

Third Sunday of Easter

April 19th, 2026



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
SMITHVILLE, TEXAS

Divine Service with Holy Communion
10 AM

Bible Class and Sunday School
8:45 AM



Grace Lutheran Church – Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

308 Byrne St. Smithville, TX 78957

512-237-2108 glcs.org

Pastor David Woelmer

**GRACE LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
SMITHVILLE, TX

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church! We give thanks that our gracious Lord Jesus Christ has gathered us together here for his Divine Service. Today again our Lord comes to serve us and lavish us with his gifts of life, forgiveness, and salvation. Rejoicing in those wonderful gifts, we sing with David in Psalm 84: “How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.”

Holy Communion is a sacred gift from Christ to His Church. In this meal, He gives His true body and blood under bread and wine into our mouths in order to forgive our sins and strengthen our union with Him and with one another (Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16-17). Christians receive this Sacrament trusting Jesus’ own words, repenting of all their sin, and confessing the faith taught in Holy Scripture together in unity (Matt. 5:23-24; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:17-26). For this reason, and because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm (1 Cor. 11:27-34), we ask that those who have not yet been instructed and those who are not members of a congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to speak with the pastor before receiving Holy Communion.

In our readings today: From “before the foundation of the world” until heaven and earth pass away, “the word of the Lord remains forever” (1 Peter 1:20, 25). This “living and abiding word of God” is the preaching of Christ Jesus, namely that God “raised him from the dead and gave him glory” (1 Peter 1:21, 23). By this living word, we “have been born again” to eternal life (1 Peter 1:23) and ransomed from our sinful and mortal life “with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18–19). This living word also calls us to repentance, to dying and rising in Holy Baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38). In this, we receive the Holy Spirit “for you and for your children and for all who are far off” (Acts 2:39). Through the preaching of His cross and resurrection, Jesus draws near to bring us “into his glory” (Luke 24:26). As He opens the Scriptures, He opens our minds to comprehend “the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27), and He brings us to know Him “in the breaking of the bread” (Luke 24:35)

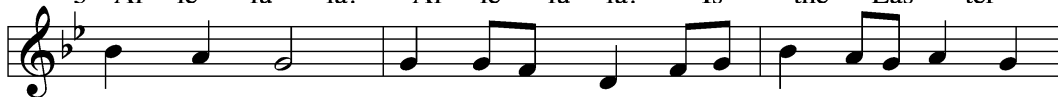
A Prayer Before Worship: *O Lord, our creator, redeemer, and comforter, as we come together to worship You in spirit and in truth, we humbly pray that You would open our hearts to the preaching of Your Word so that we may repent of our sins, believe in Jesus Christ as our only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear us for His sake. Amen.*

Exchange of Peace: By the second century, it was common for Christians to follow St. Paul’s encouragement to “greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12) during the Church’s worship. Though the place in the worship service and the manner of this greeting have changed throughout the Church’s history, it has always served as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:2-3). It’s more than a simple “holy howdy” or a warm greeting to one another. Instead, it’s an extension of the reconciliation and forgiveness that Jesus has accomplished for us. We greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, “Peace be with you.”

Please stand and remain standing



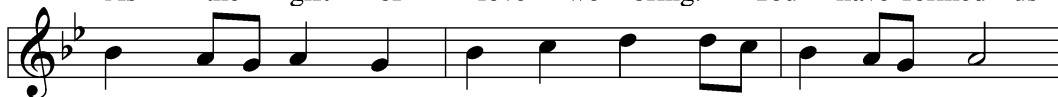
1 Who are you who walk in sor - row Down Em - ma - us'
 2 Who is this who joins our jour - ney, Walk - ing with us
 3 Who are You? Our hearts are o - pened In the break - ing
 4 Who are we who trav - el with You On our way through
 5 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!" Is the Eas - ter



