

ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR LUTHERAN CHURCH
PALM/PASSION WEEKEND
SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026 5:00PM
SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026 9:30AM



Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

ELW is the cranberry red Evangelical Lutheran Book of Worship

SSM is equipped with hearing assistance devices.

If you would like more information on how to gain access please see an usher for the instructions and assistance.

Please note: Sunday Service is streamed, recorded and posted on YouTube beginning with the prelude and continuing through the postlude. Be aware that you may be recorded when coming up the center aisle for communion.

DISTRIBUTION OF PALMS

P: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

C: **Hosanna in the highest!**

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:1-11

¹ When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” ⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ “Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

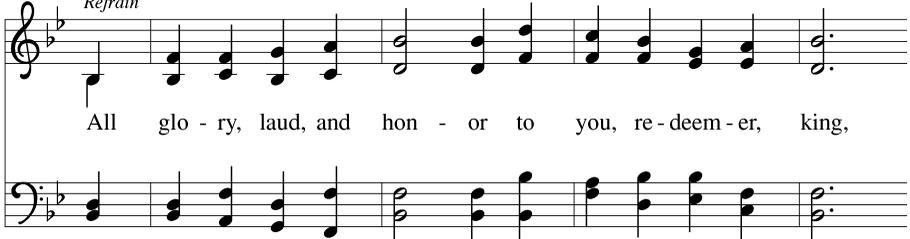
¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹ The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

PROCESSIONAL: (9:30) “Processional in C”

Handbell Choir

HYMN ELW #344 ALL GLORY LAUD AND HONOR

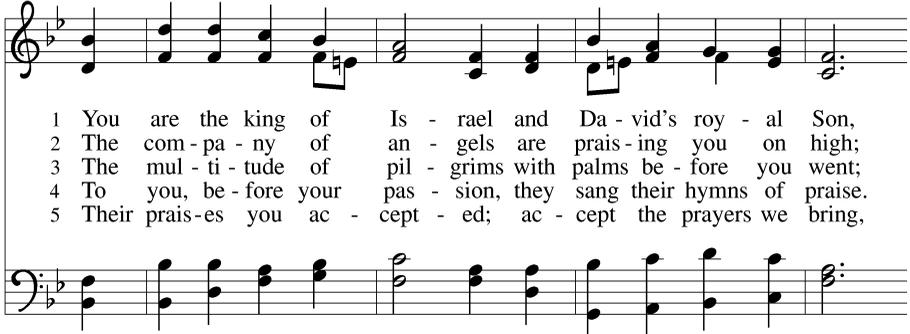
Refrain



All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,

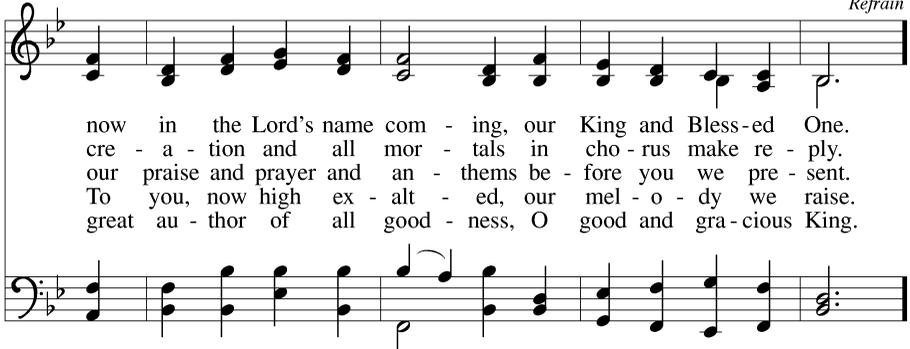


to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Refrain



now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.
cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.
our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

PROCLAMATION

P: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

C: **Hosanna in the highest!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

C: Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

CHOIR ANTHEM (9:30): “Antiphonal Hosanna” -Smith

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE (9:30)

