

March 20, 2022

Luke 13:31-35

I missed one. And it came back to bite me. A couple weeks ago we heard Satan attacking - “Did God really say?” - attacking Adam and Eve and God in the Garden of Eden. Then we heard Satan taking on Jesus in the wilderness. At Pastor Study the next day, I asked the fellas: “Which is worse - when Satan smiles, when he smiles with a promise: “I can make things good for you, better for you; I have a life better for you than what God has for you”? Which is worse: “When Satan smiles or when Satan scowls?” I missed one. What about when Satan mixes his smile and his scowl and he laughs at you? The next day after I asked: “Which is worse, when Satan smiles at you or when Satan scowls at you?” my laptop disappeared - *sperlos versankt* - gone without a trace. And the devil had such a good time with that: “How stupid! How could you let that happen? What are you going to do now? You don’t know what to do, do you?!” Every time I tried to change a password, he laughed some more. Every time I tried to move forward, he threw another wrench into things, and laughed all the more. I felt so small - “No matter what I do, no matter how hard I try - something always seems to go wrong.” And the devil laughed and laughed.

Satan loves to get into our heads, doesn’t he? “Did God really say?” He loves to get into our heads: “If you’re really the Son of God, if you’re really a real Christian” He loves to get into our heads: “You can’t get anything right. Nothings going to work for you. Why do you even bother?” Satan loves to get into our heads. Why? To get us thinking without God and his Word, to get us thinking against God and his Word. To muck up our life with God.

In our lesson, we see Satan try to get into Jesus’ head. Jesus is up north in Galilee. He’s doing what he came to do, saying what he came to say. Some days, the crowds are rejoicing over Jesus and what he says. Other days Well, not everybody liked what Jesus was doing; not everybody liked what Jesus was saying. In fact, more and more, people

didn't like what Jesus was saying and doing. But that didn't stop Jesus. He kept on doing what God gave him to do; he kept on saying what God gave him to say. When people didn't like it, when they got in his face, that didn't stop Jesus. He kept on with what God gave him to do; he kept on with what God gave him to say.

So, in our lesson, Satan changed up his tactics. Instead of just getting in Jesus' face, Satan works to get into Jesus' head. "You need to get out of here; Herod wants to kill you." We might think: That doesn't make any sense. Why would the Pharisees warn Jesus? The Pharisees didn't want what Jesus was saying or doing; why would they act like they were looking out for him? And did Herod really want to kill Jesus? Before this, John the Baptist was preaching directly against Herod, and Herod didn't want to kill John, so why would he want to kill Jesus? And after this, on Good Friday, when Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, Herod was happy, not because he wanted to kill Jesus, but because he wanted to see Jesus give him a miracle show. The warning that Herod wanted to kill Jesus just doesn't seem true. What seems more true is Satan trying to get into Jesus' head with all those questions - to get Jesus' wondering, worrying, distracted, swirling: "What's going on? What should I be doing?"

What did Jesus do with all that? Instead of getting distracted by all the questions - "Why? What's going on? What should I do?" Instead of swirling in doubt and fear - Jesus kept his focus. **"Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!"** Jesus knew what God gave him to say and do. And instead of wondering what would happen, instead of letting Satan get in his head, Jesus kept his focus on what God gave him to say and to do. One of our seminary professors put it this way - "Jesus was no marshmallow man; Jesus is a strong man, not a marshmallow man."

Sounds good, doesn't it? Jesus is the strong Jesus we need. Jesus is no marshmallow man. He said what needed to be said; he did what needed to be done. He said what God gave him to say; he did what God gave him to do. Sounds good, doesn't it? And with Jesus, like Jesus, we want to be strong - don't we? - strong to say what God gives us to say, strong to do what God gives us to do. With Jesus, like Jesus, we want to be strong, strong instead of marshmallow soft.

