As We Gather

Why are we here? This is *the* existential question. How many midlife crises have been suffered through because of those four short words? The world says, "pursue pleasure, avoid pain" but ultimately, that doesn't satisfy. Solomon, in the book of Ecclesiastes says that life is meaningless without God. He alone can give us our true purpose in life. And his answer? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

Prayer before Worship

Heavenly Father, grant Your mercy and grace to Your people in their many and various callings. Give them patience, and strengthen them in their Christian vocation of witness to the world and of service to their neighbor in Christ's name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Preservice Music

Welcome & Ringing of the Bell

Confession and Absolution

LSB 791—All People That on Earth Do Dwell *sts. 1–4*

1 All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, His praise forthtell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

2 Know that the Lord is God indeed;
Without our aid He did us make.
We are His folk, He doth us feed,
And for His sheep He doth us take.

3 O enter then His gates with praise;
Approach with joy His courts unto.
Praise, laud, and bless His name always,
For it is seemly so to do.

4 For why? The Lord our God is good:
His mercy is forever sure.
His truth at all times firmly stood
And shall from age to age endure.

Text: Public domain

Invocation & Verses of Truth

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

P The LORD is near to all who call on him,
C **to all who call on him in truth**

P I, the LORD, speak the truth.
C **I declare what is right.**

P The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.
C **We have seen his glory, the glory of the On and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Confession and Absolution

P This is the message we have hear from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.
C **If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.**

P But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.
C **If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.**

P If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
C **If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.**

P My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.
C **He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.**

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

P The truth is that you are a sinner who has earned the wrath of God. But more than that, the truth is that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, "of whom I am the worst," so that you and I might be set free to serve Him. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I speak not my words, but His: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the T Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Hymn of Praise *LSB 791—All People That on Earth Do Dwell, st. 5*

D 5 To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom heav'n and earth adore,
From us and from the angel host
Be praise and glory evermore.

Text: Public domain

Service of the Word

Prayer of the Day

P Lord Jesus Christ, You have reconciled the world to Yourself through Your death on the cross and Your resurrection from the dead and You have given us the ministry of reconciliation. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit that in our many and varied vocations we may be faithful to Your call to love God and love our neighbors; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

First Reading *Ezekiel 2:1–5 (CSB)*

1 He said to me, "Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak with you." 2 As he spoke to me,
the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and I listened to the one who was speaking to me. 3 He
said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to the rebellious pagans who have
rebelled against me. The Israelites and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this day. 4 The
descendants are obstinate and hardhearted. I am sending you to them, and you must say to them,
'This is what the Lord God says. '5 Whether they listen or refuse to listen—for they are a rebellious
house—they will know that a prophet has been among them.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading *2 Corinthians 5:14–21 (CSB)*

14 For the love of Christ compels us, since we have reached this conclusion, that one died for all, and
therefore all died. 15 And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves,
but for the one who died for them and was raised.
16 From now on, then, we do not know anyone from a worldly perspective. Even if we have known
Christ from a worldly perspective, yet now we no longer know him in this way. 17 Therefore, if anyone
is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come! 18 Everything is
from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of
reconciliation. 19 That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their
trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us.
20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us. We plead on
Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God." 21 He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so
that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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

LSB 966—Before You, Lord, We Bow

1 Before You, Lord, we bow,
Our God who reigns above
And rules the world below,
Boundless in pow'r and love.
Our thanks we bring
In joy and praise,
Our hearts we raise
To You, our King!

2 The nation You have blest
May well Your love declare,
From foes and fears at rest,
Protected by Your care.
For this bright day,
For this fair land—
Gifts of Your hand—
Our thanks we pay.

3 May ev'ry mountain height,
Each vale and forest green,
Shine in Your Word's pure light,
And its rich fruits be seen!
May ev'ry tongue
Be tuned to praise
And join to raise
A grateful song.

4 Earth, hear your Maker's voice;
Your great Redeemer own;
Believe, obey, rejoice,
And worship Him alone.
Cast down your pride,
Your sin deplore,
And bow before
The Crucified.

5 And when in pow'r He comes,
Oh, may our native land
From all its rending tombs

Send forth a glorious band,
A countless throng,
With joy to sing
To heav'n's high King
Salvation's song!

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Sermon *Why Are We Here?*

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 T **of the world to come. Amen.**

Offering Announcement

Prayer of the Church

Lord's Prayer

C **Our Father who art in heaven,**
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface & Proper 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.**

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, out of love for His fallen creation, humbled Himself by taking on the form of a servant, becoming obedient unto death, even death upon a cross. Risen from the dead, He has freed us from eternal death and given us life everlasting. 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 *LSB 161, sung*

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.

The Words of Institution

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 T 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 T 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.**

Video Presentation *Lead Me to the Cross*

LSB 622—Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared

1 Lord Jesus Christ, You have prepared
This feast for our salvation;
It is Your body and Your blood,
And at Your invitation
As weary souls, with sin oppressed,
We come to You for needed rest,
For comfort, and for pardon.

2 Although You did to heav'n ascend,
Where angel hosts are dwelling,
And in Your presence they behold
Your glory, all excelling,
And though Your people shall not see
Your glory and Your majesty
Till dawns the judgment morning,

3 Yet, Savior, You are not confined
To any habitation;
But You are present even now
Here with Your congregation.
Firm as a rock this truth shall stand,

Unmoved by any daring hand
Or subtle craft and cunning.

4 We eat this bread and drink this cup,
Your precious Word believing
That Your true body and Your blood
Our lips are here receiving.
This Word remains forever true;
All things are possible with You,
For You are Lord Almighty.

5 Though reason cannot understand,
Yet faith this truth embraces:
Your body, Lord, is even now
At once in many places.
I leave to You how this can be;
Your Word alone suffices me;
I trust its truth unfailing.

6 Lord, I believe what You have said;
Help me when doubts assail me.
Remember that I am but dust,
And let my faith not fail me.
Your supper in this vale of tears
Refreshes me and stills my fears
And is my priceless treasure.

7 Grant that we worthily receive
Your supper, Lord, our Savior,
And, truly grieving for our sins,
May prove by our behavior
That we are thankful for Your grace
And day by day may run our race,
In holiness increasing.

8 For Your consoling supper, Lord,
Be praised throughout all ages!
Preserve it, for in ev'ry place
The world against it rages.
Grant that this sacrament may be
A blessèd comfort unto me
When living and when dying.

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

P O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Benedicamus & Benediction

P Jesus Christ was born for this and came into the world for this:

C **to testify to the truth.**

P You who are of the truth, listen to His voice.

C **He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.**

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.

C **Amen.**

LSB 965—God Bless Our Native Land *(With a third verse from "Come, Thou Almighty King")*

1 God bless our native land;
Firm may she ever stand
Through storm and night.
When the wild tempests rave,
Ruler of wind and wave,
Do Thou our country save
By Thy great might.

2 So shall our prayers arise
To God above the skies;
On Him we wait.
Thou who art ever nigh,
Guarding with watchful eye,
To Thee aloud we cry:
God save the state!

D 3 To Thee, great One in Three,
Eternal praises be
Hence evermore!
Thy sov'reign majesty
May we in glory see,

And to eternity
Love and adore.

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