Alex Dollar

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

The servant of the Lord expresses absolute confidence in his final vindication, despite the fact that he has been struck and spit upon. This characteristic of the servant played an important role in the early church’s understanding of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

⁴The Lord God has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord God has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

⁶I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

⁷The Lord God helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
⁸he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

^{9a}It is the Lord God who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11

Paul uses an early Christian hymn to help us comprehend Jesus' obedient selflessness on the cross and how God has made Christ lord over all reality. The perspective of the cross becomes the way we rightly understand God, Christ, our own lives, and fellowship within the community of Christ.

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name
that is above every name,

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

INTRODUCTION TO PALM/PASSION NARRATIVE

Rev. Brian Hooper

THE PASSION ACCORDING TO MATTHEW (26:14—27:66)

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW #343 My Song is Love Unknown

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

L: O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Your power is sure. Destroy iniquity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Your desire is peace. Touch the hearts of world leaders inspiring them to work for peace among peoples and protect soldiers sent to war and all who live under the shadow of war and conflict, especially the people of Ukraine and all of the Middle East. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day and for all who are sick or fighting addiction, especially those we name before you now (*pause*). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

C: Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

CHOIR ANTHEM (9:30): “God So Loved the World” -Stainer

OFFERING

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:



OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name.

C: Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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

THE 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.

COMMUNION HYMN ELW #340 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS *Please be sure to read the announcements in your bulletin.*

BLESSING

P: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always.

C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN ELW #811 On My Heart Imprint Your Image

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE (5:00) "O Darkest Woe" -arr. W. Held

(9:30) "On My Heart Imprint Your Image" arr. Ruth Garchow Mackie

From sundaysandseasons.com

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***Flowers are provided by Karen and Bob Rasmussen
in celebration of their wedding anniversary***

THANK YOU FOR SERVING IN THE WORSHIP

Readers: (5:00) Julie Starks **(9:30)** Denise Sanders

Narrative Gospel Readers: (5:00) Linda Chaplock, Judy Merritt, Patti Nelson, Eric Sanders, Denise Sanders, Julie Starks, Larry Stasiewski, Sue Stasiewski
(9:30) Regan Kunesh, Mary Luedtke, Diane Moraza, Faith O'Connell, Cathy Peterson, Denise Sanders, Sandy Wesolowski, Seth Westfall

Ushers: (5:00): Patti Nelson

(9:30): Chris Dollar, Diane Moraza, John & Marge Muroi

Communion: (5:00) Set Up Bonnie Court, **Serve** Patti Nelson

(9:30) Set Up Denise Sanders **Servers** Denise Sanders, Bonnie Daleness

St. Stephen the Martyr Welcome Statement

St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church is a spiritual community grounded in the belief of Welcoming all, Worshiping God, Serving others.

Recognizing that there are those who have historically experienced rejection within congregational life, we strive to welcome and affirm the participation of all people into our community of faith – people of all ages, races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, physical and mental abilities, educational backgrounds, family statuses, and economic circumstances.

We are driven to be a welcoming congregation, offer a safe place to worship, and celebrate the diversity of God's family. We are committed to racial equity and invite all people to join us in our faith journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect.

We proclaim that we are an open and affirming congregation, and you are invited to join us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join us for Easter Breakfast, April 5th! Relax and let us make you breakfast with a menu of ham and rolls, pancakes and sausage, and more. Share a time of fellowship with the SSM community between the Easter worship services. Breakfast will be served from 8:15 to 9:15. There is no cost, but donations are encouraged. All proceeds will support the youth mission trip to Montgomery, Alabama. Please sign up on the bulletin board (or email the office) so we have a good estimate.

Easter Breakfast Volunteers Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist with various breakfast responsibilities, including set-up in advance of Easter Sunday. Please see the bulletin board for ways you can help.

