

**Clergy of the ELDoNA,
affiliated congregations and missions**

Rt. Rev. James Heiser

Salem Lutheran Church, Malone, TX

Rev. Jeffrey Ahonen

Good Shepherd L.C., Tony, WI; Alpha & Omega Lutheran Mission, Winter, WI; Apologia Lutheran Mission, Deer Park, WI; Peace L.C., Ironwood, MI; Pure Blessings Lutheran Mission, Fox Valley, WI

Rev. Jerald Dulas

Sts. Peter & Paul L. C., Simpsonville, SC; All Saints Lutheran Mission, Myrtle Beach, SC; St. Michael & All Angels Lutheran Mission, Martinez, GA; St. Bartholomew Lutheran Mission, Fort Myers, FL

Rev. Douglas Handrich

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Peoria, IL

Rev. Kent Heimbigner

Charity Lutheran Church, Burleson, TX

Rev. Michael Henson

Trinity Lutheran Church, Herrin, IL

Rev. Martin Jackson

Lamb of God Ev. L. C. Rogers, AR

Rev. Daniel Mensing

Faith Lutheran Church, Beaverton, OR

Rev. Mark Mueller

Redeemer L. C., Cambridge, MN

Rev. John Rutowicz

St. Boniface Lutheran Church, Niles, MI

Rev. Josiah Scheck

Christ Lutheran Church, Richmond, MO

Rev. Eric Stefanski

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR; Emmanuel Lutheran Mission, Conway, AR

Rev. Timothy Tolar

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Kenai, AK
Homer Lutheran Mission, Homer, AK

Rev. Brandon Warr

St. Patrick Lutheran Church, Chipley, FL

Rev. Dcn. Gary Harroun

Trinity Lutheran Church, Herrin, IL

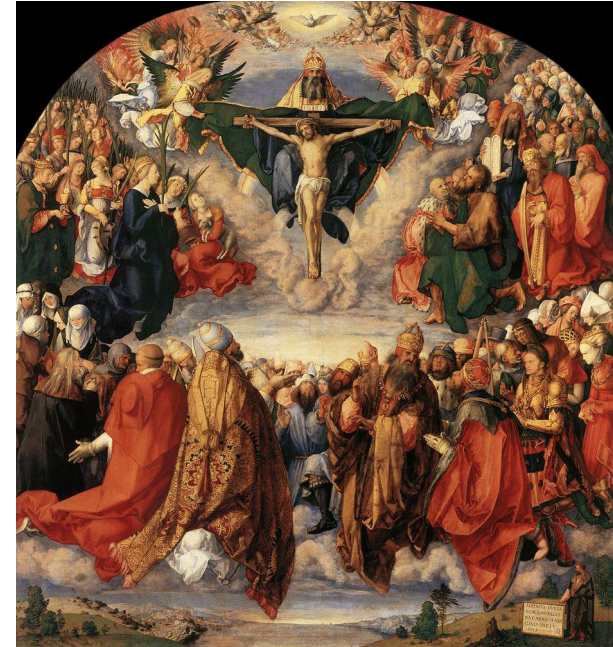
Rev. Dcn. Anthony Oncken

Salem Lutheran Church, Malone, TX

Rev. Dcn. Floyd Smithey

Sts. Peter & Paul Lutheran Church, Simpsonville, SC; St. James Lutheran Mission, Knoxville, TN

THE LUTHERAN HERALD



ADORATION OF THE TRINITY (BY ALBRECHT DÜRER, 1511)

JUNE 5–JULY 1, 2023

**A PUBLICATION OF
THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN DIOCESE OF NORTH
AMERICA**

The Calendar

The Lutheran Hymnal (1941): TLH; 2022 Supplement: ASBH

(Monday: M; Tuesday: T; Wednesday: W; Thursday: R; Friday: F; Saturday: S)

June 4	Feast of the Holy Trinity	ASBH 38
June 5 (M)	St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr	ASBH 87 (in this issue)
June 11	Trinity 1	ASBH 39
June 15 (R)	David Henkel, Pastor and Confessor	ASBH 88 (in this issue)
June 18	Trinity 2	ASBH 40
June 24 (S)	Nativity of St. John the Baptist	
June 25	Presentation of the Augsburg Confession/Trinity 3	ASBH 90
2023 COLLOQUIUM AND SYNOD OF THE ELDONA: JUNE 26–29		
June 29 (R)	St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles	TLH 466

CONFERENCE OF THE AUGUSTANA MINISTERIUM: JUNE 30

ELDONA FAMILY CAMP at SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH: JUNE 30–JULY 4

ST. IGNATIUS SEMINARY UPDATE—Summer Intensives begin June 5.

Classes for the Spring Quarter:

H007—Lutheran Church in America (3 hrs.)

P006—Liturgics Practicum III (1 hr.)

The seminarians are also completing their theses, which they will defend at the upcoming synod.

CALL SERVICE AND ORDINATION for Seminarians Ben and Jacob Henson is scheduled to take place during the upcoming Synod. For their examination, the seminarians will defend their theses, preach a sermon, teach a catechism class, and be examined by the diocese on a wide range of topics of doctrine and practice. Following their **examination** (Monday and Tuesday [June 26 & 27] of Synod), the **call service** will take place in conjunction with the Divine Service on the Festival of Sts. Peter & Paul, Apostles (Thursday night, **June 29**). **Ordination** by the bishop, pastors and deacons at synod will take place during the Divine Service of the Festival of the Visitation (**July 2**), during the days of the diocesan family camp. (Installation will follow as scheduled with the local congregations.) Discussion by the Liturgics Committee found that this return to the old Lutheran practice (found in the Norwegian Synod and Missouri Synod in the early part of the 20th century) is the most prudent course of action when there are multiple seminarians; when a single seminarian is graduating, ordination and installation will take place in one service.

