

Prayer Vigil 2007



We are pleased that you have accepted the invitation to pray during these hours. It is our prayer that this time will be a blessing to you and that God's Word and Spirit would strengthen your faith. The materials prepared for this year bring us the theme "Hymns of the Passion." Martin Luther says that music is an endowment and a gift of God, not a gift of men. Music, he says, drives away the devil and makes people cheerful. It helps us forget anger, unchasteness, pride and other vices. Reflecting on how David and all the saints put their pious thoughts into verse, rhyme and songs he says, "I place music next to theology and give it the highest praise."

Luther says:

"That it is good and pleasing to God to sing spiritual songs is, I think, not hidden to any Christian. Everyone is acquainted not only with the example of the kings and prophets of the Old Testament (who praised God with singing and playing, with poetry and all kinds of string music) but also with the common use of music, especially the singing of psalms, in Christendom from the very beginning. St. Paul, too, instituted this in 1 Corinthians 14:15 and bid the Colossians (3:16) heartily to sing spiritual songs and psalms unto the Lord in order that thereby God's Word and Christian doctrine might be used and practiced in diverse ways. ..."

He also gives us this advice:

When sadness comes to you and threatens to gain the upper hand, then say: Come, I must play our Lord Christ a song on the organ; for Scripture teaches me that He loves to hear joyful songs and stringed instruments. And strike the keys with a will, and sing out until the thoughts disappear, as did David and Elisha (1 Samuel 16:23; 2 Kings 3:15). If the devil returns and suggests cares or sad thoughts, then defend yourself with a will and say: Get out, devil, I must now sing and play to my Lord Christ.

Well written hymns help carry God's message to us. They sing us the stories of Scripture. They help hold the Word in our hearts and God's Spirit can use them to bring his Word and promises to mind.

Our hymns hold and preserve our theology, and teach it to us in ways that our hearts can grasp. That is the first truth that these materials are intended to accomplish. As we look at and pray the Hymns of the Passion, we want to drink in the love and grace of God that we see in Christ's suffering and death for sinners.

Our hymns also help us express the deepest thoughts and prayers of our hearts. The Holy Spirit uses them to bring our praises and petitions to our Father in heaven. How often it is that the needs and burdens of our souls weigh upon us so much that we are convinced that no one has ever felt as forlorn and forsaken as we have. Then we turn to our rich treasury of hymns and read the words and thoughts of the saints who have gone before us and see not only that they too faced dark days and difficult times, but that the Lord was faithful and carried them through the darkness with His grace and power.

Abide with Me

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. (John 15:7)

Henry Francis Lyte, vicar in the fishing village of Lower Brixham, Devonshire, England, ministered faithfully for twenty-three years to his sea-faring people. Though a humble couple, he and his wife, Anne lived in an elegant estate, Berry Head. It had reportedly been provided by King William IV, who had been

impressed with Henry's ministry. At water's edge, its coastal views were among the most beautiful on the British Isles. Henry laid out walking trails through the estate's forty-one acres and enjoyed the tranquility of the house and grounds. There he wrote most of his sermons, poems, and hymns.

But Henry's lung condition hung over the home like a blackening cloud. Lower Brixham suffered damp winters, and while in his early fifties Henry realized his lung disorder had deteriorated into tuberculosis. On September 4, 1847, age 54, he entered his pulpit with difficulty and preached what was to be his last sermon. He had planned a therapeutic holiday in Italy. "I must put everything in order before I leave," he said, "because I have no idea how long I will be away."

That afternoon he walked along the coast in pensive prayer then retired to his room, emerging an hour later with a written copy of "Abide With Me." Some accounts indicate he wrote the poem during that hour; others say that he discovered it in the bottom of his desk as he packed for his trip to Italy, and that it had been written a quarter century earlier. Probably both stories are true. It is likely that, finding sketches of a poem he had previously started, he prayerfully revised and completed it that evening.

