



“MIGHTIER THAN THE THORN”

Sunday, July 4, 2021 9:00AM

Worship Service

AS WE GATHER

Today, our nation celebrates its place as the land of the free and the home of the brave. At times, this reality causes us to thump our chest to let the world know how great we are. The apostle Paul, too, could claim his place among the greats. Paul was “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness, under the law blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ” (Philippians 3:5–7). Yet, he was not mightier than the thorn. As Paul followed Jesus, he was plagued by a thorn in the flesh to keep him from becoming conceited. He asked God to take it away, and God said, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). So, too, God’s grace is sufficient for us no matter where this life takes us, because when we are weak, then we are strong.

WELCOME

Sit

OPENING HYMN

“Before You, Lord, We Bow”

LSB 966

- 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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Stand

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES (1 Corinthians 10:12–13; Hebrews 4:15–16)

P Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.

C God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

P For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

C Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (Philippians 1:6; 2:7–8)

P Most merciful God,

C we confess to You our pride, arrogance, and boasting. Forgive us for all our sins in our thoughts, words, and works for the sake of Jesus, who “made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us. For Jesus' sake, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, I forgive you for all of your sins of thoughts, words, and works in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Sit

HYMN of PRAISE

“Alleluia! Let Praises Ring”

LSB 822

- 1 Alleluia! Let praises ring!
To God the Father let us bring
Our songs of adoration.
To Him through everlasting days

Be worship, honor, pow'r, and praise,
Whose hand sustains creation.
Singing, ringing:
Holy, holy,
God is holy;
Spread the story
Of our God, the Lord of glory.

2 Alleluia! Let praises ring!
Unto the Lamb of God we sing,
In whom we are elected.
He bought His Church with His own blood,
He cleansed her in that blessed flood,
And as His bride selected.
Holy, holy
Is our union
And communion.
His befriending
Gives us joy and peace unending.

3 Alleluia! Let praises ring!
Unto the Holy Ghost we sing
For our regeneration.
The saving faith in us He wrought
And us unto the Bridegroom brought,
Made us His chosen nation.
Glory! Glory!
Joy eternal,
Bliss supernal;
There is manna
And an endless, glad hosanna.

4 Alleluia! Let praises ring!
Unto our triune God we sing;
Blest be His name forever!
With angel hosts let us adore
And sing His praises evermore
For all His grace and favor!
Singing, ringing:
Holy, holy,
God is holy;
Spread the story
Of our God, the Lord of glory!

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SALUTATION

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

- C** Gracious and ever-loving God, we thank and praise You for the freedom we have in You and also the freedom we celebrate today in our nation.
- P** As Your grace has been sufficient for Your people throughout all time, grant that it be sufficient for us as well for Your power is made perfect in our weaknesses;
- C** through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 61:1–7

¹The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.
⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
⁵Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks;
foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;
⁶but you shall be called the priests of the LORD;
they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God;
you shall eat the wealth of the nations,
and in their glory you shall boast.
⁷Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion;
instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot;
therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion;
they shall have everlasting joy.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

2 Corinthians 12:1–10

¹I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ²I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. ³And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—⁴and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. ⁵On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. ⁶Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. ⁷So to keep me from being too elated by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of

Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 22:24–30

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁴A dispute also arose among [the disciples], as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵And [Jesus] said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

²⁸“You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, ²⁹and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, ³⁰that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

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 \dagger of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God and all people according to their needs.

Almighty and most holy God, we thank and praise You for all You provide us freely by Your grace. We are especially thankful for the freedoms we enjoy and celebrate today as we gather to worship You. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We pray for the leaders of our nation, state, and community, [*especially . . .*]. We acknowledge that You have placed them in these positions to govern us and all people of this land. Grant them wisdom and lead them to make decisions that are in line with Your will for all people. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Amid the thorns of this life, we lean on Your grace, knowing that it is sufficient for us and in our weakness Your strength shines through. We ask for Your grace and healing for those who grieve, [*especially . . .*]. We ask for Your grace and healing for those struggling in body, mind, and spirit, [*especially . . .*]. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We live in a nation and in communities where we are thankful to have brothers and sisters in Christ, yet there are also many who have either disconnected from You and Your Church or who have never known You. Lead us to share Your grace with others. Guide our conversations and grow our relationships with those who do not share the hope we have. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P No matter where life takes us, we know we are in Your hands. So, we confidently come before You as Your children and place these prayers and all our concerns into Your gracious hands, in Jesus' name.

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.

INVITATION TO THE MEAL

- P** Jesus Christ, who in love gave His life for us, invites us to share in the meal He has given to His disciples with His words, "Do this in remembrance of Me."
- C** **We remember His love for us in His death and we remember and celebrate His rising from the grave for our salvation.**
- P** Jesus says, "Whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven."
- C** **We publicly acknowledge You, Jesus, as our Savior from sin and we come before You now in oneness of faith and spirit to receive Your grace in this meal.**
- P** Let us then approach the Table of the Lord with confidence so that we may receive mercy, grace and strength to live as His people.

WORDS OF OUR LORD

- 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 ✠ 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 ✠ 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.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Children of the Heavenly Father"

LSB 725

- 1 Children of the heav'nly Father
Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e'er was given.
- 2 God His own doth tend and nourish;
In His holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things He spares them;
In His mighty arms He bears them.
- 3 Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth,
And their sorrows all He knoweth.
- 4 Though He giveth or He taketh,
God His children ne'er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

LSB 733 sts 1-6

- 1 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,

Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:

- 2 Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.
- 3 Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.
- 4 A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.
- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the op'ning day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last
And our eternal home!

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POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

- P** Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.
C His steadfast love endures forever.

- P** Let us pray.
C We thank You, Lord, for You have again fed and nourished us on our way through this world to the one to come. Guide us in living out Your grace until that day when we experience it in all of its fullness; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

HYMN of the DAY

“Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”

LSB 821

- 1 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
His the scepter, His the throne;
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood:
“Jesus out of ev’ry nation
Has redeemed us by His blood.”
- 2 Alleluia! Not as orphans
Are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia! He is near us;

Faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received Him
When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget His promise:
"I am with you evermore"?

- 3 Alleluia! Bread of heaven,
Here on earth our food, our stay;
Alleluia! Here the sinful
Flee to You from day to day.
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
Earth's Redeemer, hear our plea
Where the songs of all the sinless
Sweep across the crystal sea.
- 4 Alleluia! King eternal,
Lord omnipotent we own;
Alleluia! Born of Mary,
Earth Your footstool, heav'n Your throne.
As within the veil You entered,
Robed in flesh, our great High Priest,
Here on earth both priest and victim
In the eucharistic feast.
- 5 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
His the scepter, His the throne;
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood:
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
Has redeemed us by His blood."

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SERMON

BENEDICTION

- 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 ✠ give you peace.
- C** Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"God Bless Our Native Land"

LSB 965

- 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!

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