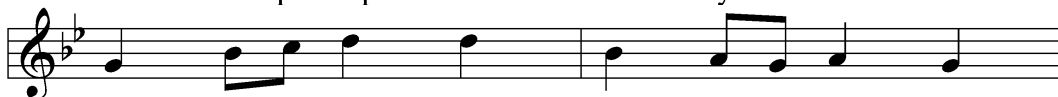
bar - ren road, Hearts dis - traught and hope de - feat - ed,
 stride by stride? Un - known Strang - er, can You fath - om
 of the bread— Christ the vic - tim, now the vic - tor
 life to death? Wom - en, men, the young, the ag - ing,
 hymn we sing! Take our life, our joy, our wor - ship



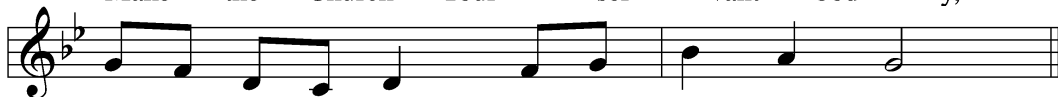
Bent be - neath grief's crush - ing load? Name - less mourn - ers,
 Depths of grief for one who died? Then the won - der!
 Liv - ing, ris - en from the dead! Great com - pan - ion
 Wak - ened by the Spir - it's breath! At the font You
 As the gift of love we bring. You have formed us



we will join you, We who al - so mourn our dead;
 When we told You How our dreams to dust have turned,
 on our jour - ney, Still sur - prise us with Your grace!
 claim and name us, Born of wa - ter and the Word;
 all one peo - ple Called from ev - 'ry land and race.



We have stood by graves un - yield - ing,
 Then You o - pened the wide Scrip - tures
 Make each day a new Em - ma - us;
 At the ta - ble still You feed us,
 Make the Church Your ser - vant bod - y,



Eat - en death's bare, bit - ter bread.
 Till our hearts with - in us burned.
 On our hearts Your im - age trace!
 Host us as our ris - en Lord!
 Sent to share Your heal - ing grace!

INVOCATION: *(God has given us our beginning in Baptism, so the Divine Service begins in His Name).*

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

CONFESSION: *(We come into the presence of our holy God, recognizing our sin and pleading for mercy on account of Christ).*

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

G But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

G 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: *(God speaks His words of forgiveness to us through His servant, the pastor).*

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.

G Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT: *(We enter God's house with Psalms of praise).*

Psalm 133; antiphon: v. 1

*Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!*

It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!

It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion!

For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

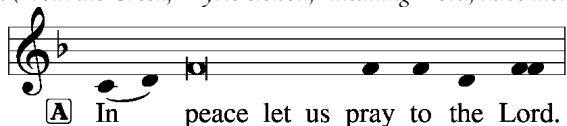
Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

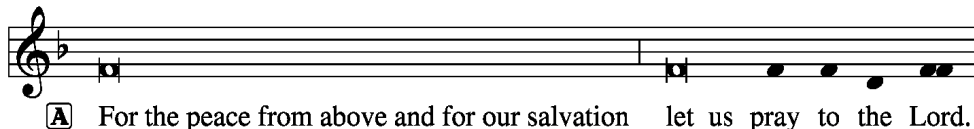
*Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!*



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



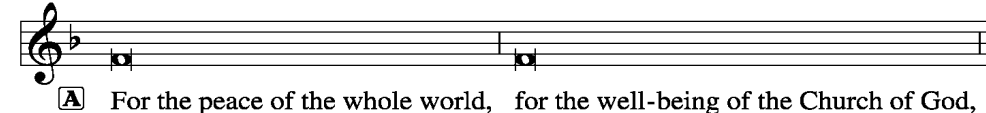
C Lord, have mer - cy.