2026 SSM Rummage Sale - We are thinking about holding another church rummage/lemonade/brat fry in mid to late April. In order to do so I need to try and get an idea of how many donors and volunteers we might have for the event. At this time, I just need to know if you **might** be interested in volunteering for set-up, sales, or take-down. This would be between Wednesday and Saturday. This is not any sort of commitment at this time, just to see if there may be enough interested volunteers to hold the event and then to set a date. Last year the volunteers were amazing. Look for rummage interest/sign-up sheets on the bulletin board or feel free to email me directly if you are interested. Please sign up if you think you might be able to help out. If it turns out later that you can't that is fine. Thanks for your consideration. Lorin lorinschu@gmail.com

The third Wednesday of every month the **Unity Food Ministry** serves an evening hot meal. Clean-up help is needed between 6 and 7 pm. You are welcome to join the guests at 5:30 pm for food and fellowship. If you are interested in volunteering, please see me in church. Thank you!
Shelly Rosenstock

Food donations for the month of April will go to the Unity Lutheran food ministry. Food items, especially those that are high in protein, are always in demand. For the convenience of the folks who don't have homes, cans with pull tabs are especially handy. Monetary donations are always welcome and allow the pantries to fill in needed items that have not come in otherwise. You can mark your contribution "Food Ministry" or use the Food Ministry envelope found on the giving station board.

Save the dates for **Vacation Bible School – Weird Animals – Where Jesus' Love is One-of-A-Kind**. Monday, June 22nd to Thursday, June 25th. Bring all of the kiddos you know.

Explore the Journey of Martin Luther in Germany: Plans are coming together for our trip to Germany, scheduled for October 13–23, 2026. This adventure will take us through key locations connected to Martin Luther's ministry in the early 1500s while also showcasing the beauty and culture of Germany.

Highlights include: A scenic cruise on the Rhine; a visit to Nuremberg and Berlin, visiting castles and cathedrals along the way; a stop in Eisenach, where Luther spent his exile translating the New Testament from Greek into German; and a visit to Wittenberg to see the famous Castle Church door

Printed itineraries and brochures are available at the church. For more information, please contact Pastor Brian at pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com or 414-421-3543.

<i>This Week at SSM</i>			
Monday, 3/30	6:30pm	Book Club	
Wednesday, 4/1	9:30am	Men's Bible Study	
	5:45pm	Handbell Rehearsal	
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal	
Thursday, 4/2 Maundy Thursday	1:00pm	Quilting – Cut & Sew – Until 3pm	
	6:30pm	Worship	Ushers: Nancy Mineau, Deb Perl
			Reader: Bonnie Daleness
			Psalm Readers: Sandy Wesolowski, Dick Kroll Communion: Diane Moraza, Julie Starks
Friday, 4/3 Good Friday (Office Closed)	2:00pm	Cross Walk beginning at St. Luke's Greendale	
	3:00pm	Ecumenical Worship at St. Luke's Greendale	
	6:30pm	Tenebrae Worship	Ushers: Dennis Lucchesi, Bob Rasmussen Readers: Bonnie Zimmermann, Kelly Sachse, Karen Rasmussen
Saturday, 4/4 Easter Vigil	5:00pm	Worship	Ushers: Larry & Sue Stasiewski
			Readers: Pam Maschke, John Rech, Bonnie Zimmermann
			Communion Set Up: Betty Kroll
			Communion Server: Heidi Hennessy
Sunday, 4/5 Easter	7:00am	Prayer Garden Worship	Ushers: Diane Moraza, Patti Nelson
			Reader: Diane Maraza
			Communion: Diane Moraza and Patti Nelson
	8:15am	Easter Breakfast	
	9:30am	Worship	Ushers: Dennis Lucchesi, John Muroi, Jim Palasz, Bob Rasmussen
			Reader: Bonnie Daleness
Communion Set Up: Tracy & Jason Covert Communion Servers: Tracy & Jason Covert, Cathy Peterson			

