

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICE 5 2026

THE GOOD NEWS OF A GOD WHO MAKES A WAY FOR US

God saved Israel from Pharaoh's armies by making a way for them through the waters of the Red Sea into a new life as His redeemed people. God has saved us from sin, death, and the devil by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, opening to us the way of everlasting life.

Through the waters of Holy Baptism, we are united with Christ, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

May the Lord bless our worship tonight

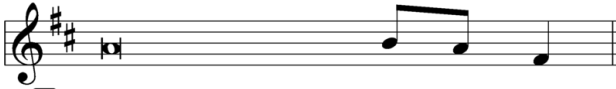


VESPERS

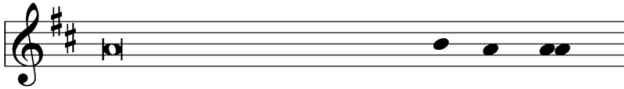
As the minister approaches the altar the congregation stands



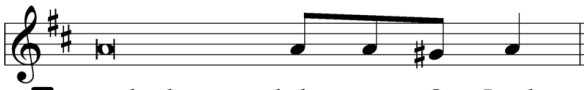
P O Lord, o - pen my lips,



C and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.



P Make haste, O God, to de - liv - er me;



C make haste to help me, O Lord.

PSALM

Psalm 121

- P** I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?
C My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.
P He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.
C Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
P The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand.
C The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
P The LORD will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life.
C The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.
- C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Sit

HYMN 611

FIRST READING

Exodus 14:5-31

P The First Reading is from Exodus, the fourteenth chapter.

⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶ So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, ⁷ and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸ And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. ⁹ The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

¹⁰ When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” ¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

¹⁵ The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷ And I shall harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I shall get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

¹⁹ Then the Angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, ²⁰ coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And

there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

²³ The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴ And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, ²⁵ clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 10:1-4

P The Second Reading is from 1 Corinthians, the tenth chapter.

¹ For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the

same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST DRAWN FROM THE FOUR GOSPELS

When they had bound Jesus, they led Him from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment and gave Him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor. It was early. They themselves did not go into the judgment hall, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

Pilate then went out to them, and said, “What charge do you bring against this Man?”

They answered and said to him, “If He were not a criminal, we would not have handed Him over to you.”

Then Pilate said to them, “Take Him, then, and judge Him according to your law.”

The Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.” So the word of Jesus was fulfilled, signifying by what death He should die.

The charges they brought against Him were: “We found this Fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a king.”

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said to Him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered him, “Do you say this for yourself, or did others say it to you about Me?”

Pilate answered, “Do you take me for a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have given You over to me. What have You done?”

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would have fought that I should not be given over to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not of this world.”

Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?”

Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. I was born and I came into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears My voice.”

Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, “I find no fault in this Man.”

The chief priests kept laying one charge after another against Him, but He answered not a word. Pilate questioned Him again, saying, “Do You answer nothing? See how many charges they lay against You.” Jesus answered him not a word. Pilate was utterly amazed. He said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no case against this Man.”

They pressed their charges more vehemently: “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judaea, beginning from Galilee to this place.”

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the Man was a Galilean. When he learned that He belonged in Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him on to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem for those days.

When Herod saw Jesus, he was delighted, for he had long wished to see Him because of what he had heard of Him, and he hoped to see Him do a miracle. He questioned Jesus repeatedly, but He gave him no answer. The chief priests and scribes stood there and vehemently accused Him. Herod and his soldiers mocked Him. They put a splendid robe on Him and sent Him back to Pilate.

Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that same day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, “You have brought this Man before me as one subverting the people. See now, I have examined Him before you and have found nothing in this Man guilty of any of your charges against Him, and neither did Herod, for he sent Him back to us. Mark this, He has done nothing worthy of death. I shall have Him punished and release Him.”

Now at the feast it was the governor’s custom to release to the crowd any one prisoner whom they asked for. They had then a notorious prisoner named Barabbas. He was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection in the city. Pilate knew that it was out of malice that the chief priests handed Jesus over. Therefore he said to them, “Do you want me to release for you Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?”

The chief priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

Pilate asked them again, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?”

And they cried out all together, saying, “Away with this Man, and release for us Barabbas.”