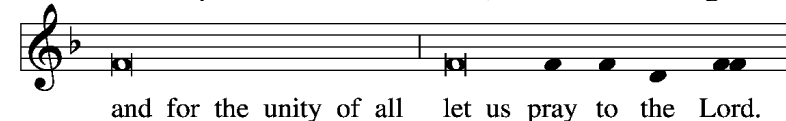
A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



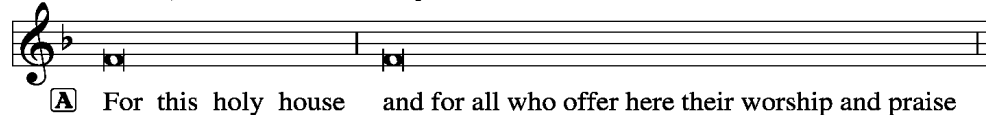
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



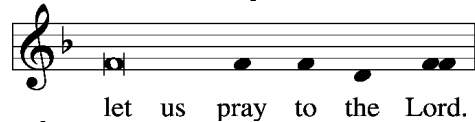
and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



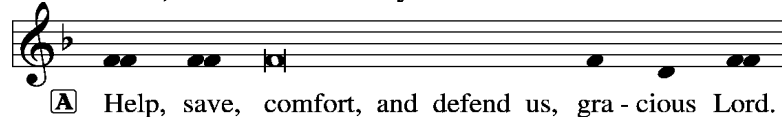
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



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



C A - men.

Refrain

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

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

- 1 — Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose
- 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and
- 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and
- 4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to
- 5 For the Lamb who was slain has be -

blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*
 hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*
 join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*
 God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*
 gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*

Final Refrain

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

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

SALUTATION: (The pastor and congregation greet each other in the Lord's presence).

P The Lord be with you.

C And al - so with you.

COLLECT OF THE DAY: (These prayers have been used for over 1,500 years. They “collect” the Gospel theme for the day).

P Let us pray.

O God, through the humiliation of Your Son You raised up the fallen world. Grant to Your faithful people, rescued from the peril of everlasting death, perpetual gladness and eternal joys; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Sit

FIRST READING

Acts 2:14a, 36–41

¹⁴Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, . . .

³⁶Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” ⁴⁰And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” ⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 116:1–14; antiphon: v. 5

⁵Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.

¹I love the LORD, because he has heard
my voice and my pleas for mercy.

²Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

³The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.

⁴Then I called on the name of the LORD:
“O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!”

⁵Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.

⁶The LORD preserves the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.

⁷Return, O my soul, to your rest;
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

⁸For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling;

⁹I will walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.
¹⁰I believed, even when I spoke,
“I am greatly afflicted”;
¹¹I said in my alarm,
“All mankind are liars.”
¹²What shall I render to the LORD
for all his benefits to me?
¹³I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD,
¹⁴I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.
⁵Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.

EPISTLE READING

1 Peter 1:17–25

¹⁷If you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for your sake, ²¹who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

²²Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴for

“All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,
and the flower falls,

²⁵but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

VERSE

LSB 156

C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter.



C Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

¹³That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” ¹⁹And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²²Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” ²⁵And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” ³³And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise to You, O Christ.

NICENE CREED (*From the Latin, “Credo,” meaning “I believe.” We say back to God what He says to us).*

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:

With High Delight Let Us Unite

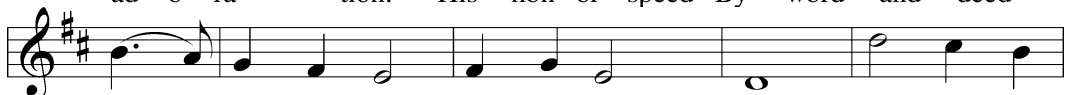
LSB 483



1 With high de-light Let us u - nite In songs of great
 2 True God, He first From death has burst Forth in - to life,
 3 Let prais-es ring; Give thanks, and bring To Christ our Lord



ju - bi - la - tion. Ye pure in heart, All bear your part,
 all sub-du - ing. His en - e - my Doth van - quished lie;
 ad - o - ra - tion. His hon - or speed By word and deed



Sing Je - sus Christ, our sal - va - tion. To set us
 His death has been death's un - do - ing. "And yours shall
 To ev - 'ry land, ev - 'ry na - tion. So shall His

free For - ev - er, He Is ris'n and sends To all earth's
 be Like vic - to - ry O'er death and grave," Saith He, who
 love Give us a - bove, From mis - er - y And death set
 ends Good news to save ev - 'ry na - tion.
 gave His life for us, life re - new - ing.
 free, All joy and full con - so - la - tion.

