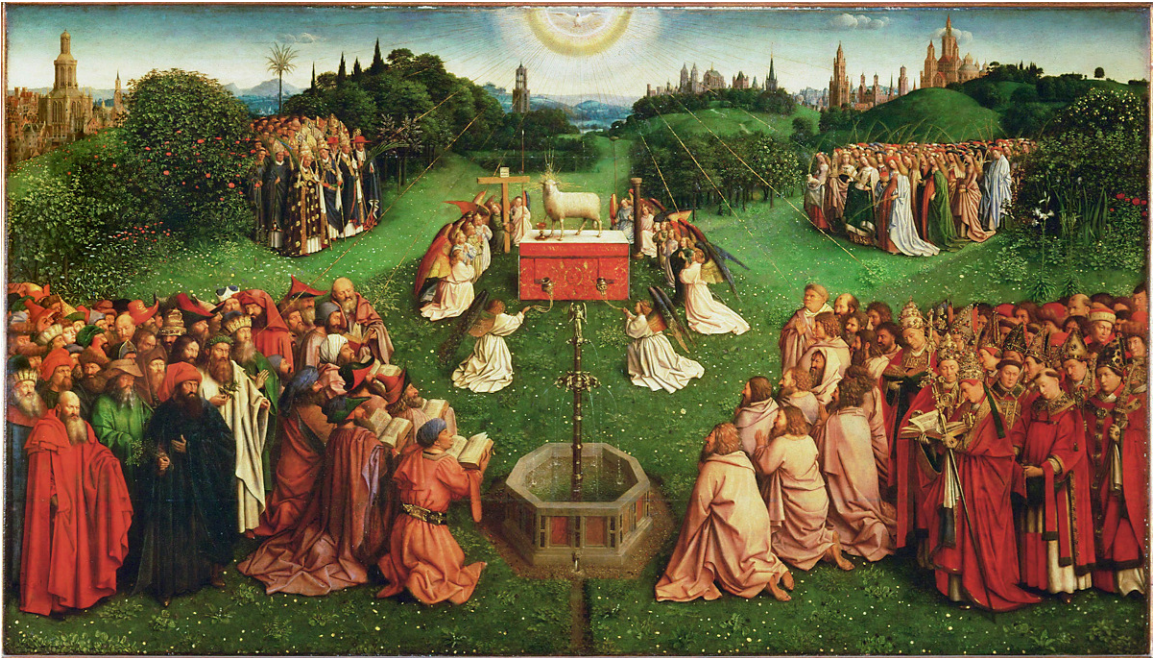


The Divine Service and Liturgy



Second Sunday after Pentecost

June 18, 2017

Welcome to our worship this morning. May God bless us all as we hear His Word, sing His praises, pray in the Spirit, and fellowship as His family. If you are visiting, please place a completed visitor card in the offering plate and sign our guest book. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

Thank you for silencing all electronic devices before entering the sanctuary.

A nursery/cry room is available if your little one needs private care during the service (the sound system is wired into that room).



The Lord's Supper is received in today's worship. Ascension Lutheran Church practices "close" communion—that is, we commune only with Lutherans with whom we are in full



doctrinal fellowship. If you're visiting with us, please speak first with the Pastor before communing. Thank you for respecting our position of love in this matter of pastoral care.

Those not communing may come to the table to receive a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest, so the Pastor will know.

The host is administered, followed by individual cups, then the common cup.

Welcome

Faith in Jesus Christ is created and sustained by God's service to us. God has always initiated relationship with and served mankind just as Jesus says, for "You did not choose Me, but I chose you" (Jn 15:16a), and "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28), and "If I do not wash you, you have no share with Me" (Jn 13:8b). In the Divine Service, Jesus meets with us in His Word and Sacrament unto forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation (SC, The Sacrament of the Altar). Worship is foremost not something we do for God but something God does for us; thus, "The life of a saint is more a taking from God than a giving" (AE 14:196). What we call "liturgy" is God's service to us, for as our Lutheran confessions state, "This word does not properly mean a sacrifice but rather public service" (Ap XXIV.80). The liturgy is an order of Scriptural texts, poems, creeds, hymns, and rituals whereby Jesus meets with us, so that we are not "a church with the liturgy" but "Christ's liturgical church," acknowledging that "God gives no one his Spirit apart from the external Word which goes before" (SA III.8.3). Today, each part of the Divine Service includes an introduction so that we might appreciate God's service—or liturgy—to us (note the Scripture reference subcaptions to the right of each part).