SATURDAY, JULY 1: JOHN 8:42–47

3RD SUNDAY A. TRINITY

Many people say that “we are all God’s children.” But many have rebelled against the Maker and despise the Lord and Savior. They have chosen to act and believe as children of the devil, which also makes them liars when they say they are God’s children. One cannot honestly pray “Our Father...” or cry out “Abba, Father” if they reject God’s Son or His commandments.

Our Lord asks, “Which of you convicts Me of sin?” None of them had the right or true evidence to condemn Jesus, which is also the work of the devil. He encourages us to take to ourselves works and vocations that are not commanded by our merciful Lord.

To call someone a child of the devil is not just ‘name calling.’ It is strong language, and most sinners hate to hear it, but Christians are not automatically unloving if they speak in this same way as their Lord did. Sometimes love and mercy requires that we confront sinners with this truth. Demonic forces and sinful hearts might cause us to writhe and seethe, but those who have the right to call us to repentance are doing so because they seek mercy for us. Even with such faithful efforts at discipline, our Savior comes according to His Word and Spirit, working among us to call sinners to humble repentance and build up His faithful people in proper works of love and mercy.

Prayer: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal. that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

False teachers disconnect God's Law from His Gospel. They teach one while twisting or suppressing the other. On the one hand, there are those who emphasize man's work and efforts, saying wrongly that our works or decisions bring about our righteousness. But no one can say Jesus Christ is Lord except by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). Our salvation is only by God's work. On the other hand, there are those who emphasize a corrupted gospel that ignores or reduces God's Law. They proclaim, "Peace, love, forgiveness, mercy!!!" But they justify or ignore sin and rebellion. There are entire religious bodies that act according to these two categories. They insist they are faithful, but they refuse to consider that they are serving their own sinful bellies.

There is a time and a place to rebuke such false teaching. Our Lord did it, sometimes using rather harsh statements. Our faithful fathers did it at the time of the Reformation. All earthly fellowships need to do it because men sin and lose their way. But as we heard yesterday, our Lord desires mercy and not sacrifice. He desires that discipline be done so that good order and faithful work is restored. The Church is not focused on self-will or manipulative control. It seeks harmony according to God's commands and good fruit borne according to His established vocations. Both the Law and the Gospel are good and holy blessings from God that serve His holy purpose.

Prayer: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal. that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Lesson from the Book of Concord Trinity Sunday

ARTICLE I.

Our Churches, with common consent, do teach, that the decree of the Council of Nicaea concerning the Unity of the Divine Essence and concerning the Three Persons, is true and to be believed without any doubting; that is to say, there is one Divine Essence which is called and which is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible; and yet that there are three Persons, of the same essence and power, who also are co-eternal, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. And the term "person" they use as the fathers have used it, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself.

They condemn all heresies which have sprung up against this article, as the Manichaeans who assumed two principles [gods], one Good, the other Evil; also the Valentinians, Arians, Eunomians, Mohammedans, and all such. They condemn also the Samosatenes, old and new, who contending that there is but one Person, sophistically and impiously argue that the Word and the Holy Ghost are not distinct Persons, but that "Word" signifies a spoken word, and "Spirit" [Ghost] signifies motion created in things.

—The Augsburg Confession

The selections from the Book of Concord for the Sundays of the Church Year are from H. E. Jacobs' translation of the Book of Concord, and are taken from the table of suggested lessons for Sundays and Festivals of the Church. (The table of appropriate lessons was originally found in Pipping's Christliches Concordienbuch [Leipzig, 1734].)

Festival of St. Boniface

87. Awake, Thou Spirit, Who Didst Fire

Wach auf, du Geist der ersten Zeugen
Carl H. von Bogatzky, 1750, cento
Tr., Catherine Winkworth, 1855, alt.

All' Ehr' und Lob
"Kirchengesangbuch"
Strassburg, 1541

1. A - wake, Thou Spir - it, who didst fire
2. Lord, let our ear - nest prayer be heard,
3. Oh, haste to help ere we are lost!
4. And let Thy Word have speed - y course,

The watch - men of the Chur - ch's youth,
The prayer Thy Son hath bid us pray;
Send preach - ers forth, in spir - it strong,
Through ev - 'ry land be glo - ri - fied,

Who faced the Foe's en - ven - omed ire,
For, lo, Thy chil - dren's hearts are stirred
Armed with Thy Word, a daunt - less host,
Till all the hea - then know its force

THURSDAY, JUNE 29: MATTHEW 12:1-8 STS. PETER AND PAUL

The Psalms, the Prophets, and the Apostles reiterate the Lord's will that He desires mercy and not sacrifice. God desires faith that clings to Him alone for mercy, and in turn does the works that show forth His mercy. The works and sacrifices that are undesirable, even offensive, to God are those that ignore faith and mercy.

God wanted mankind to do righteous works and obey His commands. Adam and Eve were given work to do, and they were given the Sabbath Day as a time of rest. The Lord showed mercy when they failed in their works. He promised them a Savior, He clothed them, and He assured them that there would still be blessings for them, even as they were expected to work during the days leading to the death that they brought upon themselves. In all this God was merciful.