While Pilate was sitting in the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message: “Do not have anything to do with that Man; I have suffered much over Him today in a dream.”

Again Pilate addressed them, for he wished to release Jesus. He said to them, “What shall I do then with Jesus who is called Christ? What shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?”

They all cried out, “Crucify Him!”

Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has He done? I have found no guilt worthy of death in Him; I shall therefore punish Him and let Him go.”

They cried out all the louder, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. The soldiers of the governor led Him away into the praetorium. They gathered the whole band of soldiers around Him. They stripped Him and put a purple robe on Him. When they had woven a crown of thorns, they put it on His head and a reed in His right hand, and they knelt before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spat on Him and took the reed and struck Him on the head. They knelt down and did Him homage.

Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I bring Him out to you that you may know I find Him not guilty.” So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the Man!”

When the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I do not find Him guilty.”

The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.”

When Pilate heard this, he was more afraid and went again into the judgment hall and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, “Do You refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to crucify You, and I have power to release You?”

Jesus answered, “You would not have any power at all over Me, unless it had been given to you from above. For that reason he who handed Me over to you has the greater sin.”

This prompted Pilate to go on trying to release Him, but the Jews cried out, “If you let this Man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king sets himself against Caesar.”

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement or, in Hebrew, *Gabbatha*. It was the Preparation of the Passover, about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your king!”

They cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!”

Pilate said unto them, “Shall I crucify your king?”

The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but rather a riot was under way, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this Man; see to it yourselves.”

Then all the people responded, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

Then Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, gave sentence that it should be as they demanded. He released to them Barabbas for whom they asked, the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder. He had Jesus flogged and then gave Him over to their will to be crucified. The soldiers mocked Him, stripped Him of the purple robe, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

After the Narrative:

P Here ends the reading.

Stand

P Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.

C Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.



Let my prayer rise before You as in - cense,

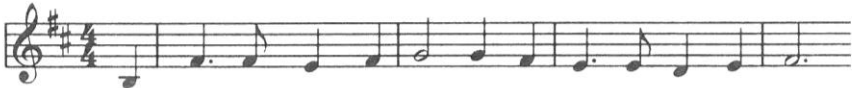


and the lifting up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

The Word That Spoke in Darkness

Lisa M. Clark

Mark Knickelbein



- 1 The Word that spoke in dark-ness And prom-ised com-ing light
- 2 The Sav-ior came to con-quer And meet His mis-sion's aim:
- 3 The Christ pro-claimed His vic-t'ry With ev-'ry act of grace:
- 4 The Prince of Peace con-tin-ued With each new task com-plete



Kept guid-ing through the a - ges Un - til the time was right
Up - end - ing Sa - tan's ter - ror, Cre - a - tion to re - claim
The out - cast shown com - pas - sion And God's own ho - ly face
At cross and tomb and glo - ry Up - on His roy - al seat,



To take on flesh and fol - low The Fa - ther's good com - mand
By walk - ing on the wa - ters So we by faith may stand
As Jes - sus looked with fa - vor On all from ev - 'ry land
De - liv - er - ance ac - com - plished Ex - act - ly as He planned;



And dwell a - mong His peo - ple, The king - dom now at hand.
With trust in Him whose res - cue Is of - fered by His hand.
Who need - ed life and heal - ing From His al - might - y hand.
Our King will raise in wel - come His pierced and ris - en hand.

SERMON The Good News of a God who makes a way for us.
Exodus 14:5-31

Dear friends in Christ,

The people of Israel had a deadly enemy bearing down on them. After the night of the Passover, Pharaoh said that the Israelites were free to leave Egypt. Soon, though, he had second thoughts. So, he gathered his army and set out in pursuit.

With the Red Sea ahead of them and the chariots of Pharaoh's army rapidly approaching from behind, it appeared that the Israelites were trapped. They didn't have time to go around the sea, they didn't have a way to get across it, and they weren't prepared to face the Egyptian forces in battle. They had no way of saving themselves, and there appeared to be no way out.

But where there seems to be no way, the Lord makes a way.

The LORD said to Moses, **“Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.”**

Just as the LORD had said it would be, so it was. **“Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.”**²² **And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.”** The people of Israel safely made their way through the Red Sea.

