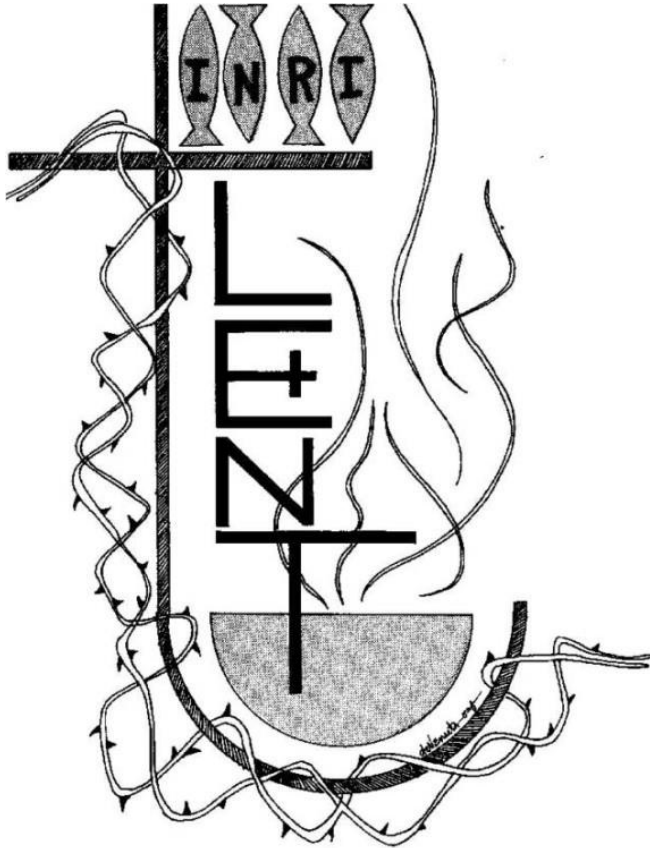


ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR LUTHERAN CHURCH
THIRD WEEKEND OF LENT
Saturday, March 9, 2024
Sunday, March 10, 2024



4

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

ELW is the cranberry red Evangelical Lutheran Book of Worship

Please note: Sunday Service is streamed, recorded and posted on YouTube beginning with the prelude and continuing through the postlude. If you prefer not to appear on camera please sit along the side aisles. Be aware that you may be recorded when coming up the center aisle for communion.

PRELUDE: 5:00 What Wondrous Love Is This?" -arr. A. Whitworth
9:30 "Amazing Grace" – arr. George Shearing

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: Creator God, in the beginning you said, "Let there be light."

C: **We come into the light of your glory.**

P: Loving Christ, your judgment is the light of mercy and grace.

C: **We come into the light of your love.**

P: Holy Spirit, by your grace in us we are light for the world.

C: **We come into the light of your presence.**

Fill us, that we may always live in your light. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: ELW #779 Amazing Grace

(please stand as able)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who writes the law on our hearts who draws all people together through Jesus.

C: **Amen.**

P: Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Holy God,

C: **we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.**

P: Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through ✠ Jesus Christ.

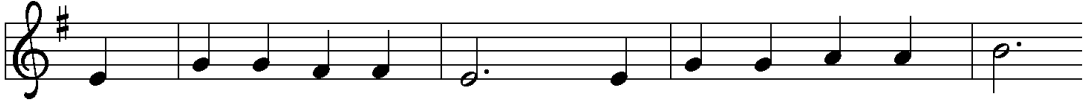
C: **Amen.**

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

C: O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Billie Jo Kunesh

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.

⁴From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking

against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1-10

While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God’s grace at work in our lives.

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *(please stand as able)*



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.

L: The Holy Gospel according to John.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE: “A Good Snake?”

Rev. Brian Hooper

HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW #323 God Loved the World

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A brief silence.

L: Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialog. We lift to you today our partners in mission at the Mbasseny Congregation in the Meru Diocese of Tanzania as they embark on a building campaign to complete construction on their worship space. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love especially Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, renewers of society, whom we commemorate today. Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen health care workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with illness and pain and all facing or recovering from surgery, especially those we remember before you now. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Teach us to pray for our enemies. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war, especially for the people of Ukraine, Israel, Gaza and Haiti. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Abiding God, your love saves. Those who died in the faith are made alive in Christ. We give thanks for your promise that we also will be raised to newness of life. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C: Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE *(please be seated after sharing the peace)*

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.