Today we remember the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul. Peter was shown mercy multiple times after he failed in the faith and work that Christ had taught him to observe. And Paul was also raised to great service for the Gospel, even after being a man who brought fear and murder to God's people. Neither one could make up for their sins, even with all the good works wrought through them after Christ's ascension. Only God's mercy through Jesus Christ could make them true saints. The same is true for all of us!

Prayer: O Almighty God, Who by Thy Son, Jesus Christ, didst give to Thy holy Apostles many excellent gifts, and commandedst them earnestly to feed Thy flock: Make, we beseech Thee, all Pastors diligently to preach Thy holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28: LUKE 10:13-16 3RD SUNDAY A. TRINITY

God expects us to hear what He says, see what He does, and believe accordingly by the power of His Spirit. If we ignore Him and cling to what seems right in our own eyes, we are in a very dangerous state, spiritually speaking.

Our Lord performed miracles and good works for the people of the world to see. He taught with love and patience. He corrected with wisdom. But there were—and are—many who do not care, and think they know better than what God's Word says. His warnings are true to this day.

Many sinners have heard our Lord's truth, repented of their sinful vanity, and are forgiven in Christ. Those who think they are wiser and more pious look at those sinners and often miss the point. Rather than understand God's message about humility and faithfulness, sinful hearts look for ways to justify their own ideas. He sends His Word and His servants according to proper vocations so that we can be helped to hear, see, and understand His good will, but those who rebel and ignore His gracious efforts toward us choose to cling to their transgressions. Such rebellion only brings damage and death.

May the Lord bless us with true humility and faithfulness so we may be brought into the work of His kingdom now and forever!

Prayer: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Who wit - nessed day and in night Thy truth,
In ev - 'ry land and in this our day,
Bold to at - tack the rule of wrong;
And fill Thy church - es far and wide.

Whose voic - es loud are ring - ing still
To cry with fer - vent soul to Thee,
Let them the earth for Thee to re - claim,
Oh, spread the con - quest of Thy Word

And bring - ing hosts to know Thy will.
Oh, help us, Lord! So let it be!
Thy her - i - tage, to know Thy name.
And let Thy king - dom come, dear Lord! A - men.

On June 5th in the year 754, St. Boniface was martyred in Dokkum by the Frisians, who at the time were still pagans. They hoped that Boniface and his company carried great riches; but instead all they found were sacred books and other materials for teaching and education.

Boniface spent his life as a missionary and evangelist among various Germanic people. He was the one who felled the Donner Oak—the tree sacred to the religion of Thor and Odin, the pagan Norse gods—and then built a chapel to the true God out of the lumber. After years of mission work he had many congregations. In purely human terms he had been very successful. He could have left the work of evangelizing the Frisians to someone else. But his love for the lost and his zeal for the Lord were such that he went himself, at risk to his own life, and was martyred there.

Many of our forebears were Germans; and without a doubt those who led the Reformation were Germans, whose ancestors had been evangelized by St. Boniface. The Christianity that endured after St. Boniface's witness to them testifies to the truth of Moses' words even in the New Testament era, and to the effectiveness of God's Word in teaching and preaching. May God ever keep us faithful to it, as St. Boniface was!

Prayer: O God, who dost guide Thy Church through the faithful ministrations of Thy servants, grant that Thy ministers, like St. Boniface, stand steadfast against those who would work iniquity; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Jesus was “greatly displeased” by the behavior of the disciples. They thought they were doing something good and helpful for Him, but in spite of their good intentions, they were wrong and deserved His rebuke.

Satan taught Eve to act on her own assumptions. Ever since, he continues to confuse us and lead us into evil, while we tell ourselves that things look good and that we have good reasons. Like yesterday's reading, Jesus is teaching us that we must not lean on our own desires or understanding, but learn to see according to His wisdom and will. Children are not a bother to our Lord; He came to save them from sin and death just as much as He did for adults who misguidedly think they are clever! Children can be examples of the humility, trust, and dependency that we should have toward our heavenly Father. The oldest and wisest adult will never outgrow his status of being a child in relation to our eternal Maker and Redeemer.

Christ teaches us to pray with the words “Our Father...” because, as Luther correctly articulates in the *Small Catechism*, we should pray “as dear children ask their dear father.” Our Lord wants us to see ourselves as dependent on our gracious God, not ‘co-lords’ or ‘co-gods.’ We are given works and vocations to do, but all authority belongs to Him, and everything we do should be in service to His kingdom of righteousness and love.

Prayer: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Good works are necessary for one to be truly faithful. “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26). Works do not save us, nor do they add anything to what Christ has done to give us forgiveness and life. Our Lord wants us to be faithful in *all* things, with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. But Satan tempts us to disconnect faith and works, and have us focus on one or the other to make us weak and confused.

The son who squandered his livelihood on sin had only bad works to show for his time, but when he repented the father still showed him love and graciousness. On the other hand, the older son had works, but he lacked mercy and humility. Jesus shows us through the father of these two sons that love, compassion, and outward deeds should all be understood in their proper place and context.

Our Savior’s entire earthly ministry was an example of a faithful spirit and righteous works in perfect harmony. Much of His teaching directs us to works of love and discipline, but all of it directs us to humility and submission to the Father’s truth. We must realize, like the younger son, we are sinners who have been foolish and wasteful; but we must also avoid the pride and vanity of the older son who failed to see with eyes of grace and mercy.

