

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Hazen, ND

Lenten Vespers

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Pastor Peters

The Hand of the Lord Who Serves and Feeds Us

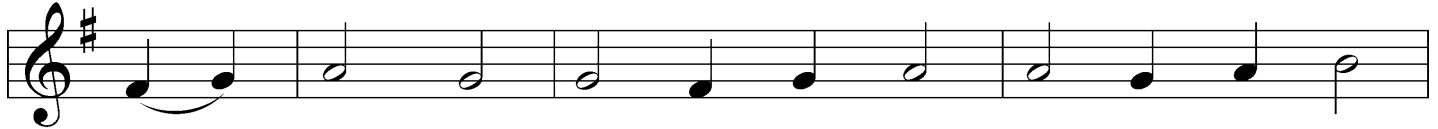
When Christians gather as the church, it is for what we normally call a “service.” In daily life a “service” is, of course, a person or group who provides something of value to others; for instance, a food service, a cleaning service, or a place for “servicing” your car. But when we gather as church for a service, who is doing the serving and who is being served? After all, with our eyes we only see one another singing and praying, making the sign of the cross, standing, sitting, kneeling, baptizing with water, and communing with bread and wine. It is easy for some to get the impression that this activity we call “worship” is a gathering where we are doing something for God. What is really going on of most importance is God’s doing, God’s serving us through the ministry of Word and Sacrament. This divine service was most dramatically shown in this night on which our Lord Jesus serves and feeds us. Tonight, our mighty Lord, who has proved His power over demons, sickness, and even death, takes the humbler part. His loving service is shown, first, by taking the role of a servant washing His disciples’ feet. His greatest and chief service, however, He announced as He took charge of the ancient Passover meal, changing it from a mere memorial of what God has done in the Old Testament exodus of the past to its fulfillment in what He was about to accomplish in His innocent, bitter suffering and death on a cross. From now on, the fulfillment of the annual Passover feast is to be celebrated “often” as the chief means by which God literally connects us with our Lord’s crucified body and His precious blood that take away the sin of the world “as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup” (LSB, p. 162).

Confession and Absolution

625 Lord Jesus Christ, Life-Giving Bread



1 Lord Je - sus Christ, life - giv - ing bread, May I in grace
 2 To pas - tures green, Lord, safe - ly guide, To rest - ful wa -
 3 O bread of heav'n, my soul's de - light, For full and free
 4 I do not mer - it fa - vor, Lord, My weight of sin



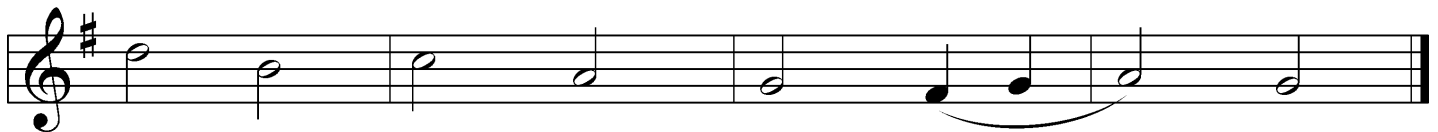
pos - sess You. Let me with ho - ly food be fed,
 ters lead me; Your ta - ble well for me pro - vide,
 re - mis - sion I come with prayer be - fore Your sight
 would break me; In all my guilt - y heart's dis - cord,



In hun - ger I ad - dress You. Pre - pare me well
 Your wound - ed hand now feed me. Though wea - ry, sin -
 In sor - row and con - tri - tion. Your righ - teous - ness,
 O Lord, do not for - sake me. In my dis - tress



for You, O Lord, And, hum - bly by my prayer im - plored,
 ful, sick, and weak, Ref - uge in You a - lone I seek,
 Lord, cov - er me That I re - ceive You wor - thi - ly,
 this com - forts me That You re - ceive me gra - cious - ly,



Give me Your grace and mer - cy.
 To share Your cup of heal - ing.
 As - sured of Your full par - don.
 O Christ, my Lord of mer - cy!

Text: Johann Rist, 1607-67; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806-74, alt.
 Tune: Theütsch kirchen ampt, 1525, Strassburg
 Text and tune: Public domain

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.

