As We Gather

As Christians, we believe that God alone determines truth, and that He passes along that truth by His Word. But what is the Word of God? First and foremost, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus is the ultimate Word of God. But that Word is also proclaimed and has been throughout human history. Every time a faithful pastor climbs into a pulpit, what you hear is the Word of God. The testimony of some of the first pastors (we call them apostles) was written down in the Bible, which is also the Word of God. Every step along the way, God is faithful in giving us the truth. If you want to find the truth, look to the ever-reliable Word of God.

Prayer

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Confession and Absolution

LSB 829—Christ the Eternal Lord *sts. 1–4*

1 Christ the eternal Lord,
Whose promise here we claim,
Whose gifts of grace are freely poured
On all who name Your name;
With thankfulness and praise
We stand before Your throne,
Intent to serve You all our days
And make Your glory known.

2 Christ the unchanging Word
To ev'ry passing age,
Whose timeless teachings still are heard
Set forth on Scripture's page;
Transform our thought and mind,
Enlighten all who read,
Within Your Word by faith to find
The bread of life indeed.

3 Christ the redeeming Son,
Who shares our human birth,
And by His death salvation won
For ev'ry child of earth;
Inspire our hearts, we pray,
To tell Your love abroad,

That all may honor Christ today
And follow Him as Lord.

4 Christ the unfading Light
Of everlasting day,
Our Morning Star in splendor bright,
The Life, the Truth, the Way;
That light of truth You give
To servants as to friends,
Your way to walk, Your life to live,
Till earth's brief journey ends.

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Invocation & Confession and Absolution

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

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

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

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Service of the Word

Kyrie *152*

P In peace let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.
C **Lord, have mercy.**

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
C **Amen.**

Hymn of Praise

LSB 529—Christ the Eternal Lord, st. 5

5 Christ the ascended King
Exalted high above,
Whose praise unending ages sing,
Whom yet unseen we love;
When mortal life is past
Your voice from heaven's throne
Shall call Your children home at last
To know as we are known.

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Salutation & Prayer of the Day

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

P Lord Jesus, our world today is looking for truth in all the wrong places. Therefore it is coming to all the wrong conclusions. It is Your Word alone that is true and pure and a shield to us who take refuge in You. Through the darkness of these days O Lord, may Your Word truly be a lamp for our feet and a light for our paths; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit as one true God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

First Reading

Hebrews 4:9–13 (CSB)

9 Therefore, a Sabbath rest remains for God's people. 10 For the person who has entered his rest has
rested from his own works, just as God did from his. 11 Let us, then, make every effort to enter that
rest, so that no one will fall into the same pattern of disobedience.
12 For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating
as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and
intentions of the heart. 13 No creature is hidden from him, but all things are naked and exposed to the
eyes of him to whom we must give an account.

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

Alleluia and Verse

LSB 156, sung

C **Alleluia.**
Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

Second Reading

John 8:30–41a (CSB)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

30 As he was saying these things, many believed in him.
31 Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you continue in my word,, you really are my
disciples. 32 You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
33 "We are descendants of Abraham," they answered him, "and we have never been enslaved to
anyone. How can you say, 'You will become free'?"
34 Jesus responded, "Truly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 A slave does not
remain in the household forever, but a son does remain forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you
really will be free. 37 I know you are descendants of Abraham, but you are trying to kill me because my
word has no place among you. 38 I speak what I have seen in the presence of the Father;, so then, you
do what you have heard from your father."
39 "Our father is Abraham," they replied.
"If you were Abraham's children," Jesus told them, "you would do what Abraham did. 40 But now you
are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do
this. 41 You're doing what your father does."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Children's Prayer

LSB 973—Thy Word Is a Lamp

ref Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my path.

1 When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way,
Still You're there right beside me.
And nothing will I fear as long as You are near.
Please be near me to the end. Refrain

2 I will not forget Your love for me, and yet
My heart forever is wandering.
Jesus, be my guide and hold me to Your side;
And I will love You to the end. Refrain

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Sermon

Where Can We Find the Truth?

Apostles 'Creed

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life T **everlasting. Amen.**

Offering Announcement

Prayer of the Church

P Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend *[name(s)]* and all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P And lastly, O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

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.

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 578—Thy Strong Word *sts. 1, 4–6*

1 Thy strong word did cleave the darkness;
At Thy speaking it was done.
For created light we thank Thee,
While Thine ordered seasons run.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise to Thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia without end!

4 From the cross Thy wisdom shining
Breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;
From the cross forever beameth
All Thy bright redeeming light.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise to Thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia without end!

5 Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us,
Mouths to speak Thy holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia!
May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias,
Alleluias without end!

D 6 God the Father, light-creator,
To Thee laud and honor be.
To Thee, Light of Light begotten,
Praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
Glory, glory be to Thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever
Praise the holy Trinity!

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