Shortly afterward, Henry embraced his family a final time and departed for Italy. Stopping in Avignon, France, he again revised "Abide With Me" – it was evidently much on his mind – and posted it to his wife. Arriving on the French Riviera, he checked into the Hotel de Angleterre in Nice, and there on November 20, 1847, his phthisic lungs finally gave out. Another English clergyman, a Rev. Manning of Chichester, who happened to be staying in the same hotel, attended him during his final hours. Henry's last words were, "Peace! Joy!"

When news of his death reached Brixham, the fishermen of the village asked Henry's son-in-law, also a minister, to hold a memorial service. It was on this occasion that "Abide With Me" was first sung.



Let this hymn be your first prayer. Pray for those who are sick and in need of the Lord's healing touch. Pray for those going through the valley of the shadow of death. Pray for those who are alone, perhaps in a nursing home. Pray for those who grieve.

Abide with Me

*Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail And comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day.
Earth's joys grow dim; Its glories pass away.
Change and decay In all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!*

*I need Thy presence Every passing hour.
What but Thy grace Can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like Thyself, My guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.*

*I fear no foe, With Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, And tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, If Thou abide with me.*

*Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies;
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.*

Music is God's gift to us. When we sing His Word or from His Word, we are bringing praise and glory to Him. We are also sharing that Word with all who hear it. The crowds sang "Hosanna" on Palm Sunday and the Pharisees tried to stop their witness to who Jesus was and why he had come. The angels sang "Holy, Holy, Holy" in Isaiah 6 and led Isaiah first to repentance, then when he had literally tasted forgiveness, he went on fearlessly to preach of the coming Messiah. When we come to the Lord's altar, we join together and sing both songs in the Sanctus. It is the song of heaven and the song of the redeemed already here on earth. We gather at the feast that is a "foretaste of the feast to come." Like the Song of Moses and Miriam in Exodus 15, or the Song of Mary in Luke 1, our hymns carry our praises to God for His great deeds of deliverance. It is good for us to learn them now, for the praise will carry on into heaven.

Revelation 5:9-14 gives us a wonderful preview of heaven's song:

And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped. (NIV)

There are many hymns that sing us the story of salvation and teach us about the great gift of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. We want to share some of them with you in this hour.

Go to Dark Gethsemane

*Go to dark Gethsemane, All who feel the tempter's pow'r;
Your Redeemer's conflict see. Watch with him one bitter hour;
Turn not from his griefs away; Learn from Jesus Christ to pray.*

*Follow to the judgment hall, View the Lord of life arraigned;
Oh, the wormwood and the gall! Oh, the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suff'ring, shame, or loss; Learn from him to bear the cross.*

*Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb; There, adoring at his feet,
Mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear him cry; Learn from Jesus Christ to die.*

*Early hasten to the tomb Where they laid his breathless clay;
All is solitude and gloom. Who has taken him away?
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes. Saviour, teach us so to rise.*

This is a hymn that doesn't seem to know where it belongs. Is it a Lenten hymn? Is it an Easter hymn? Is it both? Is it neither? Maybe we should call it a journey hymn. Like many of our hymns in the Lutheran Church, it wants to take us on a journey; it wants to lead us to contemplate what God has done and what he promises, that we might believe and trust. Our journey in this hour will take us to Gethsemane, to the cross and to the empty tomb.

In those hours our Lord spent in Gethsemane, what did our Lord pray for? He prayed for his disciples that they would not fall into temptation. He prayed for his Father's help and strength to overcome the temptation to walk away from the cross, and instead to do his Father's will.



In this hour pray for those struggling under temptation that the Lord would strengthen them. Pray for those who bear crosses for the sake of the Gospel, who suffer for the name of Jesus. Pray for the persecuted church throughout the world. Pray for those who wrestle with challenges and choices and decisions that they might have the wisdom to know the will of God and the grace to follow it. Praise God for the sacrifice of his Son, whose bitter suffering and death atoned for our wrong choices, and for all the times we sought our own will instead of his. Praise God that he has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Alas! And did My Saviour Bleed?

