Dick Huhn and Leon Tarr

**Ushers for September:** Leon Tarr and Johnathan Raelison

+ **Join us after service for an end of summer BBQ!**

**All the ladies of the congregation are invited to join the LMWL quarterly meeting which will be held after, where we will get to hear from Onja and Sydney about representing the young women at the National Conference.**

+ **Next Sunday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, is Mite Sunday.**

+ **Join us for Wednesday Evening Virtual Bible Study at 7pm on Zoom. Links are sent out weekly, also located on the homepage of our website.**

## Lectionary Summary for the Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

### *The Lord Jesus Christ Is the Son of the Living God*

Jesus asked His disciples: *"But who do you say that I am?"* (Matt. 16:15). The question is also put to us: Who do you say that He is? Flesh and blood do not reveal this to us, but by the ministry of the Gospel, the Father in heaven reveals His Son to us on earth, who has become flesh and suffered death for our salvation. Thus, we believe and confess that He is *"the Christ, the Son of the living God"* (Matt. 16:16). As He died for our transgressions and was raised for our justification, He looses us from all our sins and preserves our life within His Church, against which even *"the gates of hell shall not prevail"* (Matt. 16:18–19). His salvation is forever, and His righteousness *"will never be dismayed"* (Is. 51:6). He comforts us with the Gospel in His Church, so that *"joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song"* (Is. 51:3). Therefore, *"according to the measure of faith that God has assigned"* (Rom. 12:3), we also offer ourselves *"as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God"* (Rom. 12:1) through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## **Memory Verse for the Week**

**Titus 3:4–6** When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

## **Lutheran's For Life Thoughts**

Confessing the Christ means advocating the sanctity of every human life. If Jesus is indeed the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:16), then He also serves as Lord of life-and-death situations and decisions. May He whose Word has plundered us out of hell's gates grant our testimony to extend this same courage and compassion to everyone considering abortion or physician-assisted suicide.

## **A Snippet From 1517**

...Jesus has taken His disciples to the northern parts of Galilee. At the foot of Mount Hermon, they are at one of the sources of the Jordan River. The Greeks had built a shrine to the pagan god Pan in this place. The Romans had built a temple in honor of the emperor. Now, Jesus brings His little band of followers to this place to explore the question, "How does a disciple walk in a pagan and political world?"

In this setting, so far from the beauty of Jerusalem's temple, so far from the sacrifices and rituals of the priests, so far from the certainties of the religious authorities, Jesus asks His disciples two questions. These two questions are the two questions any disciple needs to answer when living in the world.

Jesus knows His disciples, then and now, are not always going to be able to follow His physical presence. We understand this better than the original disciples. What a blessing it must have been to have Jesus walking with you in this world. He could lead you precisely where you needed to go, and His words could clarify for you precisely what you needed to know. Jesus, however, knows He will soon be crucified and rise from the dead. He will ascend into Heaven and send His disciples to the ends of the earth. They will soon be traveling throughout the world without His physical, full bodily presence. How will they follow Him in a pagan and political world? Therefore, to answer that question, to offer future direction, Jesus asks His disciples two questions: Discipleship 101. They are two questions every disciple needs to know as they follow Jesus in a pagan political world.

The first question is, "Who do people say the Son of Man is" ([Matthew 16:13](#))? Discipleship begins by listening. It is not just listening to God but also listening to the world around you.

We know discipleship begins by listening to God. By His Word the world was created and by His Word of forgiveness we are made His children and brought into His Kingdom. His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light for our path. Discipleship involves listening to the Word of God. But discipleship is not only about listening to the Word of God. It also

involves listening to the world. In discipleship, we are following Jesus, but we are following Jesus in the world. We do not close our ears to the world around us. We do not try to silence its voices. Instead, we listen, but we listen with discernment.

Often, we can listen to the world around us to hear what is wrong. That is, we listen with a focus on naming the world's sin and proclaiming how far the world has fallen away from God. Jesus, however, asks a question which calls for us to engage in another kind of listening, a listening of discernment. "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" Jesus asks us to listen to the world to hear what it thinks about Jesus.

For the disciples, their ability to answer this question demonstrates they were already engaged in such conversation. "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets" ([Matthew 16:14](#)). The people the disciples were in conversation with understood the power of prophets. Some were aware of current events. They had heard of the death of John the Baptist, a powerful prophet, by the hand of King Herod and they thought perhaps God would vindicate his wrongful death by raising him to walk this earth again. Others were aware of the Scriptures. They knew of Elijah and Jeremiah and looked for God to work through prophets in this world.

The answers vary, but the good news is that the disciples had an answer. It was not something they made up. It was not something they assumed. They actually had been in conversation with people ("some say...") where others spoke with them about who they thought Jesus was.

What about you? In your constellation of friends and family, who do people say Jesus is? Have you had conversations where His name has come up? Talk such as this can easily come off as judgmental. It is not. For disciples, these dialogues are discerning. We are laying the foundation for future discussions where we speak of our Lord.

The second question is more important. Jesus asks His disciples, "But who do you say that I am" ([Matthew 16:15](#))? This question is important for two reasons.

First, this question is at the heart of our relationship with our Lord. God the Father has loved us into life and called us into being through the death and resurrection of His Son. Jesus Christ is our Savior and will come to be our Judge, justifying and rectifying all that has happened in our lives and in His world. This knowledge, this confession, is not something we have made ourselves. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit ([Matthew 16:17](#)). We awaken every day joined to our Savior and, no matter what sin has ensnared us or what suffering has befallen us, we can always say, "Jesus is my Lord."

Second, this question is not only at the heart of our conversation with God, it is also at the heart of our conversation with the world. Notice how Jesus uses the adversative: "But who do you say that I am?" Who we say Jesus is will differ from the world, hence the importance of our confession. Our lives are where we continue the conversation, guided by the Spirit, confessing Jesus before others, and inviting them to experience God's love in the world. *Gospel: Matthew 16:13-22, David Schmitt, August 27, 2023 1517.org*