OFFERINGS

Thank you for sharing your gifts. Offerings can also be made electronically using the Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app.

More information can be found on our website ssmelca.org, or use the QR codes listed here.

CHOIR ANTHEM: “God so Loved the World” -Stainer

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name.

C: Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Partaking of the elements will occur after the Lord’s Prayer.

You will have the opportunity to come forward to receive communion, otherwise prepare your elements by opening the two separate parts, wafer and juice (if you need assistance, please wave to an usher).

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

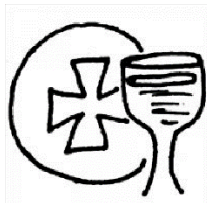
P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
 heav'n 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION: “In the night...”

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.

AGNUS DEI:



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION HYMN: ELW #335 Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

C: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS *(Please be sure to read the printed announcements on the insert.)*

BLESSING

P: Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN: ELW #623 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Share your bread.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: 5:00: "If You Will Trust in God to Guide You" -arr. J. S. Bach

9:30: "Amazing Grace" -arr. Carl Schalk

THANK YOU FOR SERVING IN THE WORSHIP

Ushers: 5:00: Deb Perl

9:30: Pat & Shelley Burns and Nancy Mineau

Reader: 5:00: Pam Maschke **9:30:** Julie Starks

Communion: 5:00: Betty Kroll

(9:30): Set Up: Cathy Peterson

Servers: Cathy Peterson and Kipp Zimmermann

Streaming Tec: Eric Sanders

Coffee Hour Hosts: Kelly, Jake, Maddie & Jonah Miller

Announcements

Food and cash contributions made during the month of March to support our food pantry partners will go to Faith Sante Fe. Protein items, such as peanut butter (and jelly too) and canned beans and meats are always in high demand. Thank you for your continued support of all of our food pantry partners.

Go out to dinner at Billy Sims BBQ on March 12th and **help the youth raise funds for their New Orleans trip this summer**. Any time of the day just mention St. Stephen the Martyr and the youth will get a portion of the sales. Billy Sims is located at 7358 W Rawson Ave. in Franklin.

The March Loose Ends Lunch will take place on March 13th at 12noon. Meet at Famous Daves BBQ located at 5077 S 27th Street. Please let Bonnie Daleness know if you plan on attending.

There will be a **Community Easter Egg Hunt** on Saturday, March 16th from 1:00pm until 3:00pm with fun crafts, treats and more. Invite your neighbors and friends and bring all of the kiddos in your life to enjoy the day. Please consider bringing along a non-perishable food item which will go to our food pantry partners.

The Greatest Hymn on Earth - Join us in worship on Saturday, March 16, at 5 pm for a special performance by the Children's Christian Theatre, "The Greatest Hymn on Earth".

The next **Unity Meal** is March 20th. This event takes place every third Wednesday of the month at our partner parish, Unity Lutheran, located at 1025 E Oklahoma Ave. Volunteers are always needed, please see the sign-up sheet on the board between the offices.

COMING SOON: 2024 Easter Breakfast, Sunday March 31st. Join us for good food and fellowship. Proceeds will go toward the youth fundraising effort. Friends and family welcome. The more the merrier. Volunteers are always welcome. Please sign up if you plan on attending so that we know how many people to plan for (you can still attend if you don't sign up.) There is a sign-up sheet on the board outside of the office.

Don't forget your Lenten special envelopes. 60% of the funds received purple Lenten envelopes will go to Outreach for Hope. The other 40% of the funds received from all special envelopes goes to support the ministry of St. Stephen the Martyr which includes practical things like paying the electric bill and mission support built into our budget, like supporting our various partner churches. Special Lenten contributions can also be made through the Vanco app.