We begin with a Hymn of Invocation because "next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise" (AE 53:323). A "hymn" is a sung confession of the faith, for "I have no one to sing and chant about but Christ, in whom alone I have everything. Him alone I proclaim, in Him alone I glory, for He has become my salvation, that is, my victory" (AE 16:129). Proper hymnody is the living voice of the gospel and a means through which the Holy Spirit is given. Through hymnody, which became a vehicle to the congregation singing the liturgy, the 16th-century Lutheran Reformation unshackled the western church laity from centuries of nonparticipation.

Confession and Absolution

Hymn of Invocation: 916, "Only-Begotten, Word of God Eternal"

Our Lord says, "In every place where I cause My name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you" (Ex 20:24), and "where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them" (Mt 18:20). In the Old Testament, God placed His name at the temple (2 Ch 7:16). In the New Testament, God places His name on the baptized, whose bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19; 1 Cor 6:19). Hence, we begin worship by invoking the Triune name into which we were baptized. The Invocation also mirrors the Trinitarian beginning to Jesus' visible ministry when, in the assembly of the synagogue, "He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me'" (Lk 4:17b-18a).

The congregation responds to the Invocation with "Amen," which means, "yes, yes, it shall be so" (SC, Lord's Prayer Conclusion). Every congregational response of "Amen" throughout the liturgy is an affirmation of the pastor's words. The individual response of "Amen" after hearing that the bread and wine is the true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is especially significant as a confession of belief in the words, "This is My body... this cup is the new testament in My blood."

Stand

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. *Mt 28:19b*

C **Amen.**

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

The reflection on God's Word, self-examination, and confession of sins prepares hearts to receive God's forgiveness. It is to admit the truth that "They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one" (Ps 14:3), that "Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins" (Ecc 7:20), that "we are not sinners because we commit this or that sin, but we commit them because we are sinners first" (AE 12:348). It is to agree with God's just verdict that we have sinned against Him and deserve only death, hell, and condemnation (Ps 51:4). Yet the truth of our sin is answered with the truth of God's forgiveness on account of the death of Jesus Christ when "we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven" (SC, Confession; Jn 20:19-23).

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

Ps 124:8

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Ps 32:5

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

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

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

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

Service of the Word

Having received God's forgiveness, the liturgy continues with the Introit, derived from the Latin for "he enters" (Ps 100). Its origin is the recitation of psalms that provided the theme for synagogue worship. It consists of a psalm verse, the Gloria Patri, and an antiphon. The Gloria Patri distinguishes the use of the psalms by the New Testament Church from that of the synagogue. The Introit is the first proper of the liturgy, meaning that it changes from week to week to inform the church year (Introit, Collect, Gradual, readings, etc.).

Introit

Ps 67:4–7; antiphon: Ps 67:3

Let the peoples praise you, | O God;*

let all the peoples | praise you!

Let the nations be glad and | sing for joy,*

for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations up- | on earth.

Let the peoples praise you, | O God;*

let all the peoples | praise you!

The earth has yielded its | increase;*

God, our God, shall | bless us.

God shall | bless us;*

let all the ends of the earth | fear him!

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.


Let the peoples praise you, | O God;*

let all the peoples | praise you!

The Kyrie, which is Greek for "Lord," calls upon God for the mercy announced in the Introit. The prayer is sung three times, thereby asking for mercy from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit. The Kyrie is the first of five ordinaries in the liturgy, meaning that it does not change during the church year (Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Creed, Sanctus, Agnus Dei).