*Alas! And did my Saviour bleed, And did my sov'reign die?
Would he devote that sacred head For such a worm as I?*

*Was it for sins that I had done He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown, And love beyond degree!*

*Well might the sun in darkness hide And shut its glories in
When God, the mighty maker, died For his own creatures' sin.*

*Thus might I hide my blushing face While his dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness, And melt my eyes to tears.*

*But tears of grief cannot repay The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away: It's all that I can do.*

Isaac Watts first published this famous hymn in six stanzas in his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 1707, entitled "Godly Sorrow Arising from the Sufferings of Christ." In some quarters there has been objection to the last line of Stanza 1, and some hymnals have altered it to read, "For sinners such as I," or to "For such a one as I."

The editorial committee for *The (old) Lutheran Hymnal* felt justified in retaining the line as Watts had written it originally, as unobjectionable in the context, while generally sharing the negative attitude toward the so-called "vermicular hymns" or "worm hymns."

As you meditate on your "vermicular" status before God, consider the depth of the infestation of sin in your heart and life. How serious is it? Do you have difficulty even having the stomach to consider the question of how deep the problem of sin is?

I think that only a Christian can dare to explore the depths of sin. Why? Could an unbeliever with no hope of escaping the wrath of a just God bear to go so deep? It is only with the glint of grace on the horizon that

we could possibly have the courage to embark on a “fearless moral inventory.” Without some light at the end of the tunnel, could we dare to look into the depths of our hearts to explore how dark and selfish, how putrid and stained our nature is? If Jesus were not there for us to lean on we could not bear the sight.

Those who are lost in the darkness of sin want to hide from the light, lest their sin be exposed. In John 3:19-20, Scripture says, “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.” When that doesn’t work, they are often led to despair. Judas had remorse and a dreadful awareness of his sin, but without faith in the forgiveness of sins, he could not go on living.



Pray for those caught in the web of sin, trapped in the darkness. Pray that the Lord would have mercy on them and break through their hard hearts with the power of the Gospel. Pray for those on the brink of despair, that the Lord would rescue them and pull them to safety. Pray that the Lord would use you, and his church in this place, to rescue the perishing and to “snatch others from the fire and save them” (Jude 23). Pray for missionaries and for the spread of the Gospel into all the world. Pray that the Lord would give us opportunities to share the light with those around us, for wisdom to recognize those opportunities when they come, and for the words to speak. “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (Colossians 4:6)

Just As I Am

*Just as I am, without one plea, But that Thy blood was shed for me'
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, and waiting not To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, though tossed about With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind; Sight, riches, healing of the mind.
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve.
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, Thy love unknown Hath broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

Charlotte Elliott wrote these hymn verses. She was from England and she was a bitter woman. Elliott became an invalid around age 30, and remained so for the rest of her life. Early on in her illness she told her family, “If God loved me He would not have treated me this way.” On May 9, 1822, in hopes of bringing her some comfort, guidance, and encouragement, the family invited a Swiss pastor to their home for dinner.

But as they ate, Elliott lost her temper and railed against God and her family. The family quickly filed out and left her alone in the room with Pastor Malan. (I have to tell you that this happens with some frequency with pastors. We end up in rooms with people whom family and friends no longer are able to speak.) “You

are tired of yourself, aren't you?" Malan asked Elliott. "You are holding to your hate and anger because you have nothing else in the world to cling to. Consequently, you have become sour, bitter, and resentful."

What, Elliott asked Malan, was the cure? "The faith you despise," he told her.

As they talked, she softened. "If I wanted to become a Christian and to share the peace and joy you possess...what would I do?"