Prayer: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal. that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

These verses contain the Aaronic benediction, or blessing, that we are also accustomed to hearing at the end of our worship services. We see the Aaronic benediction as yet another indication of the Trinity in the Old Testament. The blessing has a threefold structure; the Lord is named three times, using His own proper name, as indicated by the small capital letters in many Bibles. But it is one blessing, just as there are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but together they are not three gods or lords but one God and Lord.

We also rejoice that here, as in other special revelations that God makes about Himself, He is first and foremost the God of grace and peace. That people of Israel certainly did not deserve that grace and peace, and neither do we. We have rebelled against our just and righteous God in many ways, as did the people of Israel. But God loved them, and He loves us. He sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for their sins, for ours, and for the sins of the whole world. It is in Him and through Him that we can be blessed with these words. May He ever keep us faithful to Him!

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us, Thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

The seraphim who attend Almighty God cried aloud to each other the words we recognize from our service of Holy Communion: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!” Like other passages from this week, we particularly pay attention to the threefold repetition of the word “holy,” an indication that God is Three in One.

Isaiah is terrified at this vision; he knows he has seen something that is not common for mortal men to see. But God was calling him to the office of Prophet, an especially thankless task as the southern kingdom of Israel would be conquered and taken into captivity in Babylon during Isaiah’s ministry.

Despite Israel’s continuing rebellion, and despite the earthly judgment that was coming to them, Isaiah’s call still holds hope for God’s people. “But yet a tenth will be in it ... whose stump remains when it is cut down. So the holy seed shall be its stump.” This hope does not rest on our efforts or striving, but only in the promises and faithfulness of God Himself. Since Christ had not yet come, the location and lineage of Israel were still very important. God was reminding them, through Isaiah, that He had not forgotten His promises of the Seed of the Woman and Seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed!

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us, Thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

Lesson from the Book of Concord The Second Sunday after Trinity

ARTICLE XIII.

Of the Use of the Sacraments, they [the Lutheran theologians] teach, that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the Sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments.

They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act, and do not teach that, in the use of the Sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

—The Augsburg Confession

John the Baptist seems like a tragic figure. He lived in the wilderness, was thrown into prison for teaching the Truth, and was finally beheaded for the same reason. It may look as though John the Baptist had been abandoned by God and his “way hidden from the Lord,” but this was not the case. John the Baptist knew his Savior, and this faith gave him joy through earthly persecution. Thus the Baptist confessed, “The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled” (John 3:29).

In the same way, Isaiah teaches us that to be reconciled with God through faith is a greater treasure than all earthly comfort. It is as though God were saying, “Why do you worry about earthly persecution and hardships? Do you not know that I can deliver you from all troubles? And even should it kill you, what then? It is I who raises the dead, and will raise you from the dead on the Last Day.”

Prayer: O Lord God, Heavenly Father, who, through Thy servant John the Baptist, didst bear witness that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world and that all who believe in Him shall inherit eternal life: We humbly pray Thee to enlighten us by Thy Holy Spirit that we may at all times find comfort and joy in this witness, continue steadfast in the true faith, and at last with all believers attain unto eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Here, Jesus lets us know that we should expect to be hated by the world, because the world hated Him first. “A servant is not greater than his master,” so we should expect the world to treat us as it treated Jesus. How did the world treat Jesus? It ignored Him, mocked Him, convicted Him falsely of a crime that He did not commit, and executed Him for it.

But Jesus also wants us to know that this hatred really has nothing to do with us. The world hates us because it hated Him first, because He revealed the will of God the Father to them, and that will was not what they wanted it to be. They wanted God the Father to promise them a comfortable earthly life, free of physical wants and hunger, and free from the influence and rule of Rome.

What God the Father and Christ truly offer is so much better! Rather than a temporary peace and joy, our God offers eternal peace and joy, free from the sin and death that we cannot escape while still in this world. Our Savior Jesus Christ has already accomplished that which needed to be done to earn this for us. May we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, and not concern ourselves with what the world thinks.

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us, Thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

“Good things come to those who wait,” it is said. But nothing as good as this has ever come to anyone! Our sin placed us in bondage, and if we look at ourselves we see that we have not measured up to God’s Law. We have fallen short of His glory. And yet, thanks be to God that He is merciful nonetheless! His Son took on our flesh to redeem us, to live the life that we cannot live, and die a perfect death, the perfect substitute and redeemer. He died for the sins of the whole world.

This is not a mere academic abstraction, it has real consequences and benefits for us as we await our ultimate salvation. It results in the peace and joy here and now of knowing that our sins are forgiven, that we have an eternal home with the heavenly Father, and no longer fear His wrath. The Holy Spirit Himself dwells in our hearts and cries out “Abba, Father!” to the one we might otherwise fear. All this is true because Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, lived and died under the Law for us. May we therefore be bold, and approach the Throne of Grace, knowing that God loves us, not because we are good in and of ourselves, but for the sake of His dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us, Thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

On the Last Day the false prophets will beg entrance into the kingdom of heaven because they “prophesied... cast out demons... and [did] many wonders” in Jesus’ name. But they will be rejected because these works were not according to the will of the Father. Notice they do not say, “Lord, Lord, we preached the Gospel in Your name; we administered the sacraments in Your name.”

The will of the Father is that we believe everything the Lord Jesus Christ has taught, and that we practice every commandment which He has given. In other words, these are the Gospel and the sacraments. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession gives this general definition of “sacraments”: “rites which have the command of God and to which the promise of grace has been added” (Apology, article 13). Such a definition acknowledges what our Lord has commanded us to do, but especially those institutions which He gave to the Apostles—namely, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Absolution. These are the marks of the true Church and of a true minister.

