

343 Prepare the Royal Highway



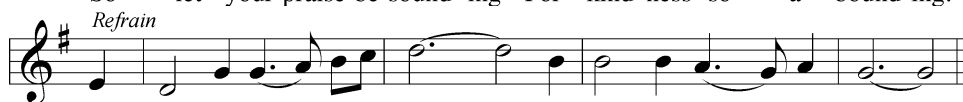
1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see Him com - ing: Your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore Him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands, bow down be - fore Him! All na - tions, now a - dore Him!
So let your praise be sound - ing For kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt.
Tune: Swedish, 17th cent.
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Confession and Absolution

Please stand as you are able. 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

- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.
- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- C** **who made heaven and earth.**
- P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
- C** **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

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

Confession of Sins

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

Absolution

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

Sharing the Peace

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

Service of the Word

Kyrie

sung by soloist - LSB 942, LSB 943 (stanza 2), LSB 942 (public domain)

Salutation and Collect of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

- P** Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

- C** Amen.

Please be seated.

Verse of the Month

- P** Our service continues as we speak our Verse of the Month from First Thessalonians, chapter five, verse twenty-three.
- C** **Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)**

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:1–11

¹Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;

lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Behold your God!”
¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Psalmody

Psalm 85:1-13

- P** LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
- C** You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin. Selah
- P** You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.
- C** Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!
- P** Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations? Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?
- C** Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation. Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.
- P** Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.
- C** Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.
- P** Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.
- C** 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.

Epistle

2 Peter 3:8-14

⁸But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able out of respect for the reading of the Holy Gospel.

Holy Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

- P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the first chapter.
- C** Glory to You, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,

³the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight, ’”

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles’ Creed

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

**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.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**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.**

Please be seated.

Sermon

344 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc - es
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; Make straight the
 3 We hail Thee as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our ref - uge
 4 Lay on the sick Thy heal - ing hand And make the
 △ 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to Thee Whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - ken,
 way for God with - in, And let us all our
 and our great re - ward; With - out Thy grace we
 fall - en strong to stand; Show us the glo - ry
 sets Thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 of Thy face Till beau - ty springs in ev - 'ry place.
 we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite
 Tune: adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621
 Text and tune: Public domain

Please stand as you are able.

Prayer of the Church

P Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend [name(s)] and all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P And lastly, O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

Please be seated.

Service of the Sacrament

Please stand as you are able.

Preface

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P The Lord be with you.

C **And also 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, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Grant us Your Spirit, gracious Father, that we may give heed to the testament of Your Son in true faith and, above all, firmly take to heart the words with which Christ gives to us His body and blood for our forgiveness. By Your grace, lead us to remember and give thanks for the boundless love which He manifested to us when, by pouring out His precious blood, He saved us from Your righteous wrath and from sin, death, and hell. Grant that we may receive the bread and wine, that is, His body and blood, as a gift, guarantee, and pledge of His salvation. 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.**

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.**

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."

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

434 Lamb of God, Pure and Holy

sts. 1, 3

1 Lamb of God, pure and ho - ly, Who on the cross didst suf - fer,
 3 Lamb of God, pure and ho - ly, Who on the cross didst suf - fer,
 Ev - er pa - tient and low - ly, Thy - self to scorn didst of - fer.
 Ev - er pa - tient and low - ly, Thy - self to scorn didst of - fer.
 All sins Thou bor - est for us, Else had de - spair reigned o'er us:
 All sins Thou bor - est for us, Else had de - spair reigned o'er us:
 Have mer - cy on us, O Je - sus! O Je - sus!
 Thy peace be with us, O Je - sus! O Je - sus!

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941
 Text and tune: Nicolaus Decius, c. 1485–after 1546
 Text and tune: Public domain

Please be seated.

Distribution

The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first and then distribute them to those who come to receive, saying:

Distribution

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Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.
Amen.

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.
Amen.