KEEP THESE SSM MEMBERS IN PRAYER

Sharon Behling, Pastor Gail Brodersen-Heins, Diana Gastrau, Sue Jarchow,
Ken & Carolyn Kahl, Joy Kilimann, Sally Kowalewski, Dick Kroll, Carol Kucharski,
Billie Jo Kunesh, Shirley Lieske, Larry Petricek, Joan Retzlaff,
Stephanie Rodenkirch, Eleanor Salb, Bob Soderstrom, Richard Sontvedt

PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Brent, grandson of Dennis & Geri Lucchesi
Carol, sister of Heidi Hennessy
Cheryl, sister-in-law of Larry & Sue Stasiewski
Helen, mother of Jenny Koeff
Pam Baranowski, friend of Kelly and Greg
Sachse
Irene Bonnert, mother of Deb Perl
Arlene Cich, cousin of Don Manning
Corstan Court, son of Bonnie Court
Jennifer F and her family, friends of Kelly
Sachse
Julie Francis, daughter-in-law of Sally
Kowalewski
Marcia Gabriel, friend of Nancy Mineau &
Marion Walton
Mimi Garcia, former administrative assistant at
SSM
Karen Gastrau, daughter-in-law of Diana
Gastrau
Liane Guthrie, daughter of Dianne Niese
Tim Ingram, grandson of Ron Ropel
Robert Koenen, friend of Don & Carol Manning

Beth Klosinski, daughter of Linda Schmidt
Jon Kowalewski, husband of Sally
Kowalewski
John O'Connell, husband of Faith
O'Connell
Ted & Ellen P., family of Gail Jakus
Paul R, friend of Shelly Rosenstock
Leroy Robinson, father of Linda Schmidt
Deb Rusch, friend of Kelly & Greg Sachse
John Schatzman, nephew of Marion Walton
Sue Seidemann, friend of Karen Hoffman
and former SWO president
Gloria Simley, sister of Dave and Rae Ann
Simley
Richard Sorenson, friend of Jim & Heidi
Hennessy
Barb Starks, mother of Julie Starks
Lynne Turnquist, friend of Carol Manning
David Vento, friend of Al Behling
Billy Waters, Stepdad of Lori Salas
Chrissy White, daughter of Sue Herman
Susan White, sister of Sally Kowalewski
Cohen Zettle, family of Pam Young

Rev. Brian Hooper, Pastor - 262-271-8913
Tabitha Moldenhauer, Music Director
Mark Breutzmann, Saturday Musician
Jim Hennessy, Church Maintenance

Bonnie Zimmermann, Ministry Assistant
Office phone - 414-421-3543
email - office@ssmelca.org
Website – www.ssmelca.org
Facebook - <https://m.facebook.com/SSMELCA/>

HYMN ELW #343 My Song is Love Unknown

- 1 My song is love unknown,
my Savior's love to me,
love to the loveless shown
that they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?
- 2 He came from his blest throne
salvation to bestow;
the world that was his own
would not its Savior know.
But, oh, my friend, my friend indeed,
who at my need his life did spend!
- 3 Sometimes we strew his way
and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day
hosannas to our king.
Then "Crucify!" is all our breath,
and for his death we thirst and cry.
- 4 We cry out; we will have
our dear Lord made away,
a murderer to save,
the prince of life to slay.
Yet cheerful he to suffering goes
that he his foes from thence might free.
- 5 In life no house, no home
my Lord on earth might have;
in death no friendly tomb
but what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was his home
but mine the tomb wherein he lay.
- 6 Here might I stay and sing—
no story so divine!
Never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine.
This is my friend, in whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend!

Text: Samuel Crossman, 1624-1683, alt.