SERMON "Questioner, Stranger, Guest – Teacher, Redeemer, Host"

(Based on one of the Scripture readings, the pastor proclaims God's Word of Law and Gospel for our lives today).

Stand

OFFERTORY *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness with sacrifices of praise).*

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.

Sit

OFFERING: *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness by bringing Him the first fruits of what He has given).*

Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: *(The congregation prays for the Church and for all people throughout the world).*

- P** Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

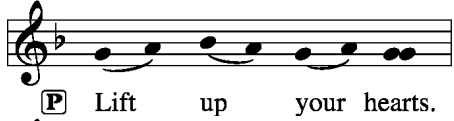
PREFACE AND PROPER PREFACE: *(We praise and thank God for what He does for us in the Lord's Supper).* LSB 160



P The Lord be with you.



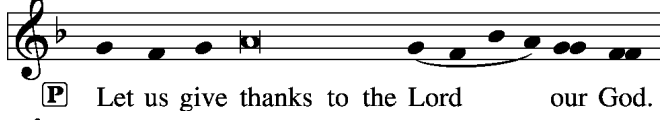
C And al - so with you.



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.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God. And most especially are we bound to praise You on this day for the glorious resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, the very Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us and bore the sins of the world. By His dying He has destroyed death, and by His rising again He has restored to us everlasting life. Therefore with Mary Magdalene, Peter and John, and with all the witnesses of the resurrection, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

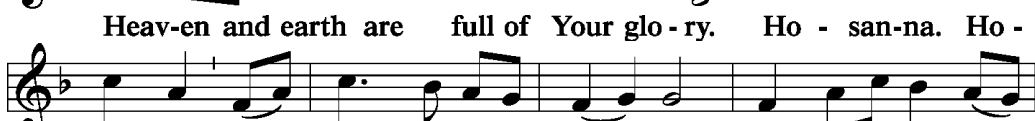
SANCTUS: *(Latin for "holy." Heaven joins earth as we cry out with the heavenly host to welcome our Savior Jesus).* LSB 161



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo-ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -



san-na. 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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: *(We thank God for His Son and ask Him to give us what He has promised).* LSB 161

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

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

C Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION *(Jesus tells us that He gives us His body and blood under the bread and the wine).* LSB 162

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: *(We pray the words that Jesus gave us to pray, trusting that our Father will hear and answer us).* LSB 162

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;

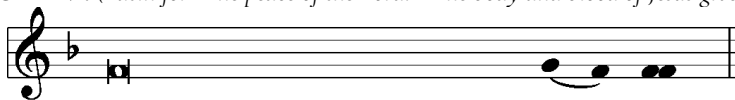
give us this day our daily bread;

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.



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



C A - men.



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.

Sit

Silent Prayer before Communing:

Dear Savior, at your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul at the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



1 Christ has a - ris - en, al - le - lu - ia.
 2 For three long days the grave did its worst
 3 The an - gel said to them, "Do not fear!
 4 "Go spread the news: He's not in the grave;
 5 Christ has a - ris - en; He sets us free;



Re - joice and praise Him, al - le - lu - ia.
 Un - til its strength by God was dis - persed.
 You look for Je - sus who is not here.
 He has a - ris - en this world to save.
 Al - le - lu - ia, to Him prais - es be.



For our Re - deem - er burst from the tomb,
 He who gives life did death un - der - go;
 See for your - selves the tomb is all bare;
 Je - sus' re - deem - ing la - bors are done;
 Je - sus is liv - ing! Let us all sing;



E - ven from death, dis - pel - ling its gloom.
 And in its con - quest His might did show.
 On - ly the grave cloths are ly - ing there."
 E - ven the bat - tle with sin is won."
 He reigns tri - um - phant, heav - en - ly King.