<i>This Week at SSM</i>			
Tuesday, 3/12	6:30pm	Council Meeting	
Wednesday, 3/13	10:15am	Women’s Bible Study	
	12 noon	Loose Ends Lunch	
	5:30pm	Handbell Rehearsal	
	6:30pm	Holden Evening Prayer/Faith Statement	
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal	
<i>5th Weekend of Lent</i>			
Saturday, 3/16	1:00pm	Community Easter Egg Hunt – until 3:00pm	
	5:00pm	Worship with the Christian Children’s Theatre presenting the Greatest Hymns on Earth	
Sunday, 3/17	9:30am	Worship	Ushers: Tom Zuleger, Dan Resterhouse and Mason Resterhouse
			Reader: Cathy Peterson
			Communion Set Up: Denise Sanders
			Communion Servers: Bonnie Daleness and Al Behling
	10:45am	Maundy Thursday Rehearsal	

*Please join us for mid-week Lenten services, **Holden Evening Prayer**, every Wednesday at 6:30pm. Services will include Faith Stories featuring a different congregation member each week:*

March 13 – Cathy Peterson and

March 20 – Al Behling

KEEP THESE SSM MEMBERS IN PRAYER

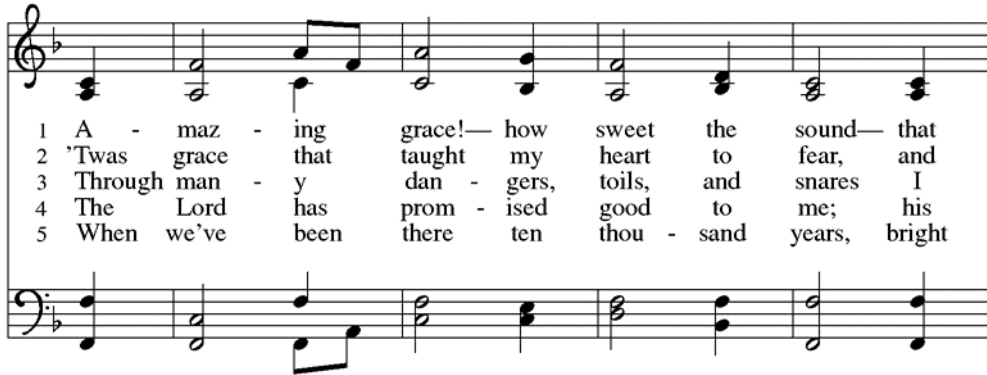
Penny Dowling, Mary Freiburger, Diana Gastrau, Sue Jarchow, Sally Kowalewski, Carol Kucharski, Karen Palasz, Patrick Rafalski, Joan Retzlaff, Dick Rutzen, Bob Soderstrom, Richard Sontvedt, John Winter, the family of Sue Herman, and Andrea and Adam Woerpel at the death of Andrea's father

PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY

<p>Helen, mother of Jenny Koeff Scott, co-worker of Mary Luedtke Nancy & Mike Andritsch, sister/brother-in-law of Barbara & Dan Davies Sandy Bell, friend of SSM – sister of Bill Bravner & friend of SSM Jim Bembenec, friend of Mike and Tracy Wholean Terry Betchner, friend of Dianne Niese Jim Busta, friend of Carol and Don Manning Jerelie Caston, daughter of Joan Retzlaff Lucy Copeland, granddaughter of Dianne Niese Tim Drover, son of John Drover Julie Francis, daughter-in-law of Sally Kowalewski Laurence Freemont, friend of SSM Karen Gastrau, daughter-in-law of Diana Gastrau Bob Guiliani, brother of Char Guiliani Liane Guthrie, daughter of Dianne Niese James Haas, friend of Patti Winter Roberta Henrichs, sister-in-law of Joan Retzlaff Tim Ingram, grandson of Ron Ropel Jeanne Jimenez, daughter of Shirley Rau Beth Klosinski, daughter of Linda Schmidt Dan Knapik, friend of Don & Carol Manning Jon Kowalewski, husband of Sally Kowalewski Susan Kueny, friend of Mary Luedtke Mark Langhoff, friend of Shelly Rosenstock</p>	<p>Jay Lessing, friend of LaVerne Morgan Ted P., brother-in-law of Gail Jakus Joseph Pearson (husband of Cherish Pearson) and the “Iron Thunder” 4-27 Field Artillery as they are deployed Lauryn Ramintho, great-granddaughter of Karen Miller Sarah Reyes, daughter of Debbie and Vic Barth Leroy Robinson, father of Linda Schmidt Larry & Lori Sachse, family members of Kelly & Greg Sachse Ann Scorzynski, friend of LaVerne Morgan Rick Sibley, friend of Heidi and Jim Hennessy Gloria Simley, sister of Dave and Rae Ann Simley Andy Stein and his family, son of Barb Stein Katie Stull, granddaughter of Phil & LaVerne Morgan Judy Ventimiglia, friend of Shelly Rosenstock Alfred Waltke, father of Kelly Sachse Billy Waters, husband of Darlene Waters & Stepdad of Lori Salas Mark Weber, son-in-law of Marian Walton Kristin White, daughter of Sue Herman Susan White, sister of Sally Kowalewski Lisa Wholean, daughter of Mike & Tracy Wholean</p>
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<p>Rev. Brian Hooper, Pastor - 262-271-8913 Tabitha Moldenhauer, Music Director Mark Breutzmann, Saturday Musician Jim Hennessy, Church Maintenance</p>	<p>Bonnie Zimmermann, Ministry Assistant Office phone - 414-421-3543 email - office@ssmelca.org Website – www.ssmelca.org Facebook - https://m.facebook.com/SSMELCA/</p>
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HYMN #779 Amazing Grace



1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

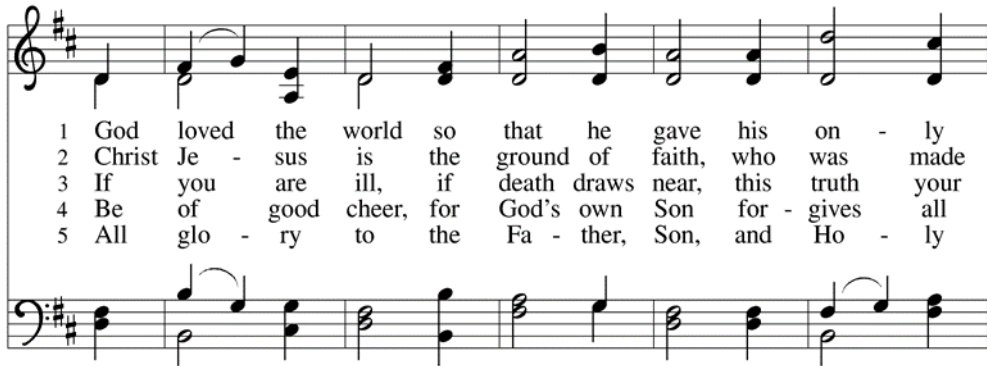


now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

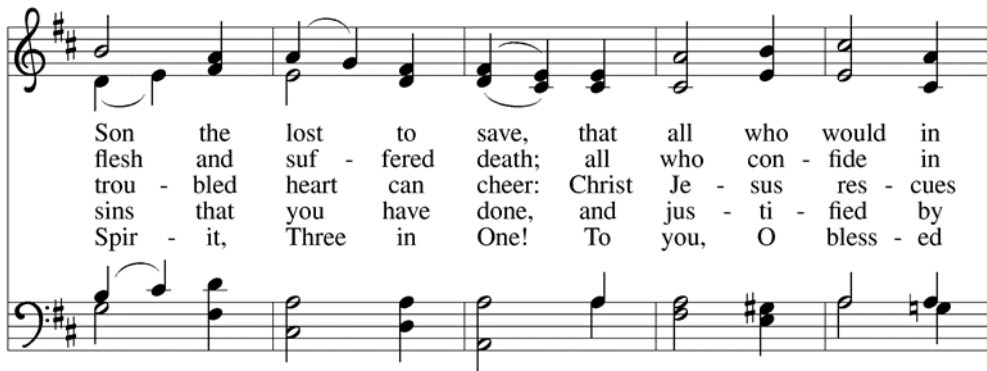
Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt., sts. 1–4; anonymous, st. 5

Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1851–1921, alt.

