

Sermon followed by Service

July 2, 2023

1 Kings 21

This is hard for me to imagine. I've lived in at least ten houses. Only one of them was a Raddatz house before me, and none of them will be a Raddatz house after me and Lisa. The homestead where my Dad grew up was in the family for 2 generations; now it's been sold and razed with the house, barn, sheds, and grove all turned into a corn field, or bean field, depending on the year. Where my Mom grew up would be closest; their family homestead up in Mequon was in the family for over 150 years. The house is still there, but everything else Mom's family worked to care for and pass on is long gone.

Imagine a place, a way of life, passed on to you from your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents. You can remember your dad working to make things right, and his dad before him. Grandpa planted that tree; great-great grandpa built that wall. And now it's yours. Yours to hold as a trust from God; yours to hold and pass on to the next generation. Do you have something like that that you hold dear? I have a kerosene lamp from my dad's mom; I have a commode, a chamber pot, from my mom's mom. Thankfully, I don't have to use either of them, but I'm hoping they stay in the family. And yet, I Imagine, for the right price I'd sell them.

Naboth had something more precious than a commode, something more precious than an old, broken kerosene lamp. And he didn't want to give it up. His vineyard had been in the

family 400 hundred plus years. But now King Ahab wanted it. And Jezebel got it. She got it by lying and cheating, corruption. She got it by bullying. She got it by playing the entitled queen stepping on and squashing someone she saw as a nobody. She got it and the way she got it was all wrong.

If you were Naboth's neighbor, what would you think? "At least they're not coming after me and mine?" Or "I better roll over and go along, or they will come after me and mine"? Or "How can they do that? That's not right; that's not fair; somebody has got to stop them, somebody has got to make them pay; we've got to step up and stop them"?

As sons and daughters of the Revolution, we hope we'd be in that last group, don't we? But maybe our hope for justice, maybe our righteous anger, maybe our "stand up and speak up voice" is squashed and lost. Squashed and lost with something more precious than a piece of land. Perhaps your hope for justice is squashed and lost with your innocence, the innocence he took from you with his creepy touch. Perhaps your hope for justice is squashed and lost with your dignity, the dignity she took from you with her bitey tongue. Perhaps your hope for justice is squashed and lost with your heart and soul, your heart and soul squashed by their what? - abuse, bullying, prejudice, racism

Whether your hope for justice is squashed and lost or you're ready to stand up and speak up with a righteous anger Whether you're ready to rise up or roll over, God has something he wants you to see. In the Hebrew it doesn't look like much, a single letter, a single stroke. In that letter God wants you to see

a connection, a connection between what Ahab and Jezebel did and what he, God, was about to do.

We don't have to roll over with our hope for justice squashed and lost. We don't have to rise up thinking that our sense of justice, our way to justice, is the be-all and end-all of justice and that we're going to make life right the way it's supposed to be. We don't need to rise up or roll over thinking: "Nobody cares; nobody'll do anything. God doesn't care; God won't do anything." We don't need to rise up or roll over thinking: "I'm on my own. If there's going to be any justice, I need to work it out myself. If there's going to be any hope or healing, I'll have to find it on my own." We don't need to rise up or roll over like God doesn't care. We don't need to go there.

In our lesson today, what do we see? Naboth with his vineyard. King Ahab wanted that vineyard. Queen Jezebel got it for him. And it was wrong.

We could make our lesson about the evils of power and government. We could make our lesson about the evils of rolling over and giving in to power and government. We could make our lesson about the need to stand up to power and government. But our lesson doesn't go there. Why not? God doesn't go there; or more precisely, God doesn't lead us there. God didn't lead his people to rise up against the evil government of Egypt's Pharaoh; God didn't lead his people to rise up against the evil governments of the Babylonians or the Herods or Pontius Pilate or the Roman Emperor Nero - no matter how evil or corrupt they were.