HYMN ELW #340 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

1 A lamb goes un - com - plain - ing forth to save a world of sin - ners.
 2 This lamb is Christ, our great - est friend, the Lamb of God, our Sav - ior,
 3 Our Sav - ior an - swered from his heart that he would take the bur - den:
 4 Of death I am no more a - fraid; your dy - ing is my liv - ing.

He bears the bur - den all a - lone, dies shorn of all his hon - ors,
 whom God in mer - cy chose to send to win us reb - els o - ver.
 "My Fa - ther's will is my com - mand; I'll do as I am bid - den."
 You clothe me in your roy - al robes that you are al - ways giv - ing.

He goes to slaugh - ter, weak and faint, is led to die with -
 "Go down, my child," the Fa - ther said, "and free my chil - dren
 Oh, won - drous love! Oh, lov - ing night! To right what mor - tals
 Your love is dress e - nough for me to wear through all e -

out com - plaint; his spot - less life he of - fers. He bears the shame,
 from their dread of death and con - dem - na - tion. The pain - ful stripes
 can - not right the Son was sent from heav - en. What love, O Love,
 ter - ni - ty be - fore the throne of heav - en, where we shall stand

the stripes, the wrath; his an - guish, mock - er - y,
 are hard to bear, but by your death they all
 who came to save by lov - ing e - ven to
 close by your side, your church, the well - ap - point -

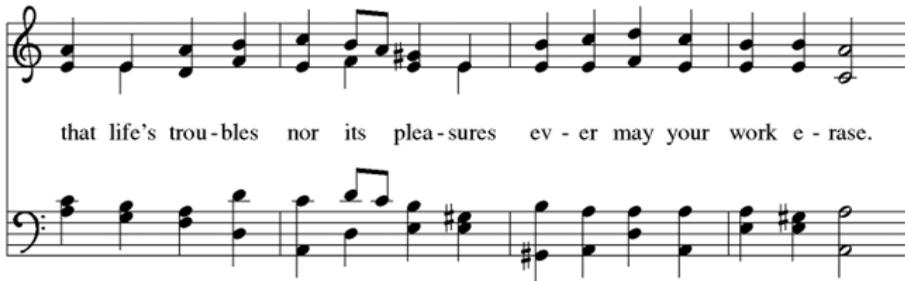
and death for us he glad - ly suf - fers.
 can share the joy of your sal - va - tion."
 the grave un - til the stone was riv - en.
 ed bride, when all the faith - ful gath - er.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.
 Music: AN WASSERFLÜSSEN BABYLON, Wolfgang Dachteln, c. 1487-1553
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

HYMN ELW #811 On My Heart Imprint Your Image



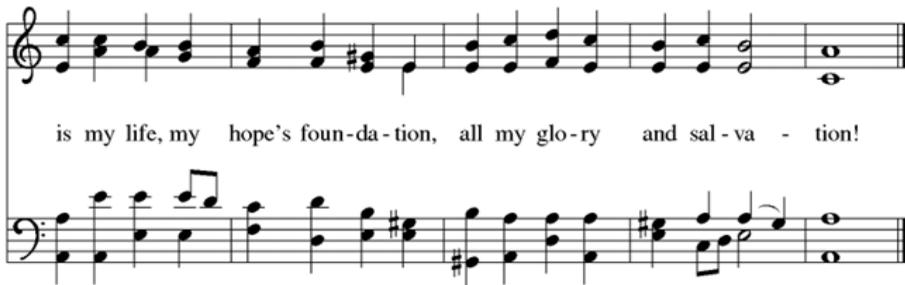
On my heart im - print your im - age, bless - ed Je - sus, king of grace,



that life's trou - bles nor its plea - sures ev - er may your work e - rase.



Let the clear in - scrip - tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,



is my life, my hope's foun - da - tion, all my glo - ry and sal - va - tion!

Text: Thomas H. Kingo, 1634–1703; tr. Peer O. Strömme, 1856–1921, alt.
Music: DER AM KREUZ, Johann B. König, 1691–1758