But in trying to be strong with Jesus, what sometimes happens? Oh, Satan loves to get into our heads, doesn't he? We see - or maybe we just imagine - people against us because of what we say and do with Jesus. It may be something from the past; or we might think: "If I say or do what Jesus wants, I just know they'll be against me." Now, we don't want to be marshmallow, do we? - scrunched and crushed. We don't want to be marshmallow for Jesus; we want to be strong for Jesus. So what do we do? We sound the alarm and go to battle stations. We put up our armor; we harden our heart, we harden our face for battle. It might not feel good, but we tell ourselves: "It's their fault; they're making me this way." A hard heart, a cold face might not feel good, but we tell ourselves: "It's for Jesus."

"It's for Jesus." But it's not Jesus' way, is it? In our lesson, Jesus is thinking of Jerusalem, the Jerusalem that would kill him. And what does Jesus show us? Not a cold, hard heart, but a heart that hurt with love for his people. **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"** With love, Jesus hurt for the people who wouldn't listen to him; with love, he hurt for the people he would someday judge.

Rejected and attacked by his own people, Satan trying to get into this head, how could Jesus keep his focus? Jesus kept his focus by looking ahead, not just looking ahead at the hard times to come, the hard things God had for him to say, the hard things God had for him to do, but Jesus looking

ahead to the blessing God would have for him - **“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”** Jesus kept his focus by looking ahead. Yes, today he had people in his face, Satan trying to get into his head, but the time was coming - Palm Sunday was coming when he would have crowds cheering him with palm branches, cheering him with the promise of God. Even better, Jesus knew the time was coming when he would have you - and countless thousands like you - when he would have you with him in heaven.

When people get in your face for what you say or do for Jesus ... when Satan tries to get in your head to distract you from Jesus ... you get to have that same focus, the same confidence, as Jesus. Why? Because you have the same future as Jesus! Satan may try to get in your minds: “Look what you’ve done. You can’t get anything right.” But you don’t have to be alone with Satan and his smack talk. You have the Jesus who took what God gave him to say, and he said it right - whether people were cheering him or hating on him - Jesus got it right.

I’ll say it again - no matter what Satan says, no matter how he tries to get in your mind, you don’t have to face Satan and his smack talk alone. You have the Jesus who took what God gave him to do and he did it right, all the way to the cross - “It is finished - right for God and right for you.” It doesn’t matter who or why people might get in your face; it doesn’t matter how Satan tries to worm his way into your head. Satan couldn’t get his way in Jesus’ head, and with Jesus, you don’t have to let Satan have his way in your head. Today, you have Jesus saying to you: “No matter what you have said or done - I forgive you! No matter what you have left unsaid, undone, I forgive you. I forgive you and - like a hen gathers her chicks - I love to gather you and lead you and wrap you up safe with me.”

What a great picture and promise. The next time Satan is looking to get in your face or into your head, the next time Satan is looking to stop you from saying and doing what God gives you to say and to do - remember that picture and promise - Jesus wrapping you up and Jesus backing you up.

Jesus wrapping you up and Jesus backing you up. In your life with Jesus, no matter who is against you, no matter who is trying to get into your head - you have Jesus to wrap you up and you have Jesus to back you up, strong with love for you. Amen.

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Family Connecting in Christ

March 19 & 20, 2022

THE SERVICE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... forces around us (and inside us) attack God's Truth with lies and disinformation. That means, as people of God's Truth, we can expect to be attacked, not just with lies and disinformation, but even with force.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see that with Christ's church of the past, we can expect opposition today. Today, we see Jesus' heart even as he was under attack for his ministry.

OPENING HYMN

"O Lord, Take Pity Once You've Seen"

Hymn 865

O Lord, take pity once you've seen what's leaving us so shaken:
your saints are few and far between—we feel we've been forsaken.
So many call your Word untrue, refusing to believe in you—
they have us far outnumbered.

May God root out all those who teach religion that is twisted,
who say with bold, defiant speech: "We cannot be resisted.
For we alone have right and might; our views are welcomed with delight.
To whom must we now answer?"

Therefore God says: "I won't delay! My people's hopes are waning.
Their sighs disclose their great dismay; I've heard their sad complaining.
My healing Word will work as planned,
will bring relief, will make them stand, will strengthen and uphold them."

Dear Lord, the godless gather round the guides whose teachings suit them.
Within your Church let there be found the courage to refute them.
Preserve your Word and keep it pure, and thus we shall remain secure
from evils that surround us!