Instead God, through Paul, said “**submit to the governing authorities.**” And what do we say? “But what about?” Oh, we can love to plot and plan our revenge, plot and plan taking control, plot and plan making things right our way. We can be good at plotting and planning, wishing we were God, but - truth be told - we’re not so good at being God and making things right. Far better to let God be God: “**Vengeance is mine,**” says the Lord, “**I will repay.**”

We don’t always see God’s vengeance and justice when, where, how we want, do we? But God shows himself in our lesson; he shows himself in words he gave to Elijah to announce to Ahab: “**Because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD. ‘I am going to bring disaster on you. I will consume your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free. I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin.’ ‘And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: ‘Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.’ ‘Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country.’**”

God didn’t just stand back and watch. He doesn’t just stand back and do nothing. God stepped in through his Word.

And what happened? Ahab, wicked King Ahab, he repents, or at least he humbles himself before the LORD. Oh, there’s a part of me that doesn’t want to see that. A part of me that just

wants to see God strike, strike fast, and strike hard. But what does God do instead?

God relents, God defers, God puts his judgment on the king's son. Part of us might think that's not fair, but if you knew the king's son, you'd see God's judgment is just.

I'm wondering: did a light bulb go off in your head? Did a light bulb go off in your head when I said: "God relents, God defers, God puts his judgment on the king's son"? What King's Son am I talking about now? It's Jesus, isn't it? Jesus who suffered the world's greatest injustice. Jesus denied and betrayed by his friends. Jesus abused and rejected by his church. Jesus condemned and crucified by the government that was supposed to defend him. How about this for justice? The judge releases Barabbas the murderer instead of Jesus, and Jesus, the Holy One of God, is crucified, hung up and hung out to die with criminals. Jesus knew - Jesus knows - what it's like to be treated like Naboth, to be falsely accused, to have his innocence abused and stolen, to have his dignity spit on, to be pushed around and treated like a nobody. Jesus knows what it is like to be a victim of injustice. Jesus knows. But Jesus isn't just our great understander, sympathizer, empathizer.

Jesus is our Ahab, not just the Ahab against us; Jesus is the Ahab inside us. The Ahab inside of us, the liar in us, the abuser in us, the bully in us, the enemy of God inside us. God put it all on Jesus, and Jesus stood in for us - for you and for me. And in Jesus, on the cross, God crushed and cursed that Ahab, that liar,

that abuser, that bully, that bleep inside us by crushing and cursing Jesus instead of crushing and cursing us.

God didn't and he doesn't just stand by and watch. He didn't and he doesn't just stand by and do nothing. He works his justice. And thankfully, with Jesus, he forgives. He forgives even the Ahab and Jezebel in me and in you.

Our lesson doesn't stop there. Was Ahab's repentance shallow? Short-lived? Maybe both, I don't know. Ahab went back to doing his thing instead of God's thing. So Ahab gets what's coming to him. Not just karma; but justice, God's justice, in God's time, God's way. Ahab thought he could outsmart God, thought he could get around God's judgment. But God and his judgment found Ahab and struck him down, just as God and his judgment will find any and all who think they can cross him and get away with it.

July 1 & 2, 2023

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we are surrounded by injustice, and the world's calls and promises of justice, and yet we are still surrounded by injustice. It can be easy to grow weary of or callous to the injustice (and the world's calls and promises of justice); it can also be easy to wonder: "Where is God in all this injustice? Where is God's justice?"

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see God work his justice his way in this world, and we are thankful for the hope of his even better justice in heaven.

OPENING HYMN

"Before You, Lord, We Bow"

Hymn 775

Before you, Lord, we bow, our God who reigns above
and rules the world below in boundless pow'r and love.
Our thanks we bring in joy and praise, our hearts we raise to you, our King!

The nation you have blessed 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.

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.

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.

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'ns high King, salvation's song!