C Amen.

P I will go to the altar of God,

C to God my exceeding joy.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

Confessional Address

P During this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving each other. Since it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, it is proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you.” It is as if He said, “I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat.”

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and 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.” Again, it is as if He said, “I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink.”

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples’ feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and one body, even as we are

all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with the wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.

C Amen.

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

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 God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

C Amen.

P Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C Yes.

P Let it be done for you as you believe.

P 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.

P Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in ✠ peace.

C Amen.

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 116:1–4; antiphon: v. 5

P Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;

C **our God is merciful.**

P I love the LORD, because he has heard

C **my voice and my pleas for mercy.**

P Because he inclined his ear to me,

C **therefore I will call on him as long as I live.**

P The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;

C **I suffered distress and anguish.**

P Then I called on the name of the LORD:

C **“O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!”**

P Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
C **our God is merciful.**

Kyrie

P In peace let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P 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 mercy.**
P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**
P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
C **Amen.**

Salutation and Collect of the Day

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

P Let us pray.
C **O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifest in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**
C **Amen.**

P The Old Testament Reading is from Exodus, the twelfth chapter.

¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,
²“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household. ⁴And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, ⁶and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

⁷“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. ¹⁰And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be

a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

1 Corinthians 11:23–32

P The Epistle is from 1 Corinthians, the eleventh chapter.

²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

²⁷Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. ³²But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

John 13:1–17, 31b–35

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. . . .

“Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³²If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. ³³Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ ³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

617 O Lord, We Praise Thee



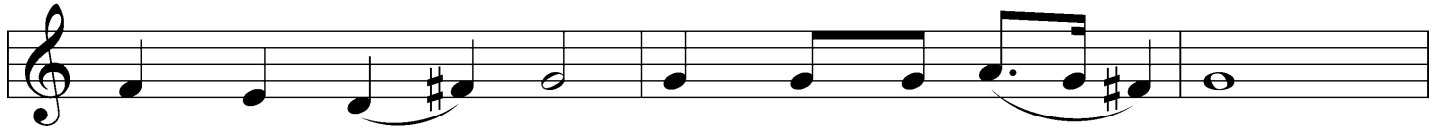
1 O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and a - dore Thee,
 2 Thy ho - ly bod - y in - to death was giv - en,
 3 May God be - stow on us His grace and fa - vor



In thanks - giv - ing bow be - fore Thee. Thou with Thy
 Life to win for us in heav - en. No great - er
 That we fol - low Christ our Sav - ior And live to -



bod - y and Thy blood didst nour - ish Our weak souls that
 love than this to Thee could bind us; May this feast there -
 geth - er here in love and u - nion Nor de - spise this



they may flour - ish: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 of re - mind us! O Lord, have mer - cy!
 blest Com - mu - nion! O Lord, have mer - cy!



May Thy bod - y, Lord, born of Mar - y, That our
 Lord, Thy kind - ness did so con - strain Thee That Thy
 Let not Thy good Spir - it for - sake us; Grant that



sins and sor - rows did car - ry, And Thy blood for us plead
 blood should bless and sus - tain me. All our debt Thou hast paid;
 heav'n - ly - mind - ed He make us; Give Thy Church, Lord, to see



In all tri - al, fear, and need: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 Peace with God once more is made: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 Days of peace and u - ni - ty: O Lord, have mer - cy!

Sermon

Nicene Creed

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.**

Prayer of the Church

P Almighty God, as we conclude these holy forty days of Lent and enter the three days of our Lord's Passion, death, and rest in the tomb, we give You thanks that You have shown Him to be for us Your very hand of our creation and life; our victorious Lord over the adversary Satan and his hordes; our Great Physician, who heals our diseases; our Lord of Life, who raises us from death; and our all-powerful Lord in whom all things hold together whether on earth or in heaven. Tonight, as He demonstrated His love at His Last Supper, make us to be servants of love toward one another. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Defend Your whole church throughout the world, purchased with the precious blood of Christ. Strengthen all pastors to rightly preach and administer Your Sacraments. Sanctify Your faithful people, making them

perfect in faith, love, and in all good works. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Bless the missions of Your church, the newly established congregations, and those that reach out across the world with the light of Your truth and witness to Your salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Preserve our nation in justice and honor, that we may lead a peaceable life in all honesty and integrity. Grant health and favor to all who bear offices of the authority of government in our land and help them to serve all people according to Your holy will. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P By Your Word and Spirit, comfort all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or adversity, [*especially . . .*]. Have mercy on those to whom death draws near. Bring consolation to those in sorrow, and grant to all a measure of Your love, taking them into Your tender care. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Offering

Offertory

C What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?