Kyrie

Mk 10:47

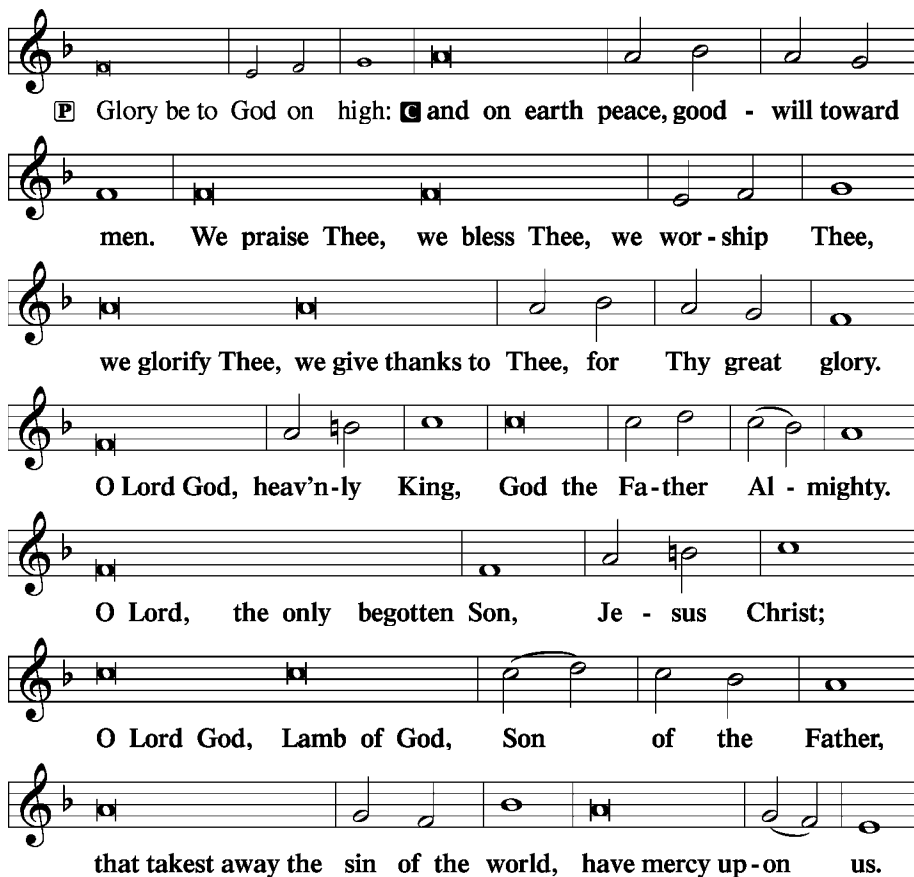


☐ Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The Gloria in Excelsis is one of the oldest morning hymns of the church, written by the 4th century and perhaps as early as the 2nd century. It borrows John the Baptist's witness and serves as the greater doxology to the Gloria Patri, continuing God's liturgy for "the sin of the world" by revealing "Jesus Christ, Lamb of God."

Gloria in Excelsis

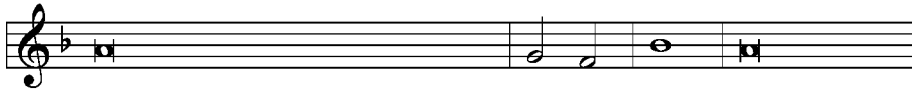
Lk 2:14; Jn 1:29



☐ Glory be to God on high: **☐** and on earth peace, good - will toward
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heav'n - ly King, God the Fa - ther Al - mighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.



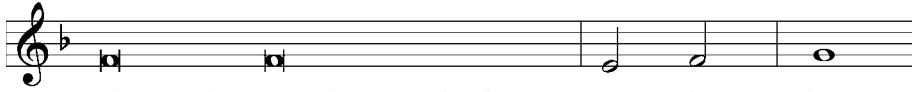
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.



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



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



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



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

In the Salutation, the pastor prays for the Lord's presence with the congregation while the congregation prays for the pastor in Christ's ministry of the Service of the Word. The Collect "collects" the thoughts of the upcoming Scripture readings into a single prayer.

Salutation and Collect of the Day



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

2 Ti 4:22



P Let us pray.

P Almighty, eternal God, in the Word of Your apostles and prophets You have proclaimed to us Your saving will. Grant us faith to believe Your promises that we may receive eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Sit

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 29:38–46

“Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. And with the first lamb a tenth seah of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD. It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

G **Thanks be to God.**

The Gradual is a psalm meditation on the first reading. Its name derives from the Latin for “step” because it was originally chanted after ascending before the altar.

Gradual

Ps 145:3, 5b, 6b

Great is the LORD, and greatly | to be praised,*
 and his greatness is un- | searchable.
 On your wondrous works, I will | meditate,*
 and I will declare your | greatness.

Epistle: Hebrews 10:19–25

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good

works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

"Alleluia" comes from the Hebrew "Hallelujah," which means, "Praise the Lord" (Rev 19:1-6). Because it is an expression of joy, it is omitted during the penitential season of Lent, also heightening the exuberance of the Easter season. We stand for the Holy Gospel to give honor to the historical life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in whom all things are fulfilled (Mt 5:17).