INSTRUCTION FOR THE BEGINNING OF LENT

P: Brothers and sisters in Christ, God created us to know joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. By our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment, but to turn to him and live. Therefore, God in his mercy has sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take our place under the law, to suffer for us, and to die the death we deserve. God made Jesus, who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

During the forty days of Lent we fix our eyes on Jesus, as the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God. The time of Lent reminds us that to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor.

I invite you, therefore, to confess your sins, ask our Father for forgiveness, and commit yourselves to this struggle.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;
I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins
with his innocent suffering and death.
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

CW p. 174

The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are: "In peace let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy. For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy. 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." The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with hyphens under "mer - cy" to indicate a long note.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Lord our strength, the battle of good and evil rages within and around us, and our ancient foe tempts us with his deceits and empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your Word, and then give us the courage and strength to speak your Truth with Love, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 26:8–15

But as soon as Jeremiah finished telling all the people everything the LORD had commanded him to say, the priests, the prophets and all the people seized him and said, “You must die! Why do you prophesy in the LORD’s name that this house will be like Shiloh and this city will be desolate and deserted?” And all the people crowded around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

When the officials of Judah heard about these things, they went up from the royal palace to the house of the LORD and took their places at the entrance of the New Gate of the LORD’s house.

Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and all the people, “This man should be sentenced to death because he has prophesied against this city. You have heard it with your own ears!”

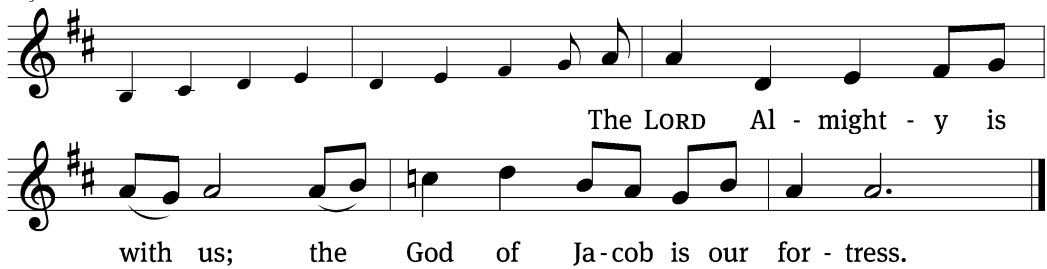
Then Jeremiah said to all the officials and all the people: “The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the things you have heard. Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the LORD your God. Then the LORD will relent and not bring the disaster he has pronounced against you. As for me, I am in your hands; do with me whatever you think is good and right. Be assured, however, that if you put me to death, you will bring the guilt of innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and on those who live in it, for in truth the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 46A

Refrain



The LORD Al - might - y is
with us; the God of Ja - cob is our for - tress.

Tone



God is our ref- / uge and strength,
an ever-present help in / trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the / earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart / of the sea,
though its waters / roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their / surging. *Refrain*

There is a river whose streams make glad the cit- / y of God,
the holy place where the Most / High dwells.
God is within her, she / will not fall;
God will help her at / break of day.
"Be still, and know that / I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted / in the earth."
**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

SECOND READING**Philippians 1:27–30**

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**2 Peter 3:9**

Glory, praise, and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ.
He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish,
but everyone to come to repentance.
Glory, praise, and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL**Luke 13:31–35**

At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, “Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you.”

He replied, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will keep on driving out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’ In any case, I must press on today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate.

I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head"

Hymn 861

Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's head, you are her one foundation;
in you she trusts, before you bows, and waits for your salvation.
Built on this rock secure, your Church shall endure
though all the world decay and all things pass away.
O hear, O hear us, Jesus!

O Lord, let this your little flock, your name alone confessing,
continue in your loving care, true unity possessing.
Your sacraments, O Lord, and your saving Word
to us e'er pure retain; grant that they may remain
our only strength and comfort.

Help us to serve you evermore with hearts both pure and lowly;
and may your Word, that light divine, shine on in splendor holy
that we repentance show, in faith ever grow;
the pow'r of sin destroy and evils that annoy.
O make us faithful Christians.