INVOCATION

- M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.
- C: **And also with you.**

+ CONFESSION OF SINS AND ABSOLUTION +

- M: God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.
- C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**
- M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

+ PRAYER AND PRAISE +

LORD, HAVE MERCY

- M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C: **Lord, have mercy.**
- M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.
- C: **Christ, have mercy.**
- M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C: Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

HYMN (No Introduction)

"O Lord, Our Lord"

Hymn 939

Refrain

O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

Al-might-y God, mer-ci-ful Fa-ther, you crown our life

with your love. You take a-way our sin; you com-fort our spir-it;

you make us pure and ho-ly in your sight. You did not spare your

Refrain

on-ly Son, but gave him up for us all. O Lord, our Lord,

how glo-rious is your name in all the earth. O Son of

God, e-ter-nal Word of the Fa-ther, you came to live with us;

you made your Fa-ther known; you washed us from our sins in

your own blood. You are the King of glo-ry; you are the Lord!

Refrain

O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord, keep this nation under your care. Bless the leaders of our land that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to the other nations of the earth. Help us elect trustworthy leaders, contribute to wise decisions for the general welfare, and serve you faithfully in our generation to the honor of your holy name; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

1 Kings 21:1–11, 15–29; 22:29–37

Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.”

But Naboth replied, “The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors.”

So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.

His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won’t you eat?”

He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’ ”

Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I’ll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him. In those letters she wrote:

"Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them bring charges that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them.

As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead." When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: "Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!'"

Ahab said to Elijah, "So you have found me, my enemy!"

"I have found you," he answered, "because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD. He says, 'I am going to bring disaster on you. I will wipe out your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free. I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have aroused my anger and have caused Israel to sin.'

"And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

"Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds will feed on those who die in the country."

(There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife.

He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the LORD drove out before Israel.)

When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: "Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son."

So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will enter the battle in disguise, but you wear your royal robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle.

Now the king of Aram had ordered his thirty-two chariot commanders, "Do not fight with anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel." When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they thought, "Surely this is the king of Israel." So they turned to attack him, but when Jehoshaphat cried out, the chariot commanders saw that he was not the king of Israel and stopped pursuing him.

But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor. The king told his chariot driver, "Wheel around and get me out of the fighting. I've been wounded." All day long the battle raged, and the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans. The blood from his wound ran onto the floor of the chariot, and that evening he died. As the sun was setting, a cry spread through the army: "Every man to his town. Every man to his land!"

So the king died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried him there.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 73B

Sure-ly, it is God who saves me, I will trust in him and
 not be a - fraid, for the LORD is my strong-hold and my
 sure de-fense, and he will be my Sav - ior.

Tone

I am always / with you;
 you hold me by my / right hand.
 You guide me with your / counsel,
 and afterward you will take me into / glory.
 Whom have I in / heav'n but you?
 And earth has nothing I desire be- / sides you.
 My flesh and my / heart may fail,
 but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for- / ever.
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain

SECOND READING

Romans 8:28–34

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2–6

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

“What Is the World to Me”

Hymn 717

What is the world to me with all its vaunted pleasure
when you and you alone, Lord Jesus, are my treasure!
You only, dearest Lord, my soul’s delight shall be;
you are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!

The world seeks after wealth and all that money offers,
yet never is content though gold should fill its coffers.
I have a higher good, content with it I'll be;
my Jesus is my wealth. What is the world to me!

The world is like a cloud and like a vapor fleeting,
a shadow that declines, swift to its end retreating.
My Jesus shall remain, though all things fade and flee,
my everlasting rock. What is the world to me!

What is the world to me! My Jesus is my treasure,
my life, my health, my wealth, my friend, my love, my pleasure,
my joy, my crown, my all, my bliss eternally.
Once more then I declare: What is the world to me!

SERMON

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Almighty God, we acknowledge with thanks that all we have and enjoy is a gift from your gracious hand. We come before you today in heartfelt appreciation for our nation and its people.

We thank you for enabling us to worship you in freedom and to serve you without fear.

You have enriched us with the bounties of farm and factory, the beauty of forest and mountain, and the marvels of medicine and science.

For all these blessings, we praise and glorify you.

Look with favor upon our nation and preserve our cherished liberties. Enable our leaders to govern with wisdom, honesty, courage, and justice. Protect those who serve in the armed forces and those who maintain peace and safety in our communities.