Stand

Alleluia



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

Holy Gospel: John 4:16–24

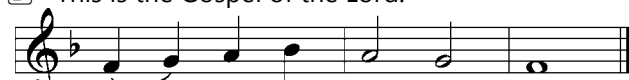
P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourth chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

The word "creed" derives from the Latin for "I believe"; hence, a creed is a statement of what one believes. We confess an epitome of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for "with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved" (Rom 10:10). The form and content of the Apostles' Creed was compiled as early as the 2nd century to combat false teaching. Thereafter, it became a confession of faith in the rite of holy baptism. Each of the three ancient creeds (the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian) simply repeat what God has said to us in Scripture.



But in learning the Faith and in professing it, acquire and keep that only, which is now delivered to you by the Church, and which has been built up strongly out of all the Scriptures. ...in order that the soul may not perish from ignorance, we comprise the whole doctrine of the Faith in a few lines. This summary I wish you both to commit to memory when I recite it, and to rehearse it with all diligence among yourselves, not writing it out on paper, but engraving it by the memory upon your heart...

—Cyril of Jerusalem (313-386), *Catechetical Orations* V.12

Apostles' Creed

**☩ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

*Rom 10:10; 2 Cor 6:18
Ge 1:1*

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.**

*Jn 1:14, 18; 3:16; 20:28
Mt 1:18; Lk 1:35
Mt 1:18; Lk 1:34
Jn 19:1, 15-16; 1 Ti 6:13
1 Cor 15:3-4
1 Pet 3:19*

The third day He rose again from the dead.

Lk 24:5-7

He ascended into heaven

Lk 24:51

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

Mk 16:19; 1 Pet 3:22

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

Acts 10:42; 2 Ti 4:1

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.**

*Ge 1:2; Jn 14:26
Acts 20:28
1 Cor 11:23-26
Mt 26:27; Lk 24:47; Jn 20:23; Acts 2:38
Acts 24:15; 1 Cor 15:12-13
Mt 25:46; Jn 12:50; Rev 22:20*

Sit

Hymn of the Day: 556, "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice"

The Offering is a time for faith to perform a good work, where "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). It is not a time to atone for sin or earn favor before God, because Jesus Christ alone can accomplish and has accomplished these things. Yet the reception of God's richest gift constrains us to give Him what we can for the continued proclamation of His gospel and administration of His sacraments.

Offering and Record of Fellowship

Hymn: 895, "Now Thank We All Our God"

The Sharing of the Peace invites the congregation to greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, "Peace be with you," as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Mt 5:22-24; Eph 4:1-3). It is an opportunity to forgive each other as the Lord has forgiven you before receiving His body and blood (Col 3:13). Its origin is the "holy kiss" (Rom 16:6; 1 Pet 5:14).



But we, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptized person, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss.

—Justin Martyr (100-165), Apology 65

Sharing of the Peace

Gathered in Jesus' name (Jn 16:26-27), we speak communal petitions. This prayer is called the Prayer of the Church because in it the royal priesthood of the baptized makes "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" (1 Ti 2:1-2).

Prayer of the Church

- P** Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
- P** For the Church, that she would faithfully continue the work of the apostles, and that God would bless her every effort to enlarge His flock, let us pray to the Lord:
- G Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those called to be fathers, that God would strengthen and preserve their faith so that they may be well equipped to lead and teach their households, let us pray to the Lord:
- G Lord, have mercy.**

P For the president of the United States, for the governor of our state and for all who make, administer and judge our laws, that God grant them health and prosperity and grace to govern according to His good pleasure, to the hindrance and punishment of wickedness, that we may lead peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For laborers for the harvest, that God would continue to call faithful pastors to the ministry and let them heed His calling, that they may be blessed in their training and sustained in their vocation, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who are sick and suffering, that God would look with compassion upon His servants who are facing mental or physical illness, surgery, pain, loneliness or grief, especially Albert, Lorene, JoAnn, Gary, Bob, Judie, Amanda, Brian, Ray, Brian, Cari, Bertha, Shirley, Mike, Jane, Gary, Sandra, Toni, Chandler, John, and Shirley, that they may be reminded that they are not facing these things alone and be comforted with the hope of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who receive the good gifts of the Lord's Supper, that with repentant hearts they would receive the true body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for the strengthening of their faith and to the benefit of their neighbor, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