I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call

on the name of the Lord.

I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,
in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

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.

Proper Preface

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, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who accomplished the salvation of mankind by the tree of the cross that, where death arose, there life also might rise again and that the serpent who overcame by the tree of the garden might likewise by the tree of the cross be overcome. 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

C Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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.

Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

C Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.

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:

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:

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.**

Distribution Hymns

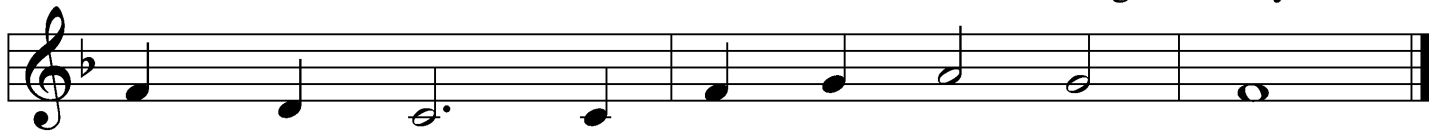
845 Where Charity and Love Prevail



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail There
2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear His
3 For - give we now each oth - er's faults As
4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; Let



God is ev - er found; Brought here to - geth - er
char - i - ty we learn; Let us with heart and
we our faults con - fess, And let us love each
all con - ten - tion cease; Be God's the glo - ry

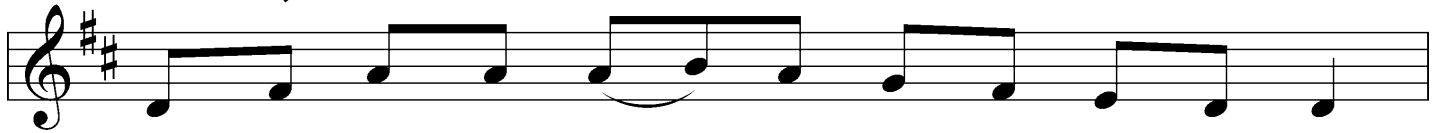


by Christ's love By love are we thus bound.
mind and soul Now love Him in re - turn.
oth - er well In Chris - tian ho - li - ness.
that we seek; Be ours His ho - ly peace.

5 Let us recall that in our midst
Dwells Christ, His only Son;
As members of His body joined
We are in Him made one.

6 For love excludes no race or clan
That names the Savior's name;
His family embraces all
Whose Father is the same.

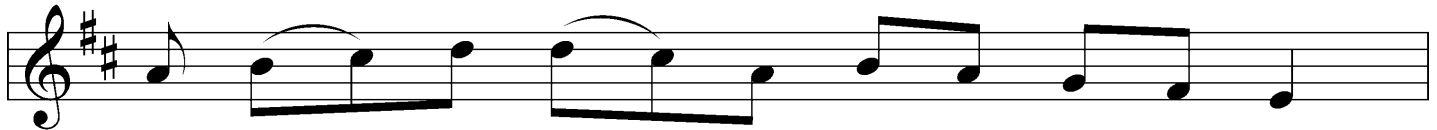
640 Thee We Adore, O Hidden Savior



1 Thee we a - dore, O hid - den Sav - ior, Thee,
 2 In this me - mo - rial of Thy death, O Lord,
 3 Thou, like the pel - i - can to feed her brood,
 4 Foun - tain of good - ness, Je - sus, Lord and God:
 5 O Christ, whom now be - neath a veil we see,



Who in Thy Sac - ra - ment art pleased to be;
 Thou dost Thy bod - y and Thy blood af - ford:
 Didst pierce Thy - self to give us liv - ing food;
 Cleanse us, un - clean, with Thy most cleans - ing blood;
 May what we thirst for soon our por - tion be:

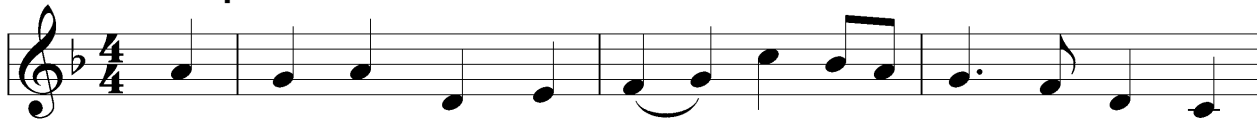


Both flesh and spir - it in Thy pres - ence fail,
 Oh, may our souls for - ev - er feed on Thee,
 Thy blood, O Lord, one drop has pow'r to win
 In - crease our faith and love, that we may know
 To gaze on Thee un - veiled and see Thy face,



Yet here Thy pres - ence we de - vout - ly hail.
 And Thou, O Christ, for - ev - er pre - cious be.
 For - give - ness for our world and all its sin.
 The hope and peace which from Thy pres - ence flow.
 The vi - sion of Thy glo - ry, and Thy grace. A - men.

The Word That Spoke in Darkness



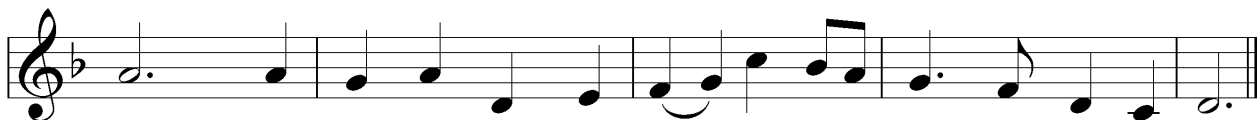
1 The Word that spoke in dark - ness And prom - ised com - ing
2 The Sav - ior came to con - quer And meet His mis - sion's
3 The Christ pro - claimed His vic - t'ry With ev - 'ry act of
4 The Prince of Peace con - tin - ued With each new task com -



light Kept guid - ing through the a - ges Un - til the time was
aim: Up - end - ing Sa - tan's ter - ror, Cre - a - tion to re -
grace: The out - cast shown com - pas - sion And God's own ho - ly
plete At cross and tomb and glo - ry Up - on His roy - al



right To take on flesh and fol - low The Fa - ther's good com -
claim By walk - ing on the wa - ters So we by faith may
face As Je - sus looked with fa - vor On all from ev - 'ry
seat, De - liv - er - ance ac - com - plished Ex - act - ly as He



mand And dwell a - mong His peo - ple, The king - dom now at hand.
stand With trust in Him whose res - cue Is of - fered by His hand.
land Who need - ed life and heal - ing From His al - might - y hand.
planned; Our King will raise in wel - come His pierced and ris - en hand.

Text: Lisa M. Clark
Tune: English; Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
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Post-Communion Canticle

C Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled.

My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of ev'ry people:

A light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel.

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.

Post-Communion Collect

P Let us pray.

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

C Amen.

Stripping of the Altar

The communion vessels are reverently removed from the altar, the altar is stripped, and the chancel is cleared in preparation for the solemn services of Good Friday.

Psalm

Psalm 22

P ¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

C ²**O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.**

P ³Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

C ⁴**In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.**

P ⁵To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

C ⁶**But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.**

P ⁷All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;

C ⁸**“He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”**

P ⁹Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.

C ¹⁰**On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother's womb you have been my
God.**

P ¹¹Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

C ¹²**Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;**

P ¹³they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

C ¹⁴**I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;**

P ¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

C ¹⁶**For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—**

P ¹⁷I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;

C ¹⁸**they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.**

P ¹⁹But you, O LORD, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!

C ²⁰**Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!**

P ²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion!

You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

C ²²**I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:**

P ²³You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

C ²⁴**For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.**

P ²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.

C ²⁶**The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!**

P ²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.

C ²⁸**For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.**

P ²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.

C ³⁰**Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;**

P ³¹they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a
people yet unborn,
that he has done it.

All leave the church in silence.

Acknowledgments

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