To prophesy and to cast out demons are not wicked works themselves, but if they are not part of the faithful work of Christ’s ministry in the Church, focused on His Gospel and sacraments, they do not include that promise of grace. Therefore, they are inferior to the sacraments in every sense. Anyone who boasts of such unfaithful works is a false prophet.

Prayer: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The same God who created you is the God who saves you. God wants to be your Savior because He is your Creator. He loves you because you are His handiwork. To create and to save go together.

When Jesus forgave the sins of a certain paralytic, the Pharisees accused Him of blasphemy: “Who,” they reasoned, “can forgive sins but God alone?” But Jesus countered, “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk?’” (Mark 2:5–12). It was a ‘trick question.’ It is the same as asking, “Which is easier: to create or to save?” Both to heal and to forgive are acts of the true God. Likewise, Isaiah confesses that God is both Creator and Savior.

Through Baptism, God creates a new heart within the sinner, which is able to trust in the Christ. Before this, the sinner was not capable of faith, therefore God, by a divine act of creation, gives the sinner a new heart which can believe. This is why St. Paul writes, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). Creation and salvation go together; they are both divine works of God alone, so that all glory belongs to the Triune God, and to no other.

Prayer: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

In Acts, Luke tells us that St. Paul and his company had not planned to go to Macedonia. But God revealed to them in a dream that they should go, and thus the congregation of the saints in Philippi was founded.

Our logic and experience would sometimes suggest that our labor in mission fields might better be spent elsewhere, or in other ways. But had not Paul and his company come to Philippi, who would have preached to Lydia and her household? And not only were she and her household baptized, she persuaded Paul to stay longer, and they then had opportunity to preach to the Philippian jailer, who was also baptized with his whole household. Paul would later write his epistle to this Philippian congregation, and to us; a great comfort and source of joy to them and to all Christians until Christ comes again in glory.

This is a reminder that it is God’s Word, not our word; and God’s Word is for all people in all places. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to create and sustain faith through that Word; God calls us to proclaim it faithfully throughout the world. May He give us strength, wisdom, and courage to do so!

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us, Thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

Lesson from the Book of Concord

The First Sunday after Trinity

ARTICLE XXIV.

Falsely are our churches accused of Abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained on our part, and celebrated with the highest reverence. All the usual ceremonies are also preserved, save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. For ceremonies are needed to this end alone, that the unlearned be taught. And not only has Paul commanded to use in the Church a language understood by the people [1 Cor. 14: 2, 9], but it has also be so ordained by man's law.

The people are accustomed to partake of the Sacrament together, if any be fit for it, and this also increases the reverence and devotion of public worship. For none are admitted except they be first proved. The people are also advised concerning the dignity and use of the Sacrament, how great consolation it brings anxious consciences, that they may learn to believe God, and to expect and ask of Him all that is good. This worship pleases God; such use of the Sacrament nourishes true devotion toward God. It does not, therefore, appear that the Mass is more devoutly celebrated among our adversaries, than among us.

But it is evident that for a long time, it has been the public and most grievous complaint of all good men, that Masses have been basely profaned and applied to purposes of lucre. For it is unknown how far this abuse obtains in all the churches, by what manner of men Masses are said only for fees or stipends, and how many celebrate them contrary to the Canons. But Paul severely threatens those who deal unworthily with the Eucharist, when he says [1 Cor. 11:27]: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." When, therefore, our priests were admonished concerning this sin, Private Masses were discontinued among us, as scarcely any Private Masses were celebrated except for lucre's sake.

Neither were the bishops ignorant of these abuses, and if they had corrected them in time, there would now be less dissension. Heretofore, by their own negligence, they suffered many corruptions to creep into the Church. Now, when it is too late, they begin to complain of the troubles of the Church, seeing that this disturbance has been occasioned simply by those abuses, which were so manifest that they could be borne no longer. Great dissensions have arisen concerning the Mass, concerning the Sacrament. Perhaps the world is being punished for such long-continued profanations of the Mass, as have been tolerated in the churches for so many centuries, by the very men who were both able and in duty bound to correct them. For, in the Ten Commandments, it is written (Exodus 20), "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." But since the world began, nothing that God ever ordained seems to have been so abused for filthy lucre as the Mass.

There was also added the opinion which infinitely increased Private Masses, namely, that Christ, by His passion, had made satisfaction for original sin, and instituted the

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21: MATTHEW 5:33-37 2ND SUNDAY A. TRINITY

"Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.'" This is a command. No one should think that he has kept this command simply because he has avoided swearing—as though swearing, in and of itself, were the problem. What Jesus forbids is dishonesty; what He commands is truthfulness.

One little word ought to carry the same weight for you as an oath. You should never say "yes" or "no" unless you mean it and intend to do what you have said. If you do that, you will never need to swear. On the other hand, he who feels the need to swear unnecessarily is dishonest, because his simple word is not good enough to be trusted. For the same reason, do not require others to swear to you. Whether they say "yes" or "no", honor it and hold them to it. In this way, you respect them and you teach the dishonest man to take his own word seriously.

Christ commands this of us because that is how God Himself works. Every word of Scripture is true and trustworthy, whether God chooses to add an oath or not. Therefore, we have confidence in the forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ, because God has promised this and God's Word cannot be broken.