"You would give yourself to God just as you are now, with your fightings and fears, hates and loves, pride and shame." Elliott could hardly believe it, but asked God to help her believe it. She surrendered to Christ that day and later claimed the words of Jesus from the Gospel of John as her special verse, ...he who comes to Me, I will by no means cast out.

Charlotte Elliott was an invalid all her life, but she lived in a joyful relationship with Christ, nonetheless. She knew the depths of God's mercy and was grateful for it. She strove to live in response to His love. Years after her fateful conversation with Pastor Malan, Elliott's brother was raising money for a school for the children of poor clergy. She composed a poem, which was printed and sold to fund the effort. It sold thousands of copies. Later, "Just As I Am" was put to music.

About her physical condition, Elliott wrote:

My Heavenly Father knows, and He alone, what it is, day after day, and hour after hour, to fight against bodily feelings of almost overpowering weakness and languor and exhaustion, to resolve, as He enables me to do, not to yield to the slothfulness, the depression, the irritability, such as a body causes me to long to indulge, but to rise every morning determined on taking this for my motto, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me."

When Charlotte Elliott died and they went through her things, they found more than one-thousand letters from people telling her what an inspiration and encouragement her poem-turned-into-a-song had been for them.



Pray for those in the midst of chronic illness, and for those who minister to their needs. Pray that the Lord would awaken us to the needs of those around us, that we might bring them help and comfort and encouragement. Pray that the Lord would teach us all to love one another as he has loved us, and to carry each other's burdens.

Gracious Saviour, Gentle Shepherd

We cannot take this hour of prayer and not pray for our children and youth, our college students and those starting out on their first career. Think of all the challenges they face and all the temptations that are before them. Think of how much Jesus loves the children and wants to bless them. Pray this hymn for them:

*Gracious Saviour, gentle Shepherd, Children all are dear to you;
May your loving arms enfold them In your care their whole life through,
Fondly tend and safely keep them In your mercy strong and true.*

*Tender Shepherd, never leave them Never let them go astray;
By your warning love directed, May they walk the narrow way;
Thus direct them, thus defend them, Lest they fall an easy prey.*

*Cleanse their hearts from sinful folly In the stream your love supplied,
Mingled stream of blood and water Flowing from your wounded side;
And to heav'nly pastures lead them, Where your own still waters glide.*

*By your holy Word instruct them: Fill their minds with heav'nly light;
By your powerful grace constrain them, Always to approve what's right,
Let them know your yoke is easy, Let them prove your burden light.*

*Taught to lisp your holy praises, Which on earth your children sing,
With their lips and hearts, sincerely, Glad thank off'rings may they bring,
Then with all the saints in glory Join to praise their Lord and King.*

Stricken, Smitten and Afflicted

This greatly loved hymn tells a story. It is what I would like to call, a “Teaching Hymn.” During these moments I want to give you some questions to think about and meditate upon.

*Stricken, smitten, and afflicted, See him dying on the tree!
This is Christ, by man rejected; Here, my soul, your Saviour see.
He's the long expected prophet, David's Son, yet David's Lord.
Proofs I see sufficient of it: He's the true and faithful Word.*

*Tell me, all who hear him groaning, Was there ever grief like this?
Friends through fear his cause disowning, Foes insulting his distress;
Many hands were raised to wound him, None would intervene to save
But the deepest stroke that pierced him Was the stroke that Justice gave.*

*You who think of sin but lightly Nor suppose the evil great
Here may view its nature rightly, Here its guilt may estimate.
Mark the sacrifice appointed; See who bears the awful load;
It's the Word, the Lord's Anointed, Son of Man and Son of God.*

*Here we have a firm foundation; Here the refuge of the lost;
Christ, the rock of our salvation, His the name of which we boast.
Lamb of God, for sinners wounded, Sacrifice to cancel guilt!
None shall ever be confounded Who on him their hope have built.*

1. Who is this One who is “stricken, smitten and afflicted”? (Try and think of as many Scripture names for Him as you can.)
2. Has anyone ever suffered the way He does (or more)?
 - a) How far is it from the “Stone Pavement” place of judgment to Golgotha? Prisoners of war have done death marches of a thousand miles.
 - b) He spends a mercifully short six hours on the cross.
 - c) He suffers lashes, a crown of thorns, thirst, shortness of breath, pain, loss of blood ... but have not others died horribly too?
3. What else must this “Lamb of God for sinners wounded” endure?
 - a) Abandonment by His friends.
 - b) Ridicule from those He came to help.