Give us willingness to obey our nation's laws and to work for the common good.

Keep our financial institutions secure and our economy strong. Bless our fields that they may produce abundant harvests. Guard us from calamities of nature and accident and spare our land from the ravages of disease and epidemic.

Teach us not to worry but to cast all our cares on you.

Strengthen the homes of our nation. By your Spirit lead husbands and wives to love each other, parents to nurture their children, young adults to assume responsibility, and children to show respect.

Lead the citizens of our land to honor the useful foundations of society.

Care for those who are sick or have been injured. Calm those who are disappointed and depressed. [Especially bless... *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Provide guidance to those who care for people in trouble or in need.

Lead us to provide help when we can and to pray at all times.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

To you, O Lord, we bring our thanks and our requests.

Hear our prayers for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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.

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Gluten-free wafers are available; ask Pastor.)

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

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

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. In the past he spoke to us through prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, who is the radiance of his glory.

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *Sanctus* (No Introduction)

C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.
You are my God and I will ex - alt you.
I will give you thanks for you have be - come my sal -
va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

The image shows a musical score for the Sanctus. It consists of six staves of music in a single system. Each staff is in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff begins with a common time signature 'C'. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The music features a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes, with some phrases being repeated. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

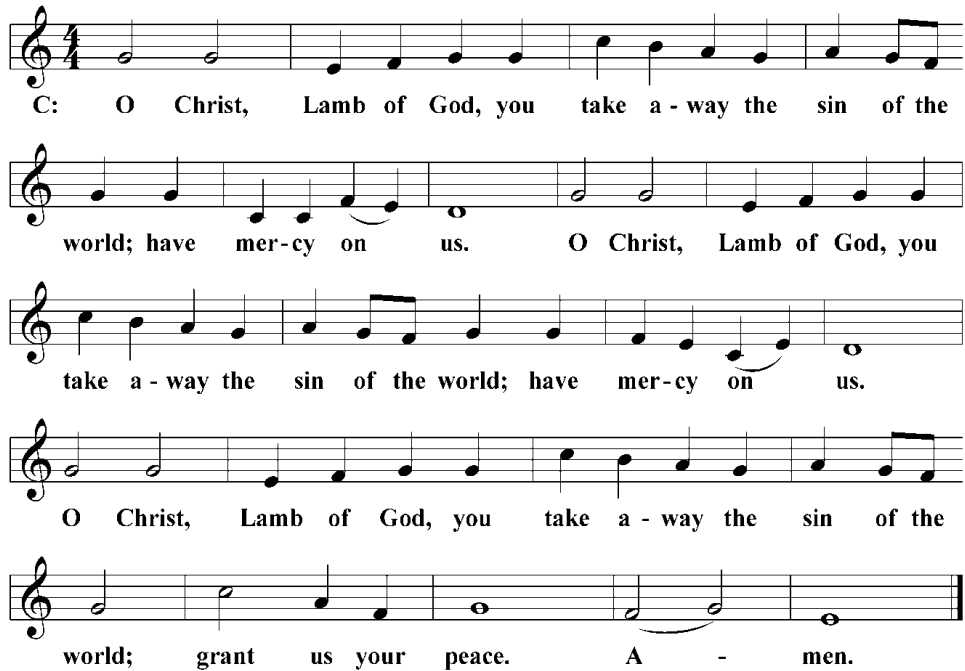
WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD *Agnus Dei* (No Introduction)



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us your peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"I Come, O Savior, to Your Table"

Hymn 670

I come, O Savior, to your table, for weak and weary is my soul;
 O Jesus, you alone are able to satisfy and make me whole.
 Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

O grant that I in manner worthy may eat and drink and be restored,
 and, dwelling on your boundless mercy, look only unto you, O Lord.
 Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

I should not be your sheep, dear Savior; I stray in sin's accursed terrain.
And yet you pardon my behavior; my faithful Shepherd you remain.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

O let me loathe all sin forever as death and poison to my soul,
that I through willful sinning never may see your judgment take its toll!
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