Prayer: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

“In this mountain...,” prophesies Isaiah. Which mountain? Mount Zion is a literal place; the highest point in the city of Jerusalem. But the geographical mountain is not what Isaiah means. Mount Zion is a symbol of the heavenly Jerusalem of which all the baptized are citizens. Thus the book of Hebrews teaches: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22). Isaiah lists the many pleasures of this heavenly city: “A feast of choice pieces... wine on the lees... fat things full of marrow,” but the greatest pleasure is this: “we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.” In other words, the greatest pleasures of this world are nothing compared to those of the heavenly kingdom, chief of which is the salvation of God. He who receives God’s salvation through faith will inherit all the pleasures of heaven.

The world thinks us harsh because we confess that those who do not believe in the Christ go to hell. But it is they who have chosen hell for themselves. They want to have the pleasures of heaven, but without the salvation of heaven. This will not work. Whoever receives the salvation of God in this life will inherit heaven. But he who rejects God’s salvation rejects everything; there is nothing left. The greatest pleasure, from which all others flow, is the salvation of God through the Christ.

Prayer: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Mass wherein an offering should be made for daily sins, venial and mortal. From this has arisen the common opinion that the Mass taketh away the sins of the living and the dead, by the outward act. Then they began to dispute whether one Mass said for many were worth as much as special Masses for individuals, and this brought forth that infinite multitude of Masses. Concerning these opinions our teachers have given warning, that they depart from the Holy Scriptures and diminish the glory of the passion of Christ. For Christ’s passion was an oblation and satisfaction, not for original guilt only, but also for all sins, as it is written to the Hebrews (10:10), “We are sanctified through the offering of Jesus Christ, once for all.” Also, 10:14: “By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Scripture also teaches that we are justified before God through faith in Christ, when we believe that our sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake. Now if the Mass take away the sins of the living and the dead by the outward act, justification comes of the work of Masses, and not of faith, which Scripture does not allow.

But Christ commands us [Luke 22:19]: “This do in remembrance of Me”; therefore the Mass was instituted that the faith of those who use the Sacrament should remember what benefit it receives through Christ, and cheer and comfort the anxious conscience. For, to remember Christ, is to remember His benefits, and to realize that they are truly offered unto us. Nor is it enough only to remember the history, for this the Jew and the ungodly also can remember. Wherefore the Mass is to be used to this end, that there the Sacrament [Communion] may be administered to them that have need of consolation; as Ambrose says: “Because I always sin, I am always bound to take the medicine.”

Now, forasmuch as the Mass is such a giving of the Sacrament, we hold one communion every holyday, and also other days, when any desire the Sacrament it is given to such as ask for it. And this custom is not new in the Church; for the Fathers before Gregory make no mention of any private Mass, but of the common Mass they speak very much. Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to the Communion and keeping back others. And it appears from the ancient Canons, that someone celebrated the Mass from whom all the other presbyters and deacons receive the Body of the Lord, for thus the words of the Nicene Canon says: “Let the deacons, according to their order, receive the Holy Communion after the presbyters, from the bishop or from a presbyter.” And Paul [1 Cor. 11:33] commands concerning the Communion: “Tarry for one another,” so that there may be a common participation.

Forasmuch, therefore, as the Mass with us has the example of the Church taken from the Scripture and the Fathers, we are confident that it cannot be disapproved, especially since the public ceremonies are retained for the most part, like those hitherto in use; only the number of Masses differs, which, because of very great and manifest abuses, doubtless might be profitably reduced. For in olden times, even in churches most frequented, the Mass was not celebrated every day, as the Tripartite History (Book 9, chapt. 33) testifies: “Again in Alexandria, every Wednesday and Friday, the Scriptures are read, and the doctors expound them, and all things are done, except only the celebration of the Eucharist.”

—The Augsburg Confession

Just as the Lord called the prophet Ezekiel to preach to a people that were rebellious at heart, so also God calls men into the Holy Ministry to proclaim His Word and administer His gifts to poor sinners. It is far from an easy task.

The Lord also commands the faithful to make a true confession of their faith in the midst of a hostile world. Whether the world listens or not, it does not change what God has sent His Word to do.

Therefore, pray for pastors as they seek to fulfill their ministry, even when sinners rebel. Pray also that when you are faced with a rebellious world, or even when you are faced with your own sinful flesh, your eyes turn back to Jesus. Pray that your heart is conformed to God's Word by the working of the Holy Ghost as you receive the Lord's gifts, given by His called servants in the Holy Ministry.

Prayer: O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The key word is "good": God knows how to give *good* gifts to those who ask. When God does not give us what we ask, does that mean God does not care? No. Does it always mean that what we asked for was sinful? Again, no. It means that God knows better than we do what is good for us. Imagine if a son asked his father for a serpent: would the father give it, or might he explain that a fish is better? In our ignorant flesh we pray for things which seem good to us, but which God knows to be problematic. So, the message is not, "God will give you anything you ask for," but instead, "God will give you good things, which He wants you to ask for."

We should ask God for all our wants and needs, whether He gives them or not, because it shows that we trust Him. He especially wants us to learn which things are truly good for us and to ask for those. An immature son may ask for a serpent because it is "cool"; a mature son will ask for a fish because it is food. Likewise, we ignorantly ask for many things without knowing the consequences. But the truly good things we should ask for are faith, the forgiveness of sins, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, which are the very things He promises to give.

Prayer: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Lesson from the Book of Concord

The Second Sunday after Trinity

ARTICLE XIII.