When they had made it through, the Lord told Moses, **“Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.”**²⁷ **So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea.**²⁸ **The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained.**

“Thus,” as Moses wrote, **“the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians.”**

Seeing that they had been saved by the LORD's power, **“the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.”**

Embarking on their new life as God’s redeemed people, they set out to go where the LORD would lead them. A long journey still lay ahead, but through God’s gracious deliverance, a new day had dawned for Israel.

Looking back to the miraculous Red Sea crossing, we marvel at what God did for the Israelites that day—and all the more so when we see that He did it not only for them but also for us!

By saving the people of Israel from Pharaoh, God preserved the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In doing that, He kept alive His promises to them—including the promise of an Offspring of Abraham through whom all nations would be blessed!

More than that, not only did God preserve His promise to send us a Saviour, but, as He delivered Israel through the waters of the Red Sea, *He also gave a preview of how that promised Saviour would ultimately deliver us.*

Apart from Christ, we all face mortal danger from deadly enemies. The devil desires and seeks our destruction, and our own sinful nature often plays right into the devil’s hands. James writes, “*You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.*”³ *You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions*” (James 4:2-3). And because of our sin, death is like a dark shadow following us, an enemy pursuing us.

Threatened by these dangers on every side, we would seem to be trapped. We cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition any more than the Israelites could have saved themselves from Pharaoh’s armies. Whatever direction we look, the way is blocked.

But again, where there seems to be no way, the Lord makes a way.

The God who gave Moses to deliver His people from slavery in Egypt gives His own Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from sin, death, and the devil.

To make a way for Israel, the LORD directed Moses to lift up his staff and stretch out his hand over the sea. To make a way for us, Christ is lifted up on a cross of wood, with His arms stretched out over Mount Calvary.

Like the people of Israel, we are safely delivered from our enemies. But while Moses, too, passed through unharmed, Christ secures our safety *only at the cost of His own life.*

To save us from sinking down into the depths of judgment for our sin, Christ makes a safe path for us to the shores of freedom. And as He cuts off the devil's pursuit of our souls, Christ Himself is crushed as the waves of judgment crash down and flood over Him. By His death, He saves us from death.

But this exodus wasn't done just yet. With Christ crucified, dead, and buried, it certainly appeared that the way of Christ had come to its end. But once again, where there seems to be no way, the LORD makes a way. In vindication of this self-sacrificing Saviour, God the Father lifts Him up out of the miry depths and delivers our Deliverer! Christ is raised to life, never to die again—and by His resurrection, He opens to us the way of everlasting life!

In fact, not only does Christ open a way to us—not only does He make a way for us—but He himself *is* the Way. This Way is trustworthy, for Christ is the Truth. And in Him, we find life, for Christ is Himself the Life. He is the one true way to life, and in Christ, God makes the way that saves us from all threats and gives us everlasting life.

So, He now comes to us to bring this life to us personally, that in Him we may have life and have it abundantly.

And to do this, He again works in a way that bears a striking resemblance to Israel's exodus! As the Lord once delivered the Israelites into a new life through the waters of the Red Sea, He now delivers us personally to new life through the waters of Holy Baptism. The sinful nature is drowned, and we emerge safely on the other side.

Martin Luther makes that connection in a baptismal prayer as he says to the LORD, "*Almighty and Eternal God, . . . You drowned hard-hearted Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea, yet led Your people Israel through the water on dry ground, foreshadowing this washing of your holy baptism.*"

By water and the Word, we are baptised into Christ, and the saving benefits of His death and resurrection are applied to us personally. Remember the words of the Apostle Paul to the Romans, "*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His*" (Romans 6:3-5).

Through the waters of baptism, we are delivered to a new life in Christ. So, you can think of your baptism as your own personal exodus.

In Christ, you have been set free, and the fullness of life is yours. May you rejoice in your Redeemer from this time forth and forevermore. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

HYMN 598

Stand

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

LSB 233



P The Lord be with you.



C And with your spir - it.

P Let us pray.

C Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

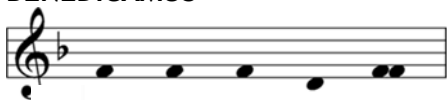
P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;

give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against
 us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and
 ever. Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

LSB 234



P Let us bless the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

LSB 234



P The grace of our Lord † Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the communion of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



C A - men.

Sit

HYMN 427