Refrain



Let us sing praise to Him with end - less joy;



Death's fear - ful sting He has come to de - stroy.



Our sin for - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!



Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

Abide with us, the day is waning

TLH 194 (sung to the tune of "By Grace I'm Saved")

1 "Abide with us, the day is waning,"
Thus prayed the two while on the way;
We read that Thou, O Lord, remaining,
Didst all their doubts and fears allay.
Incline Thine ear, Thou King of Grace,
When, praying thus, we seek Thy face.

2 At eventide, Thy Spirit sending,
Help us, O Lord, our watch to keep,
In prayer devout, before Thee bending,
Ere our eyelids close in sleep,
Confessing sin in deed and word
With hope of mercy from the Lord.

3 Abide with us; with heav'nly gladness
Illumine, Lord, our darkest day;
And when we weep in pain and sadness,
Be Thou our Solace, Strength, and Stay.
Tell of Thy woe, Thy vict'ry won,
When Thou didst pray: "Thy will be done."

4 Abide with us, O Savior tender,
That bitter day when life shall end,
When to the grave we must surrender,
And fear and pain our hearts shall rend.
The shield of faith do Thou bestow
When trembling we must meet the foe.

5 When earthly help no more availeth,
To sup with us Thou wilt be nigh;
Thou givest strength that never faileth,
In Thee we grave and death defy.
While earth is fading from our sight,
Our eyes behold the realms of light.

Abide with Me

LSB 878



1 A - bid e with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
2 I need Thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
3 Come not in ter - rors, as the King of kings,
4 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bid e.
What but Thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
But kind and good, with heal - ing in Thy wings;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
Who like Thy - self my guide and stay can be?
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev - 'ry plea.
Change and de - cay in all a - round I see;



Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, O a - bide with me.
 Come, Friend of sin - ners, thus a - bide with me.
 O Thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.

5 I fear no foe with Thee at hand to
 bless;
 Ills have no weight and tears no
 bitterness.
 Where is death's sting? Where,
 grave, thy victory?
 I triumph still if Thou abide with
 me!

6 Hold Thou Thy cross before my
 closing eyes;
 Shine through the gloom, and point
 me to the skies.
 Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's
 vain shadows flee;
 In life, in death, O Lord, abide with
 me.

Silent Prayer after Communing:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of my sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

Stand

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

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

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE: *(Having received Christ in the Sacrament, we give thanks and go forth in peace).*

Thank the Lord

LSB 164



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



Let all who seek 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: (*We thank God for what He has done and ask that it would show forth in our lives*).

P Let us pray.

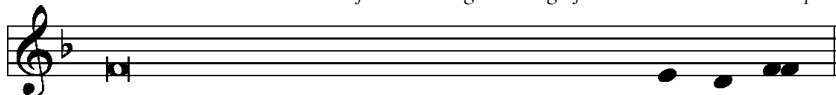
We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You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



C A - men.

BENEDICTION: (*The Divine Service ends just as it began. We go forth with God's name upon us*).

LSB 166



P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



C A - men.

Sit

CLOSING HYMN: *Awake, My Heart, with Gladness*

LSB 467



1 A - wake, my heart, with glad - ness, See what to - day is done;
2 The foe in tri - umph shout - ed When Christ lay in the tomb;
3 This is a sight that glad - dens—What peace it doth im - part!
4 Now hell, its prince, the dev - il, Of all their pow'r are shorn;



Now, af - ter gloom and sad - ness, Comes forth the glo - rious sun.
But lo, he now is rout - ed, His boast is turned to gloom.
Now noth - ing ev - er sad - dens The joy with - in my heart.
Now I am safe from e - vil, And sin I laugh to scorn.



My Sav - ior there was laid Where our bed must be made
For Christ a - gain is free; In glo - rious vic - to - ry
No gloom shall ev - er shake, No foe shall ev - er take
Grim death with all its might Can - not my soul af - fright;



When to the realms of light Our spir - it wings its flight.
He who is strong to save Has tri - umphed o'er the grave.
The hope which God's own Son In love for me has won.
It is a pow'r - less form, How - e'er it rave and storm.