Of the Use of the Sacraments, they [the Lutheran theologians] teach, that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the Sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments.

They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act, and do not teach that, in the use of the Sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

—The Augsburg Confession

TUESDAY, JUNE 13: I TIMOTHY 6:6–19 1ST SUNDAY A. TRINITY

Some people have a way of making biblical instructions into a catchphrase or cliché. The passage we read today can often be taken that way, as a blanket charge against all money. However, the Apostle says that “the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil,” as he gives instruction to rich Christians, as he gives instruction to Timothy.

Instead of catchphrases that exalt worldly righteousness, we as believers ought to strive for the pure Word of God, as it is the only thing that makes us wise to salvation. We receive the good confession, which is to be confessed before the world, and no part of that should be watered down, added to, or taken away.

If we only know God’s Word through a cliché or catchphrase, then we rob ourselves of the joy to which the Word truly points, which is Jesus Christ. Therefore, let us pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness, which are implanted in us by the pure Word of God.

Prayer: O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

What a blessing it is to know the Lord! Even while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you! God's people have been given the gift of faith and adoption through Holy Baptism. They hear and receive the promise of forgiveness whenever the words of the Absolution are spoken. They receive the food and drink of Christ's true Body and Blood, which strengthens us in Him.

What other gift in this life is more amazing than this? Is there anything that can compare to so great a salvation that believers have in Christ Jesus?

There is nothing more amazing than knowing that Jesus has reconciled us poor sinners with the Father and that He calls us His own. There is no comparison to anything else in this life. Therefore, make your boasts and glories in the one thing that matters most: that you know God because of what He has done for you!

Prayer: O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The parable of the rich fool, like many of Jesus' parables, cuts to the heart of the problem: the sinful heart. Our Lord reacts to a man who demands that Jesus tell the man's brother to divide an inheritance. Christ teaches that righteousness is not found in earthly wealth.

There is nothing wrong with saving money or managing one's finances. The sin of covetousness is the problem. The man who demanded that our Lord arbitrate a dispute was blinded by a sinful heart that seeks security in worldly treasures, rather than in believing the Gospel.

It is easy for the old Adam to wrap himself up in things that are tangible and worldly. It is easy to say, "I have done well!" and "I have enough now." But nothing from the temporal world can save us from death. Our striving for good works cannot earn salvation! Therefore, look to what truly matters: believing in the Lord Jesus and trusting Him to save you from sin, death, and the grave. The Gospel of forgiveness and life in Christ crucified is the true treasure of eternal life!

Prayer: O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Our Lord gives what some may call a ‘reality check’ as He warns the disciples that the message they will preach will cause division.

As we considered earlier this week, some have come up with catch phrases and cliches that often minimize the truth of what Scripture teaches. We hear that Jesus preaches peace, but few acknowledge the kind of peace Jesus brings. Peace with God is by the washing of regeneration and forgiveness of sin. This type of peace causes enmity with the world because the world rejects the Lord.

This is why the type of peace Jesus brings to the believer will cause division, sometimes even within a household. There is a noticeable division between those who know the peace of God and those who want the false peace the world promises.

Our hope is that hearers receive the teachings of the Apostles found in Scripture and, therefore, receive Christ. If we receive Christ, then we have true peace which the world cannot give.

Prayer: O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

When Jesus sent His disciples to preach, He commanded them not to fear those who would persecute them and His Word. Instead, they were instructed to confess Christ before such men.

When Rev. David Henkel founded the Tennessee Synod, he did so because many Lutheran Synods of his day had begun to compromise the confession of the Church. This is the same confession that Christians always are to cling to by faith. Jesus told His disciples, “Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.” Rev. Henkel, by God’s grace, knew that this was not just a mere suggestion on the part of our Lord. It may have been easier to compromise, but David Henkel chose the hard way: the faithful way.

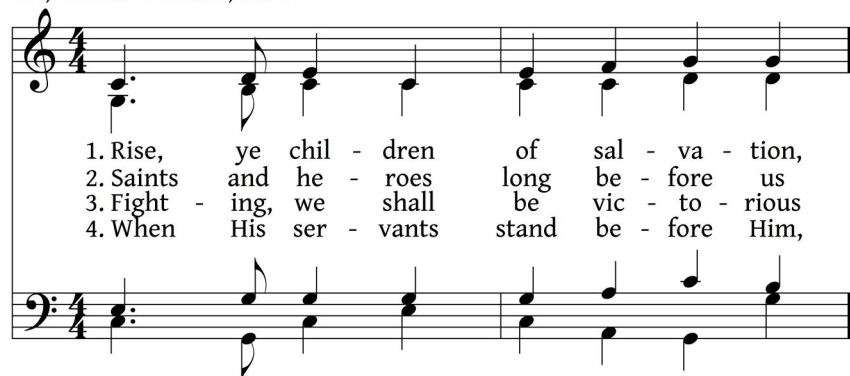
Let us continue to pray that we make a good confession and, even more so, that pastors feel the same convictions that Pastor Henkel felt: to never compromise the confession of Christ before men.