And for your gospel let us dare to sacrifice all treasure;
teach us to bear your blessed cross, to find in you all pleasure.
O grant us steadfastness in joy and distress.
Lord, for your mercy's sake, let us by grace partake
of endless joy and glory.

SERMON

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Heavenly Father, you loved the world and gave your Son to free us from sin and death by his obedient death on the cross.

We confess that without your love we are lost.

Lord of the Church, we thank you for the treasure of the gospel. By your Spirit, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. **Strengthen our determination to do what pleases you, no matter what the danger or the cost.**

Guard and guide those who carry a cross in the name of Christ and face ridicule and persecution for the sake of the kingdom: missionaries and chaplains, young people who stand up for what is right in the face of pressure to do what is wrong, and all who pay a high price for their faith and values as Christians.

By your Spirit, O Lord, grant them patience and endurance.

Keep in your care those who carry heavy burdens in life: the sick and the chronically ill, the depressed and the lonely, those torn by conflict in personal relationships, and those victimized by war and injustice. [We pray especially for...*here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Comfort all who face the terrors of life with a heavy heart.

Grant them peace, O Lord, and in your mercy, be their guardian and friend, their comfort and hope.

Watch over those who care for others: pastors and counselors; physicians and nurses; social workers and caring friends; all who feed the hungry, comfort the hurting, and stand beside the dying.

Strengthen them in their work, O Lord, and do not let them become weary in doing good.

Hear us as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Help us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Keep us faithful even to the point of death, that we may receive the crown of life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

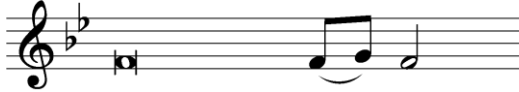
THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Individually packaged wafers are gluten-free.)

CW p.183

PREFACE



The Lord be with you.



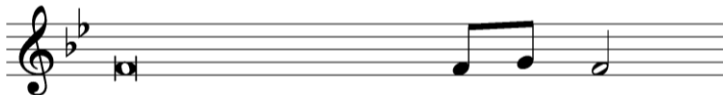
And al - so with you.



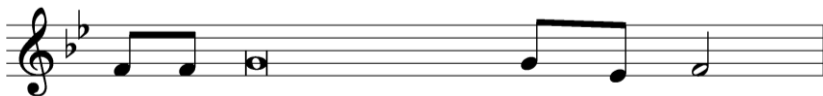
Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

CW p.184



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,



God of might. Heav-en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the



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



san - na in the high - est!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my T body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my T blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD

CW p.186



Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us your peace.

DISTRIBUTION (CHOIR)

“We Believe”

*We believe in God the Father, Maker of the universe,
And in Christ His Son our Saviour, Come to us by virgin birth.
We believe He died to save us, Bore our sins, was crucified.
Then from death He rose victorious, Ascended to the Father’s side.*

*Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all, Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all, Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all.
Name above all names, Name above all names. Name above all names.*

*We believe He sends His Spirit, On His church with gifts of power.
God His word of truth affirming, Sends us to the nations now.
He will come again in glory, Judge the living and the dead.
Every knee shall bow before Him, Then must every tongue confess.*

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

“The Church’s One Foundation”

Hymn 855

The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word.
From heav’n he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from ev’ry nation, yet one o’er all the earth;
her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with ev’ry grace endued.

The Church shall never perish. Her dear Lord, to defend,
to guide, sustain, and cherish, is with her to the end.
Tho’ there be those that hate her and strive to see her fail,
against both foe and traitor she ever shall prevail.

Tho' with a scornful wonder the world sees her oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
and soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of her war
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
and the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest.

PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”

Hymn 862

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word; curb those who by deceit or sword
would seek to overthrow your Son and to destroy what he has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, your pow’r make known, for you are Lord of lords alone;
defend your Christendom that we may sing your praise eternally.

O Comforter of priceless worth, send peace and unity on earth;
support us in our final strife and lead us out of death to life.

OFFERING

*If you prefer online giving, you may scan this code
with your mobile device.*



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