- c) The gloating of His enemies.
- d) Failed justice ... Pilate knows His innocence but washes his hands of Him ... the Centurion knows too, but follows orders. None would intervene to save! Was there no one to speak up for Him?

4. What is the hardest thing? What is the most unimaginable thing? “The deepest stroke that pierced Him was the stroke that Justice gave.” What does He really carry and endure?

How can you know how deep the power of sin is? At an accident scene you can get a sense of how serious the accident and injuries are by how many flashing lights there are up ahead. So, how serious is sin? Look at who has to carry its awful load. Only Jesus himself, the very Lamb of God who carries away the sin of the world, can endure its punishment.

Only he could carry the load. And in the ultimate gift of his love for you, he did ... “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

What is the result of what Jesus has done for you? “Here you have a firm foundation” the hymn says. The question is often asked, “What’s the difference between Christianity and other religions?” and even, “What’s the difference between Lutheran and Roman Catholic?” You may be surprised to know that the answer is the same. There are only two foundations upon which salvation might be built ... our own works being enough to warrant our salvation ... or faith in the cross of Christ, that His works, His perfect life and His death as our substitute save us apart from works. Any time salvation is rooted in our works, certainty is the first casualty, because we can never be sure we have done enough works. The path of works leads either to the self-righteousness of thinking I’m good enough, or to the despair of thinking I can never make it.

What does the Scripture say? “However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.” (Romans 4:5)

St. Paul lays it out this way a few verses before:

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:21-26)

It is in Christ Jesus alone that we have a firm foundation and a sure salvation. It is in Christ alone that we have hope ... and joy ... and peace.

In Philippians 3:4-14, St. Paul describes how he lived his early life as a Pharisee ... as the best Pharisee he could be. If anyone was going to get to heaven by his own works and efforts, it was going to be him. Then he met Jesus on the road to Damascus and in the searching light of God’s presence he realized for the first time in his life just how much of a sinner he was ... and how lost he was. All his past efforts were just so much garbage, and we all know that garbage has to go somewhere. Unless our sin “goes somewhere” we will have to face its eternal consequences on the last day.

Thanks be to God that there is a “somewhere” that our sin can go. It goes on Jesus and he carries it away “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12). “All we like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6). St. Paul can rejoice

and praise God because through faith in Jesus as his Saviour, he has a firm foundation ... he has a righteousness that hasn't been achieved by his own doing, but has been given to him by grace. "And we can all be saved in this same way, by coming to Christ, no matter who we are or what we have been like. Yes, all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious ideal; yet God now declares us "not guilty" of offending him if we trust in Jesus Christ, who in his kindness freely takes away our sins." (Romans 3:22-24 Living Bible).



O Lord Jesus Christ, we will never know the full extent of your suffering for us. Because you asked your Father to forgive those who put you on the cross, we know that our sins have also been forgiven. Because you promised the criminal who believed in you everlasting life, we have the assurance that, in spite of our sins, we too may have eternal life. As in the midst of your suffering you had consideration for your mother, we can be confident that you will be with us to the end of our earthly life. Because you were forsaken by God the Father, we know that we shall never be forsaken. Because you thirsted for us, we now have the water of everlasting life. Because of your declaration that the work of redemption was finished, we no longer need to be doubtful about our salvation. Through the yielding up of your spirit to death, we have life. Holy Spirit, abide in our hearts. Help us to believe that Christ died in our place. Grant us a faith that bears testimony to our friends and community that this salvation is available for them. Fill us that our lives will be a constant witness to our faith in the crucified Christ.