The Eucharistic Prayer, comprised of the Common and Proper Prefaces, is prayed before receiving Jesus' body and blood. The Common Preface is almost the oldest part of the liturgy, dating to at least the mid-2nd century. It includes another Salutation, this time for the pastor in Christ's ministry of the Service of the Sacrament. The lifting up of hearts "does not lead minds away from the table which has been spread... [for] we consider not only those things which are apparent to the senses but in accordance with the Word hold that Christ Himself with His body and blood is present at the table" (LS X.D). A thanksgiving for Christ's gracious gift of body and blood precedes the Proper Preface. Because the Proper Preface varies according to church season, we can trace its origin to the 4th century, when the church year was first given form. The Eucharistic Prayer's conclusion confesses

the belief that where Jesus is, there is heaven and his saints communing simultaneously with us. The conclusion also leads into the Sanctus, which is Latin for "holy." The first half of the Sanctus is heaven's hymn of praise made by the angels in Isaiah's vision, likely sung in worship by Jesus Himself; the second half is earth's hymn of praise made by mankind at Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem and appended by the New Testament Church. Together they show "heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory," for God has become man and comes again to his people under bread and wine.

Preface

2 Ti 4:22; Col 3:1; Ps 136



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them up un - to the Lord.



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



C It is meet and right so to do.

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

Sanctus

Is 6:3; Mt 21:9



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



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



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



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



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

In the Lord's Prayer, "God takes the initiative and puts into our mouths the very words and approach we are to use. In this way we see how deeply concerned He is about our needs, and we should never doubt that such prayer pleases Him and will assuredly be heard... [for] there is no nobler prayer to be found on earth." (LC III.22-23). As baptized children of God (Jn 1:12; 3:3-5), we come before our heavenly Father in prayer, for "With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father" (SC, Lord's Prayer Introduction). The Didache, written in the late 1st century, locates the Lord's Prayer just before the Lord's Supper.



Already [Jesus] had foretold that the hour was coming when the true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth; and He thus fulfilled what He before promised, so that we who by His sanctification have received the Spirit and truth, may also by His teaching worship truly and spiritually. For what can be a more spiritual prayer than that which was given to us by Christ, by whom also the Holy Spirit was given to us? What praying to the Father can be more truthful than that which was delivered to us by the Son who is the Truth, out of His own mouth?

—Cyprian of Carthage (200-258), *Treatise IV.2*

Lord's Prayer

Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4

Ⓐ Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

Ⓒ **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.

The oldest part of the liturgy is the Lord's Supper, whereby God serves us by giving His Son's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus "instituted His Holy Supper as a certain assurance and confirmation... that also in the nature according to which He has flesh and blood He wants to be with us, to dwell in us, to work in us, and to exert His power for us" (SD VIII.79). The body and blood of Jesus are truly present through the power of his Word, for "if you take the Word away from the elements or view them apart from the Word, you have nothing but ordinary bread and wine. But if the words remain, as is right and necessary, then by virtue of them the elements are truly the body and blood of Christ. For as Christ's lips speak and say, so it is; He cannot lie or deceive" (LC V.14). Like the Absolution, it is not merely the pastor speaking but Christ speaking through the pastor. The Words of our Lord are spoken for three reasons: 1) to obey Christ's command; 2) to strengthen the faith of the hearers; and 3) to consecrate the elements of bread and wine (SD VII.80-82).

The Words of Our Lord

Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25

The Peace of the Lord is the greeting of our risen Lord to His people who will approach the altar and receive His body and blood. It also serves as an absolution by declaring God's peace with mankind.



Then [Jesus] greets them again, using his customary words, that is, "Peace be with you." In so doing he is laying down a law, as it were, on this point for the children of the church. That is why in the holy gatherings we say this to one another at the beginning of the mystery. After all, being at peace with one another and with God should be understood to be the fountain, as it were, and beginning of every good thing.

—Cyril of Alexandria (376-444), *Commentary on John XII.1.129*

Pax Domini

Jn 20:19



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



C A - men.

The Agnus Dei was written in the 6th century, making it the latest ordinary included in the liturgy. It continues God's revelation from the Gloria in Excelsis before receiving the body and blood of the Lamb of God unto forgiveness, for "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 Jn 1:7b).