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

Dismissal Statement

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

347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People



1 "Com - fort, com - fort ye My peo - ple, Speak ye peace," thus
2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, Blot - ting out each
3 Hark, the her - ald's voice is cry - ing In the des - ert
4 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed; Make the rough - er



saith our God; "Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, Mourn - ing
dark mis - deed; All that well de - served His an - ger He no
far and near, Call - ing sin - ners to re - pen - tance, Since the
plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be -



'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem
more will see or heed. She hath suf - fered man - y a day,
King - dom now is here. O that warn - ing cry o - bey!
fits His ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



Of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her
Now her griefs have passed a - way; God will change her
Now pre - pare for God a way; Let the val - leys
Now o'er earth is shed a - broad, And all flesh shall



sins I cov - er And her war - fare now is o - ver."
pin - ing sad - ness In - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.
see the to - ken That His Word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann Olearius, 1611-84; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.
Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois
Text and tune: Public domain

620 Jesus Comes Today with Healing



1 Je - sus comes to - day with heal - ing, Knock - ing at my
 2 Christ Him - self, the priest pre - sid - ing, Yet in bread and
 3 Un - der bread and wine, though low - ly, I re - ceive the
 4 God de - scends with heav'n - ly pow - er, Gives Him - self to



door, ap - peal - ing, Of - f'ring par - don, grace, and peace.
 wine a - bid - ing In this ho - ly sac - ra - ment,
 Sav - ior ho - ly, Blood and bod - y, giv'n for me,
 me this hour In this or - di - nar - y sign.



He Him - self makes prep - a - ra - tion, And I hear His
 Gives the bread of life, once bro - ken, And the cup, the
 Ver - y Lamb of God from heav - en, Who to bit - ter
 On my tongue His pledge re - ceiv - ing, I ac - cept His



in - vi - ta - tion: "Come and taste the bless - ed feast."
 pre - cious to - ken Of His sa - cred cov - e - nant.
 death was giv - en, Hung up - on the curs - ed tree.
 grace, be - liev - ing That I taste His love di - vine.

5 Let me praise God's boundless favor,
 Whose own feast of love I savor,
 Bidden by His gracious call.
 Wedding garments He provides me,
 With a robe of white He hides me,
 Fits me for the royal hall.

6 Now have I found consolation,
 Comfort in my tribulation,
 Balm to heal the troubled soul.
 God, my shield from ev'ry terror,
 Cleanses me from sin and error,
 Makes my wounded spirit whole.

Text: Heinrich Puchta, 1808-58; tr. David W. Rogner, 1960
 Tune: Johann Löhner, 1645-1705; adapt. Johann Balthasar König, 1691-1758
 Text: © David W. Rogner. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110002260
 Tune: Public domain

632 O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee



1 O Je - sus, bless - ed Lord, to Thee My heart - felt
 2 Break forth, my soul, for joy and say: What wealth is



thanks for - ev - er be, Who hast so lov - ing -
 come to me this day! My Sav - ior dwells with -



ly be - stowed On me Thy bod - y and Thy blood.
 in my heart: How blessed am I! How good Thou art!

Text: Thomas Hansen Kingo, 1634-1703; tr. Arthur J. Mason, 1851-1928
 Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois
 Text and tune: Public domain

Post-Communion Collect

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 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 Amen.

Benedicamus

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

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

C Amen.

Please be seated.

346 When All the World Was Cursed



1 When all the world was cursed By Mo-ses' con-dem-na-tion,
2 Be-fore he yet was born, He leaped in joy-ful meet-ing,
3 Be-hold the Lamb of God That bears the world's trans-gres-sion,
4 O grant, dear Lord of love, That we re-ceive, re-joic-ing,



Saint John the Bap-tist came With words of con-so-la-tion.
Con-fess-ing Him as Lord Whose moth-er he was greet-ing.
Whose sac-ri-fice re-moves The dev-il's dread op-pres-sion.
The word pro-claimed by John, Our true re-pen-tance voic-ing,



With true fore-run-ner's zeal The great-er One he named,
By Jor-dan's roll-ing stream, A new E-li-jah bold,
Be-hold the Lamb of God, Who takes a-way our sin,
That glad-ly we may walk Up-on our Sav-ior's way



And Him, as yet un-known, As Sav-ior he pro-claimed.
He tes-ti-fied of Him Of whom the proph-ets told:
Who for our peace and joy Will full a-tone-ment win.
Un-til we live with Him In His e-ter-nal day.

Text: Johann Gottfried Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Paul E. Kretzmann, 1883–1965, alt.
Tune: Ahasverus Fritsch, 1629–1701
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