He's Risen, He's Risen

Read through the words of this hymn, contemplating one verse at a time.

*He's risen, he's risen, Christ Jesus, the Lord;
Death's prison he opened, incarnate, true Word.
Break forth, hosts of heaven, in jubilant song
While earth, sea, and mountain the praises prolong.*

I asked the confirmation class if they could come up with one word to describe Easter. What came to my mind was the first word of this hymn by C.F.W. Walther (the first President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod). In the original German text it is the word "Erstanden" which translates "He's Risen!" Here is the foundation and cornerstone of our faith and life. It holds within it all that we believe, teach and confess.

*The foe was triumphant when on Calvary
The Lord of creation was nailed to the tree.
In Satan's domain his hosts shouted and jeered,
For Jesus was slain, whom the evil ones feared.*

When you look at verse 2, do you have a picture in your mind of how Satan felt as the sun set on that Good Friday? Was he sitting on his throne in hell rubbing his hands together thinking "I love it when a plan comes together!?" For millennia ... ever since Eden, Satan had but one goal, to get the Seed before the Seed can get me (Genesis 3:15). "Bruise Him? Yes, I'll bruise Him! Crush me? I don't think so!"

So excited and happy is the devil as the sun sets on Good Friday that he decides to throw a huge party with lots of devilishly good food ... devilled eggs, devilled ham sandwiches, chicken wings with "suicide sauce," jalapeño peppers ... and for dessert ... devil's food cake! After a Friday night of partying, the devil sets out with all the leftovers for a Saturday afternoon picnic. He leaves two of his strongest henchmen in charge of their captive. Death is there to hold Jesus. Corruption is right behind to get rid of him once and for all.

*But short was their triumph, the Saviour arose,
And death, hell, and Satan he vanquished, his foes;
The conquering Lord lifts his banner on high.
He lives, yes, he lives, and will never-more die.*

Verse 3 tells us that there was bad news waiting for the devil when he got back. Death could not hold Jesus. Corruption couldn't even touch him! All the while our Father in heaven is sitting on His throne in heaven rubbing His hands together thinking, "I love it when a plan comes together!"

What does all this mean for you and me? If death could not hold Jesus and if corruption could not touch him, then death has lost its sting and its power.

*Oh, where is your sting, death? We fear you no more;
Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden's door.
For all our transgressions his blood does atone;
Redeemed and forgiven, we now are his own.*

All that from one word ... Erstanden! ... He's Risen ... He's risen indeed! Alleluia!



God of life and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in your grace you have begotten us again to a new and living hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. You have transformed the night of doubt and sorrow into the new and eternal day of joy and gladness. You have brought life and immortality to light by the glad tidings that Christ is risen. We thank you. You have delivered your Son, who died for our sins, from the grip of death and raised him by your power. That which you sowed in dishonour and weakness, you raised in power and glory. We praise you that through him you have removed death's sting from us. You have brought us victory over the grave. Fill our hearts with the joy of the resurrection. Give to your Church and your people everywhere the power of the resurrected Christ. Help us to show forth your praises. Bless our homes with the comfort and hope of Easter. Send the conquering banner of Christ's victory into all the world that many more may join the hosts of heaven in songs of triumph. Take away from us all fear of death. Renew us in the Spirit of him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Amen.

*Then sing your hosannas and raise your glad voice;
Proclaim the blest tidings that all may rejoice.
Laud, honour, and praise to the Lamb that was slain;
In glory he reigns, yes, and ever shall reign.*

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Sources: [What Luther Says](#) – Edward Plass
[Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal](#) – W. G. Pollack
[Then Sings My Soul](#) – Robert J. Morgan