HYMN #323 God Loved the World



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly
 2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made
 3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your
 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son, for - gives all
 5 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly



Son the lost to save, that all who would in
 flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in
 trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues
 sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by
 Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
 Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
 us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
 Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.
 Trin - i - ty, be praise now and e - ter - nal - ly!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.
 Music: ROCKINGHAM OLD, Edward Miller, 1731–1807, adapt.

HYMN #335 Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross



1 Je - sus, keep me near the cross, there's a pre - cious foun - tain;
 2 Near the cross, a trem - bling soul, love and mer - cy found me;
 3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes be - fore me;
 4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hop - ing, trust - ing ev - er,



free to all, a heal - ing stream flows from Cal - v'ry's moun - tain.
 there the bright and morn - ing star sheds its beams a - round me.
 help me walk from day - to day with its shad - ow o'er me.
 till I reach the gold - en strand just be - yond the riv - er.

Refrain



In the cross, in the cross be my glo - ry ev - er;



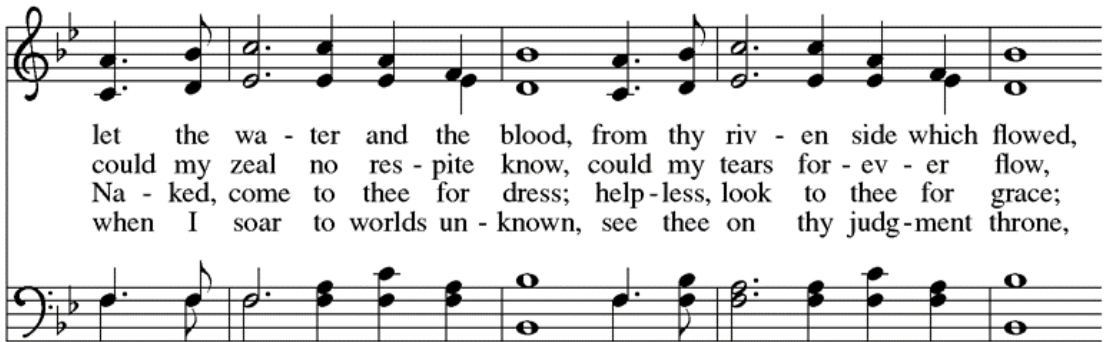
till my ran - somed soul shall find rest be - yond the riv - er.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915
 Music: NEAR THE CROSS, William H. Doane, 1832–1915

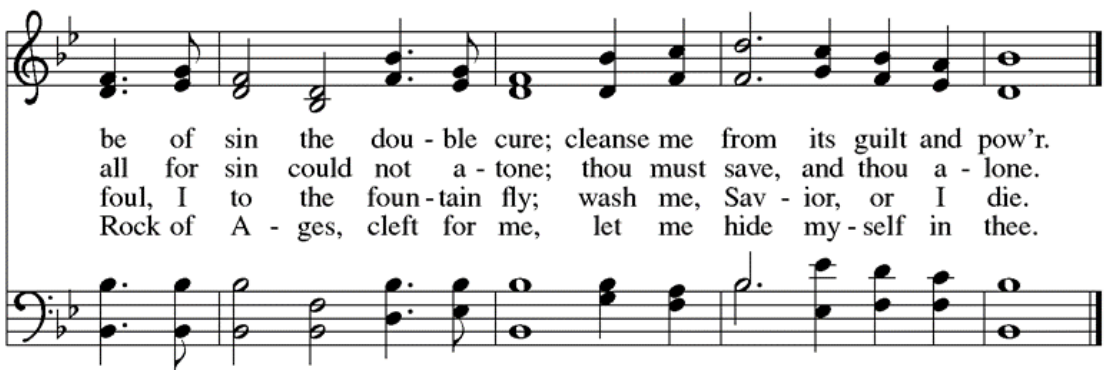
HYMN #623 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
Na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to thee for grace;
when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure; cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.
foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740–1778
Music: TOPLADY, Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872