5 The world against me rages,
Its fury I disdain;
Though bitter war it wages,
Its work is all in vain.
My heart from care is free,
No trouble troubles me.
Misfortune now is play,
And night is bright as day.

6 Now I will cling forever
To Christ, my Savior true;
My Lord will leave me never,
Whate'er He passes through.
He rends death's iron chain;
He breaks through sin and pain;
He shatters hell's grim thrall;
I follow Him through all.

7 He brings me to the portal
That leads to bliss untold,
Whereon this rhyme immortal
Is found in script of gold:
"Who there My cross has shared
Finds here a crown prepared;
Who there with Me has died
Shall here be glorified."

Silent Prayer After Worship

Almighty and merciful God, we have again worshiped in Your presence and received both forgiveness for our many sins and the assurance of Your love in Jesus Christ. We thank You for this undeserved grace and ask You to keep us in faith until we inherit eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

Text Background

Paul Gerhardt (1607-76) employs the pronouns "I" and "me" in many of his hymns and especially this month's hymn, "Awake, My Heart, with Gladness." He wants you to know that everything that Jesus does is for your sake and benefit. This is how we approach not only the whole church year, but especially the Easter season. The resurrection of Christ means that He is victorious over Satan, sin, death, and hell *for you*. He died for you, bearing your sins in His own body on the tree of the cross. He rose for you, breaking the shackles of death and bursting out of the grave. And now, there is no longer any charge against you, no more condemnation, no more sin or guilt in you. The devil and the world have no more power over you, because the resurrection of Christ from the dead is *your* resurrection.

Text Commentary

Stanza 1 & 2: "Today" we see what has been done. Our Savior was laid in the "grave-bed" that we all deserve because of our sin. He entered the darkness we must enter, taking on our flesh and blood so that "through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death" and free those enslaved by its fear (Heb. 2:14-15). It was then that the "foe in triumph shouted." But the gloom and sadness of Good Friday gave way to the glorious light of Easter morning. It was then that the foe's boast was "turned to gloom," for the One who is "strong to save has triumphed o'er the grave." Christ crushed the ancient serpent (Genesis 3:15) and cast out the ruler of this world (John 12:31) when He went and "disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame" (Col. 2:15) by His death and resurrection. Christ's victory means the night of sin and death is over. The battle is finished! Because Christ has gone before us, death has become the portal from the darkness of this life to God's eternal light. "The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended" (Isa. 60:20).

Stanzas 3, 4, & 5: "Peace" is the message Christ brings to his frightened disciples (John 20:21, 26) and to us. The God of hope fills us "with all joy and peace in believing" (Romans 15:13). Gerhardt makes some bold yet truthful claims about what this Easter message means:

- Nothing can ever "sadden" the "joy within my heart."
- No gloom or foe can ever "shake" or "take" the hope which Christ has won for me.
- I am "safe" from evil, I can "laugh" at sin, and I am not afraid of death since hell and the devil have been stripped of its power.
- I am "free" from care, "untroubled" by trouble, and "playful" with misfortune since the world's raging fury has been defeated and night has turned into day. Commenting on Psalm 50:15, Martin Luther wrote, "*All of the misfortunes we experience are nothing but a joyful game that God plays with us...the Father will gladly and quickly lend a hand.*"

We now sing with confidence, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Cor. 15:55). Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39). Therefore, we give thanks, for "God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

Stanzas 6 & 7: Faith clings to Christ above all things, trusting His promise: "I will never leave you nor forsake you." To belong to Him is to share His path, for we long "to know him and the power of his resurrection," and to "share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (Phil. 3:10). The Christian life is shaped by daily repentance, suffering, and endurance, yet always with this hope: "that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:11). Those who share Christ's death in Holy Baptism will also share His life (Romans 6:4), for the way of the cross leads to the throne. Christ promises, "The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne" (Rev. 3:21). Whoever dies with Christ will live and reign with Him forever.