Agnus Dei

Jn 1:29



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



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



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



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



world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sit

The Lord's Supper is the culmination of the Divine Service and Christian life in this age. It is received by the baptized who confess the bodily presence of Jesus Christ under the bread (Ap X.2), for

“anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself” (1 Cor 11:29). Thus, “we must take the words just as they stand, making no change and letting the bread be the body of Christ” (AE 40:158), so that “in the Supper we eat and take to ourselves Christ’s body truly and physically. But how this takes place or how He is in the bread, we do not know and are not meant to know. God’s Word we should believe without setting bounds or measure to it. The bread we see with our eyes, but we hear with our ears that Christ’s body is present” (AE 37:28). The Lord’s Supper is pure gospel, received in faith unto the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, where “With the very substance of His body and blood [Jesus] joins as closely as possible to Himself not only the soul but also the very bodies of those who eat” (LS V). In the words, “Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you,” and, “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,” we hear Jesus at the height of God’s liturgy, for the Lord’s Supper is not something we give or do but something God gives and does for us (LC V.7).

- Distribution Hymn: 633, “At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”**
617, “O Lord, We Praise Thee”
639, “Wide Open Stand the Gates”

Stand

The Nunc Dimittis derives its name from the first words of its Latin version, “Now you dismiss.” It declares the gospel of Jesus Christ that is for “all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.” For this reason, it was traditionally an evening canticle. However, as the song of Simeon who saw salvation in the infant Jesus, it was appropriately added after the Lord’s Supper for those who see salvation under the bread and wine through eyes of faith. It also accords with Jesus and His apostles, who “sung a hymn” after the Last Supper (Mt 26:30).

Nunc Dimittis

Lk 2:29–32

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-
cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,



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



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



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



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

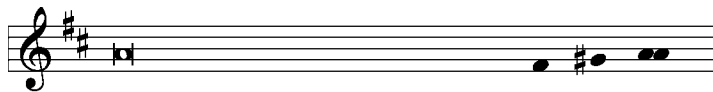


is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

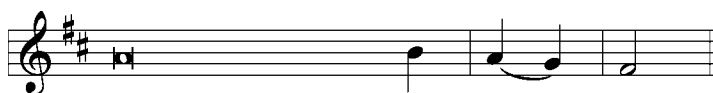
Just as we give thanks for receiving earthly food, so we give thanks for the greater heavenly food that is Jesus Christ Himself, for He said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh. ...Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on Me, he also will live because of Me" (Jn 6:51, 54-57).

Thanksgiving

Ps 107:1



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



B and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

A Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and 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.



A - men.

God's liturgy draws to a close with a final Salutation, a blessing (Ps 89:52), and the Benediction. The Benediction, along with the Invocation, frames the Divine Service in the Triune name (Nu 6:27). In this baptismal name we were gathered and in this baptismal name we go into the world as "living sacrifices" (Rom 12:1). Here God speaks through the pastor a threefold blessing upon His people: the first blessing offers God's watchful protection; the second announces God's favor on account of Jesus Christ; and the third ends God's service in the divine peace that is absolution. The congregation responds with a threefold "Amen," thereby acknowledging each person of the Trinity and each blessing from the Lord.

Salutation and Benedicamus



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



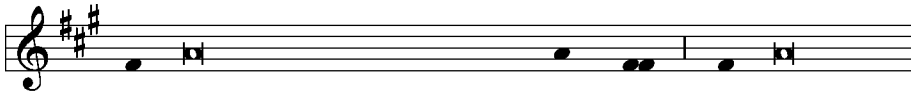
A Bless we the Lord.



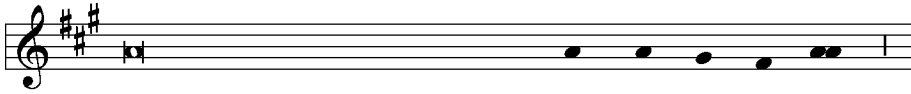
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

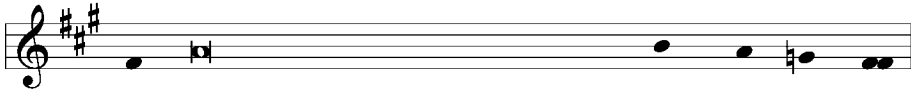
Nu 6:24–26



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



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



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



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

Closing Hymn: 941, “We Praise You and Acknowledge You, O God”

Acknowledgments

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Abbreviations:

- AE Martin Luther’s Works, American Edition
- Ap Apology of the Augsburg Confession (Book of Concord)
- LC Large Catechism (Book of Concord)
- LS Martin Chemnitz, The Lord’s Supper
- SA Smalcald Articles (Book of Concord)
- SC Small Catechism (Book of Concord)
- SD Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord (Book of Concord)

For more information regarding the Divine Service:

An Explanation of the Common Service. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Emmanuel Press, 2006.