Your holy heart has one obsession, one blessed thing it burns to do—
to cleanse the sinner from transgression; so I, a sinner, come to you.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

My soul is burdened; Lord, relieve me, by all this weight of sin oppressed!
Though sinful, yet, in grace receive me and feed me as your grateful guest.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

Within me, Lord, your vision traces a heart of deep humility
that mourns its sin and yet embraces the merit you have earned for me.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

By faith I call your holy table the testament of your deep love,
for by your gift I now am able to know the heart of God above.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

This meal with blessing is abounding:
to poor ones wealth, to weak ones pow'r,
to angels joy, to hell confounding, and life for me in death's dark hour.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

My heart has now become your dwelling, O blessed, holy Trinity.
With angels I, your praises telling, shall live in joy eternally.
Lord, may your body and your blood be for my soul the highest good.

CLOSING PRAYER

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“God Bless Our Native Land”

Hymn 774

God bless our native land; firm may she ever stand thro’ storm and night!
When the wild tempests rave, Ruler of wind and wave,
do thou our country save by thy great might.

For her our prayers shall rise 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!

OFFERING

If you prefer online giving, you may scan this code with your mobile device.



Acknowledgements: Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2023 Texts and music covered under OneLicense.net #A-712373 and CCLI Copyright License 11194382, CCLI Streaming License CSPL059933 Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™ Service of Word and Sacrament O Lord, Our Lord Text: © 1993 Northwestern Publishing House. Tune: © 1993 Kurt J. Egger, admin. Northwestern Publishing House. Psalm 73B Refrain text: The Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer © 1976 Charles Mortimer Guilbert Refrain Tune: Jack Noble White © 1976 The H. W. Gray Company. Tone: © 1993 Kermit G. Moldenhauer, admin. Northwestern Publishing House I Come, O Savior, to Your Table Text (sts. 1, Ref. 2, 4, 8-10): © 1941 Concordia Publishing House; (sts. 3, 5-7): © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House.

CELC meets in Seoul, South Korea

The 2023 Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) convention was held in Seoul, South Korea, June 6-8. Representatives and guests from 27 countries around the world attended the convention, which was originally scheduled for 2020. This eagerly anticipated event hosted by Seoul Lutheran Church offered a unique platform for devoted Lutherans from around the world to deepen their faith, engage in theological discussions, and foster fellowship. Providing a rich program of worship, devotions, theological presentations, and networking opportunities, the convention served as a source of inspiration and an avenue for strengthening biblical fellowship between these church bodies.

An opening communion service brought the participants together around Word and sacrament. Pastors from a variety of CELC church bodies presented devotions, and hymns were sung throughout the week. Several times during the convention, CELC president Rev. Tom Nass noted the beautiful sound of voices from so many cultures blending together when singing the hymns and liturgies.

The convention's theological essays provided much opportunity for discussion. Pastors and professors from various regions presented these papers and led discussions on multiple topics ranging from civil government to training laity for evangelism. Attendees had the opportunity to engage one another with questions and shared experiences from their respective fields. The essays helped to foster a deeper understanding of the core beliefs that unite these churches.

Seoul, a city blending rich tradition with modernity, provided a vibrant backdrop for the convention. Seoul Lutheran Church provided a tour of Gyeongbokgung Palace, one of South Korea's most important historical sites, followed by a banquet filled with traditional Korean delicacies. Professional musicians entertained the attendees after the banquet with a program of beautiful classical and traditional Korean music.

The convention offered a unique environment for fellowship and networking, allowing attendees to build connections with Lutherans from different cultures and backgrounds. Informal interactions during breaks and meals facilitated the exchange of personal experiences, challenges, and triumphs within the context of shared faith. Pastors, church leaders, and laypeople alike had the opportunity to form meaningful relationships, laying the foundation for future collaborations, mutual support, and unity within this worldwide confessional Lutheran community.

The CELC is an international fellowship of 34 confessional Lutheran church bodies, of which WELS is a member. Learn more about the CELC at celc.info.