Prayer: O Lord, hear our prayers to Thee on this day of David Henkel, Thy confessor and pastor, that as Thou didst lead him to render faithful service to Thee, Thou wouldst lead us to faithfully confess our hope in Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

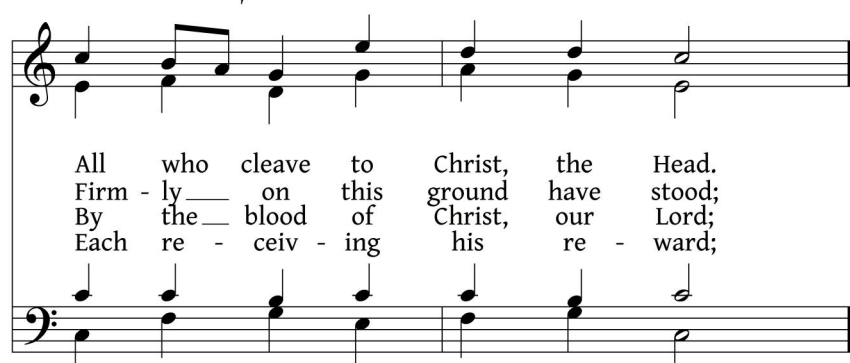
Festival of David Henkel
88. Rise, Ye Children of Salvation

Auf, ihr Christen, Christi Glieder
Justus Falckner, 1697, cento
Tr., Emma F. Bevan, 1858

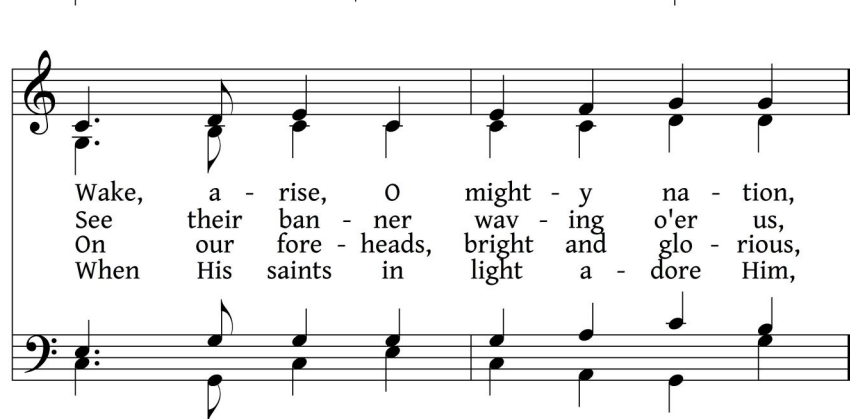
Neander
Joachim Neander, 1680



1. Rise, ye chil - dren of sal - va - tion,
2. Saints and he - roes long be - fore us
3. Fight - ing, we shall be vic - to - rious
4. When His ser - vants stand be - fore Him,



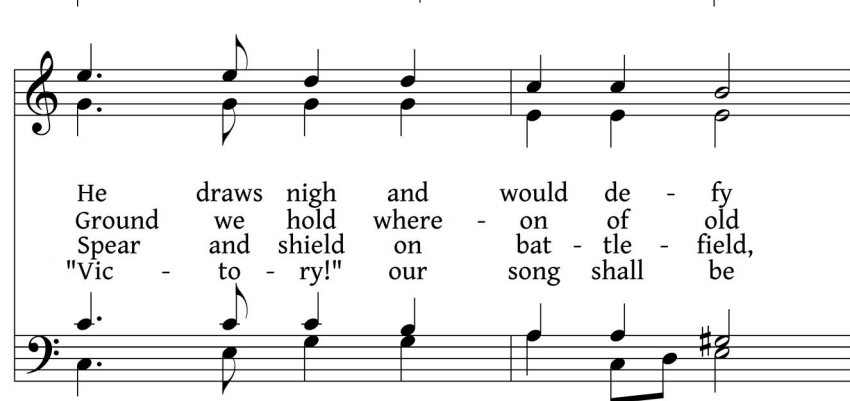
All who cleave to Christ, the Head.
Firm - ly on this ground have stood;
By the blood of Christ, our Lord;
Each re - ceiv - ing his re - ward;



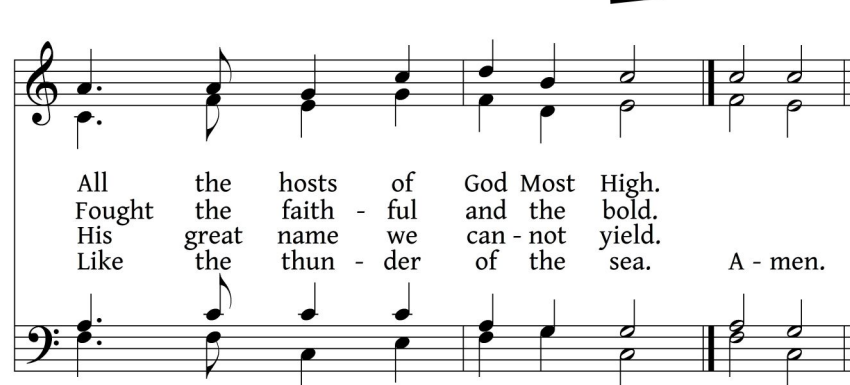
Wake, a - rise, O might - y na - tion,
See their ban - ner wav - ing o'er us,
On our fore - heads, bright and glo - rious,
When His saints in light a - dore Him,



Ere the Foe on Zi - on tread.
Con - qu'rors through the Sav - ior's blood.
Shines the wit - ness of His Word;
Giv - ing glo - ry to the Lord,



He draws nigh and would de - fy
Ground we hold where - on of old
Spear and shield on bat - tle - field,
"Vic - to - ry!" our song shall be



All the hosts of God Most High.
Fought the faith - ful and the bold.
His great name we can - not yield.
Like the thun - der of the sea. A - men.