Just, Arthur A., Jr. *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service.* St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 2008.

Excerpts on worship and liturgy:

Viva vox Jesu—the living voice of Jesus—is what we hear when His Word is read and preached. The Word of Jesus is both a written and an oral word. This Word, though written in words inspired and canonically received, is also spoken and heard within a community called the Body of Christ. This voice is a living voice, for by it Jesus Christ is present for us bodily.

This Word comes from the Word made flesh, a Word that has creative power—power to cast out demons, heal the sick, raise the dead, and release us from our sins. With the Old Testament saints, we acknowledge that God’s Word is God’s food for hungry pilgrims who have journeyed in Christ through a baptism of His death and resurrection toward the final destination of full communion with Him in heaven.

—Arthur A. Just, Jr. in *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service*



Different rites instituted by human beings do not undermine the true unity of the church, although it pleases us when universal rites are kept for the sake of tranquility. Thus, in our churches we willingly observe the order of the Mass, the Lord’s day, and other more important festival days. With a very grateful spirit we cherish the useful and ancient ordinances, especially when they contain a discipline by which it is profitable to educate and teach.

—Ap VII/VIII.33



Songs of praise are a form of corporate teaching and preaching. This has, I fear, been forgotten in many parts of the church today. When modern Christians speak of praise, they, at least if they have been influenced by the charismatic movement, identify praise, by and large, with either thanksgiving or adoration, which are quite properly addressed to God and spoken to him. Yet the psalms, the Scriptures as a whole, and our Lutheran tradition hold that we speak to each other when we praise God. We do not sing Hallelujah to the Lord but to each other. When we praise the triune God, we address each other and tell one another how good he is. Our song of praise, then, is the corporate proclamation of the gospel by the congregation in the very presence of the living God.

Now God's grace is so wonderful and rich that mere prose and plain human language are quite incapable of adequately and comprehensively communicating his goodness. The mystery of his gracious presence with us in the body and blood of our Lord Jesus is best announced and best proclaimed in full-bodied, wholehearted, corporate praise. The marriage of poetry and music in the song of the whole church alone suffices to preach the gospel to the world in a way that leaps across the normal barriers of communication and reaches the very heart of the hearer. Hymnody therefore, as Luther and Watts and the Wesley brothers knew so well, serves to teach the gospel vivaciously in the congregation, even as it preaches Christ liturgically to all creation. That, by the way, is why we have so many hymns in our hymnals which speak about God in the third person, like 'Now Thank We All Our God.' Have you noticed how unfashionable they have become, and how few are to be found in most modern collections of songs for public worship? This means that a whole dimension of praise has almost become completely lost.

—John Kleinig in *Singing with Grace in Our Hearts*



It looks as if [innovative clergy] believed people can be lured to go to church by incessant brightenings, lightnings, lengthenings, abridgements, simplifications, and complications of the service. And it is probably true that a new, keen vicar will usually be able to form within his parish a minority who are in favour of his innovations. The majority, I believe, never are. Those who remain—many give up churchgoing altogether—merely endure.

Is it simply because the majority are hide-bound? I think not. They have a good reason for their conservatism. Novelty, simply as such, can have only an entertainment value. And they don't go to church to be entertained. They go to use the service, or, if you prefer, to enact it. Every service is a structure of acts and words through which we receive a sacrament, or repent, or supplicate, or adore. And it enables us to do these things best—if you like, it 'works' best—when, through long familiarity, we don't have to think about it. As long as you notice, and have to count, the steps, you are not yet dancing but only learning to dance. A good shoe is a shoe you don't notice. Good reading becomes possible when you need not consciously think about eyes, or light, or print, or spelling. The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.

But every novelty prevents this. It fixes our attention on the service itself; and thinking about the worship is a different thing from worshipping. The important question about the Grail was "for what does it serve?" "'Tis mad idolatry that makes the service greater than the god."

