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Affiliation: Church of the Lutheran Confession

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WELCOME: *To all who are present today, we offer a heart-felt welcome in Jesus' name.*

Today's Theme: *Our service this evening assures our hearts that the entire span of the world and of our individual lives is in the good keeping of God's hands. In His Son, our Lord Jesus, whom He sent into the world, we find acceptance before our God so that we need not fear either this world or death. God's favor is toward those who trust in the name of Jesus for forgiveness, life, and salvation.*

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER: *We ask the Lord's blessings on our worship.*

HYMN: #123 (vv. 1-3)

"Our God, Our Help, In Ages Past"

**Our God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal Home!**

**Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.**

**Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.**

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Cong: (spoken) Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Make haste, O Lord, to deliver me.

Cong: Make haste to help me, O Lord.

Pastor: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love.

Cong: According to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Pastor: Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.

Cong: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Pastor: For You will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; You will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

Cong: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Pastor: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Cong: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise.

GLORY TO GOD: *From All that Dwell Below the Skies*

From all that dwell below the skies

Let the Creator's praise arise;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let the Redeemer's name be sung

Thro' ev'ry land, by every tongue.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Eternal are Thy mercies, Lord;

Eternal truth attends Thy Word;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,

Till suns shall rise and set no more.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Amen.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Pastor: Almighty God, in whose hands our times are held and by whom the preappointed times and the boundaries of our dwellings have been established, we give thanks to You for this time of grace in which we stand, and we implore You that You would, by Your Holy Spirit, cause us to redeem the time, knowing that the days are evil, that we might live in a constant state of repentance regarding our sin and in faith regarding our Lord Jesus Christ, that we might always cling to that blessed hope that You have given us in our Savior, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit—one God, forever and ever.

Cong: Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 30:8-17

(ESV) And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever. (9) For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the LORD; (10) who say to the seers, “Do not see,” and to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us what is right; speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions, (11) leave the way, turn aside from the path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel.” (12) Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, “Because you despise this word and trust in oppression and perverseness and rely on them, (13) therefore this iniquity shall be to you like a breach in a high wall, bulging out and about to collapse, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant; (14) and its breaking is like that of a potter’s vessel that is smashed so ruthlessly that among its fragments not a shard is found with which to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern.” (15) For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.” But you were

unwilling, (16) and you said, “No! We will flee upon horses”; therefore you shall flee away; and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. (17) A thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill.

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON: Romans 8:28-39

(ESV) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (29) For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (30) And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (31) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (32) He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (33) Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. (34) Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? (36) As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” (37) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (38) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, (39) nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**For Your mercy and Your grace,
Constant through another year,
Hear our song of thankfulness;
Savior and Redeemer, hear!**

**For our sins on You we cast,
You, our perfect Sacrifice,
And, forgetting all the past,
Press unto our glorious prize.**

**Dark the future; may Your light
Guide us, bright and Morning Star.
Fierce our foes and hard the fight;
Arm us, Savior, for the war.**

**In our weakness and distress,
Rock of strength, be e'er our Stay;
In the pathless wilderness,
Be our true and living Way.**

**Who of us death's awful road
In the coming year shall tread,
With Your rod and staff, O God,
Comfort then his dying head.**

**Keep us faithful, keep us pure;
Keep us evermore Your own.
Help, oh, help us to endure;
Fit us for the promised crown.
Amen.**

THE SERMON: Luke 4:16-21

(ESV) And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. (17) And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, (18) “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, (19) to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” (20) And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. (21) And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

“The Acceptable Year of the Lord”

THE OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS

GENERAL PRAYER & THE LORD’S PRAYER

HYMN: #124

O Lord, Our Father, Thanks to Thee

Lord, our Father, thanks to Thee

In this new year we render,

For ev'ry evil had to flee

Before Thee, our Defender.

Our life was nourished, we were fed

With rich supplies of daily bread,

And peace reigned in our borders.

Lord Jesus Christ, our thanks to Thee

In this new year we render;

Thy reign hath kept Thy people free,

Hath shown Thy mercies tender.

Thou hast redeemed us with Thy blood,
Thou art our Joy, our only Good,
In life and death our Savior.

Lord Holy Ghost, our thanks to Thee
In this new year we render,
For Thou hast led our eyes to see
Thy truth in all its splendor
And thus enkindled from above
Within our hearts true faith and love
And other Christian virtues.

Our faithful God, we cry to Thee:
Still bless us with Thy favor,
Blot out all our iniquity,
And hide our sins forever.
Grant us a happy, good new year
And, when the hour of death draws near,
A peaceful, blest departure.
Amen.

THE EXHORTATION

Pastor: Dearly loved by God, since we intend to come to the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is fitting for us diligently to examine ourselves. For this Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort and strengthening of those who humbly confess their sins and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But if we do sincerely examine ourselves, we will find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we cannot set ourselves free. Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy upon us and has taken upon Himself our human nature, that He might fulfill for us the whole will and Law of God and for us and for our deliverance He might suffer death and all that we by our sins have deserved. In order that we might more confidently believe this and be

strengthened by our faith in a cheerful subjection to His good and gracious will, He has instituted the holy Sacrament of the Altar, in which He feeds us with His body and gives us to drink of His blood. So, whoever eats of this bread and drinks of this cup, firmly believing the words of Christ, dwells in Christ, and Christ in Him, and through Him has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, proclaiming His death – that He was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification before God. So let us give thanks unto Him for it and, taking up our cross to follow Him, love one another just as He has loved us and given Himself for us, because we are one bread and one body, even as we are all partakers of His of this one bread and drink of this one cup.

I now ask you before God, who searches the heart:

Do you sincerely confess that you have sinned against God and have deserved His wrath and punishment? Then declare so by saying: I do confess.

Cong: I do confess.

Pastor: Truly, you should confess, for Holy Scripture declares, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

Do you sincerely repent of all your sins committed in thought, word, and deed? Then declare so by saying: I do repent.

Cong: I do repent.

Pastor: Truly, you should repent, as did the penitent sinners: King David, who prayed for a contrite heart; Peter, who wept bitterly; the sinful woman; the Apostle Paul; and others.

Do you sincerely believe that God, by grace, for Jesus' sake, forgives all your sins? Then declare so by saying: I do believe.

Cong: I do believe.

Pastor: Truly, you should so believe, for Holy Scripture declares: For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life; and, In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Do you promise that by the power of the Holy Spirit you will from now on walk as children of light? Then declare so by saying: I do promise.

Cong: I do promise.

Pastor: Truly, you should make such a promise, for Christ, your Lord, says: Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Finally, do you believe that through me, a called servant of the Lord, you receive the forgiveness of all your sins? Then declare so by saying: I do believe.

Cong: I do believe.

Pastor: As you believe, so may it be done for you.

Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you. 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.

Cong: Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the same night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them saying, "Take, eat. This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

In the same way, also, He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all you. This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE CLOSING

Pastor: The Lord will give strength to His people.

Cong: The Lord will bless His people with peace.

Pastor: O God, from whom comes all holy desires, all good instruction, and all just works, give to Your servants that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to submit to Your commandments and also that we, being defended by You from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Cong: Amen.

THE BENEDICTION

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Cong: Amen.

**A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.**

**Thy word commands our flesh to dust:
"Return, ye son of men!"
All nations rose from earth at first
And turn to earth again.**

**Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.**

**Like flowery fields the nations stand,
Pleased with the morning light;
The flowers beneath the mower's hand
Lie withering ere 'tis night.**

**O God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Be Thou our Guard while life shall last
And our eternal Home!
Amen.**