—C. S. Lewis in *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*



The church, when it's not seduced by consumerist spirituality, is in the business of cultivating ordinary Christians, people who are united to Christ by faith and are in it for the long

haul, like people in a good marriage. It transforms people, not by giving them life-changing experiences but by repetition, continually telling the story of Christ so that people may hear and take hold of him by faith. For we do not just receive Christ by faith once at the beginning of our Christian lives and then go on to do the real work of transformation through our good works. We keep needing Christ the way hungry people need bread, and we keep receiving him whenever we hear the gospel preached and believe it. So what transforms us over the long haul is not one or two great life-changing sermons (although these can be helpful from time to time) but the repeated teaching and preaching of Christ, Sunday after Sunday, so that we never cease receiving him into our hearts.

The word for this nurturing repetitiveness in the ancient churches is liturgy. More modern churches are not so good at this kind of nurture, but you can recognize what it's like if you love Christmas carols. Every year we wait for months for the time when we get to sing the same old songs again, with the same old words that feed our hearts. That's the essence of liturgy: the ever-repeated experience of hearing the gospel of Christ in joy, which forms our hearts in Christian faithfulness.

...So what the church is doing, when it keeps preaching the same old gospel to produce ordinary Christian lives, is profoundly countercultural. It is a form of resistance to our culture of ever-shifting images, ever-changing desires for ever new stuff, and an ever-transforming self that's always getting a spiritual makeover. What the consumerist churches understand is that they must compete for attention with all the flashy electronic media, the sensory overload and distraction of a vast and sophisticated technology of entertainment. But when they fight fire with fire, worshiping in front of giant TV screens and offering life-changing experiences with every new program, they can only win on consumerism's own terms: competing for short attention spans rather than developing lasting attachments, offering new experiences and a multitude of choices rather than forming the heart in one enduring pattern of faith, hope, and love.

—Phillip Cary in *Good News for Anxious Christians*



Ceremonies should be observed both so that people may learn the Scriptures and so that, admonished by the Word, they might experience faith and fear and finally even pray.

...As a matter of course, theologians rightly distinguish between a sacrament and a sacrifice. Therefore, the genus that includes both of these could be either a "ceremony" or a "sacred work." A sacrament is a ceremony or work in which God presents to us what the promise joined to the ceremony offers. Thus baptism is not a work that we offer to God, but one in which God, through a minister who functions in his place, baptizes us, and offers and presents the forgiveness of sins, etc., according to the promise [Mark 16:16], "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved." By contrast, a sacrifice is a ceremony or work that we render to God in order to give him honor.

—Ap XXIV.3, 17-18

About the cover:

The Ghent (Belgium) Altarpiece is a 15th-century Early Flemish polyptych in St. Bavo's Cathedral, attributed to the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck, and considered a masterpiece of European art. Measuring 134.3 x 237.5 cm (4.4 x 7.8 ft), the center panel displays the Lamb of God standing on an altar in a verdant meadow. The foreground includes an octagonal fountain—a shape typical for early church baptismal fonts and representing the new creation (resurrection) on the eighth day. The meadow is framed by trees and bushes with Jerusalem's spires in the background. The iconography, suggested by the groupings of the figures, appears to follow the liturgy of All Saints' Day. The altar is flanked by seven angels on each side, some holding symbols of Christ's Passion (e.g., cross, crown of thorns), and two swinging censers. The Lamb has a wound on its breast from which blood pours into a golden chalice, conveying the source of the Sacrament of the Altar (Jn 19:34). The Lamb shows no outward expression of pain, depicting Christ's steadfastness in sacrifice. The antependium on the upper portion of the altar front is inscribed with the words from Jn 1:29: *ECCE AGNUS DEI QUI TOLLIT PECCATA MUNDI*, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." The lappets bear the phrases *IHESUS VIA* and *VERITAS VITA*, "Jesus the Way" and "the Truth, the Life." A dove, characterizing the Holy Spirit, hovers above the Lamb. The emanating rays were painted by van Eyck over the finished landscape, serving to illuminate the scene in a celestial, supernatural light. The light does not give reflection or throw shadow, portraying the New Jerusalem that "has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rev 21:23). The dove and the Lamb are positioned on the same axis as God the Father in the panel directly above (not shown), thereby proclaiming the Trinity.

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