

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Cantate Sunday

May 15, 2022

Cantate is the name given to the Fifth Sunday of Easter. *Cantate* is the first word of the Introit “*Cantate Domino novum canticum.*” (Psalm 98:1) “*Sing* to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.” Cantate as the name for this Sunday dates at least to the 12th century for we know it was used by John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres who died in 1182.

The NEW song is the song of life rather than the old song of sin and death. Apart from God, all we experience is the old, the sinful, and the dying but in Christ, we now have everything made new. The Marvelous Thing done by God is the gift of His only begotten Son given for the salvation of sinners. The Marvelous Thing: Jesus has risen from the dead and we too shall rise. SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG!

An Easter Salutation

adapted from 2 Timothy 1:10 & Psalm 118


- L** Christ is risen! Alleluia!
- C** Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!
- L** Christ has destroyed death. Alleluia!
- C** And has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Alleluia!

- L** The Lord is my strength and my song. Alleluia!
- C** He has become my salvation. Alleluia!
- L** I will not die, but live. Alleluia!
- C** I will proclaim what the Lord has done. Alleluia!
- L** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
- C** as it was in the beginning is now and will be forever. Amen.

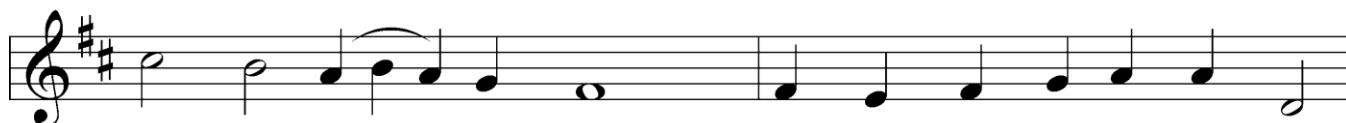
- L** I will not die, but live. Alleluia!
- C** I will proclaim what the Lord has done. Alleluia!
- L** Christ is risen! Alleluia!
- C** Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing

Lutheran Service Book 633, Lutheran Worship 126, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a
Stanzas 1-4



1 At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to
2 Praise we Him, whose love di - vine Gives His
3 Where the pas - chal blood is poured, Death's dread
4 Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Pas - chal



our vic - to - rious King, Who has washed us in the tide
 sa - cred blood for wine, Gives His bod - y for the feast—
 an - gel sheathes the sword; Is - rael's hosts tri - um - phant go
 vic - tim, pas - chal bread; With sin - cer - i - ty and love



Flow - ing from His pierc - ed side. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Christ the vic - tim, Christ the priest. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Through the wave that drowns the foe. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Eat we man - na from a - bove. Al - le - lu - ia!

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L In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

L Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 124:8*)

L Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

C Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. (*Psalm 19:12, 13*)

L If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

L Let us, confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and as His people let us take refuge in His infinite mercy seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, saying:

C God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(*Luke 18:13*)

L Almighty God, merciful Father, in Your holy Church, You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Introit Psalm 98:2–6; antiphon Psalm 98:1

L Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
 His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

C The Lord has made known his salvation;
 he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

L He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
 All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

C Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
 break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

L Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
 with the lyre and the sound of melody!

C With trumpets and the sound of the horn
 make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

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.

L Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

Kyrie

L O Lord,	C Have Mercy on us.
L O Christ,	C Have Mercy on us.
L O Lord,	C Have Mercy on us.

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

L Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
C Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.
L Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:
C Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
L Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.
C For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

L Let us pray: O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

Acts 11:1–18

¹Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ²So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, ³“You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” ⁴But Peter began and explained it to them in order: ⁵“I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. ⁶Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. ⁷And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ ¹⁰This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. ¹²And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; ¹⁴he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ ¹⁵As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” ¹⁸When they heard

these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

L Christ has risen from the dead.

C God the Father has crowned him with glory and honor,

L He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;

C He has put all things under his feet.

Psalm 148

L ¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

C ²Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!

L ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!

C ⁴Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

L ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.

C ⁶And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

L ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,

C ⁸fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!

L ⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

C ¹⁰Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!

L ¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

C ¹²Young men and maidens together, old men and children!

L ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.

C ¹⁴He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.

Praise the LORD!

Revelation 21:1–7

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

John 16:12–22

- L** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 16th chapter.
- C** Glory to You, O Lord.

¹²[Jesus said:] “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

¹⁶“A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.” ¹⁷So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?” ¹⁸So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” ¹⁹Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’? ²⁰Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. ²¹When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²²So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.”

- L** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Praise to You, O Christ.

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father

Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing

Lutheran Service Book 633, Lutheran Worship 126, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a
Stanzas 5-8

5 Mighty Victim from the sky,
Hell's fierce pow'rs beneath You lie;
You have conquered in the fight,
You have brought us life and light.
Alleluia!

6 Now no more can death appall,
Now no more the grave enthrall;
You have opened paradise,
And Your saints in You shall rise.
Alleluia!

7 Easter triumph, Easter joy!
This alone can sin destroy;
From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free,
Newborn souls in You to be.
Alleluia!

8 Father, who the crown shall give,
Savior, by whose death we live,
Spirit, guide through all our days:
Three in One, Your name we praise.
Alleluia!

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Devotional thoughts:

Almost everyone in my generation and older can recite the oath taken by witnesses before giving testimony in court. It is not that we have served as witnesses but courtroom dramas were an entertainment staple in most of our households. Although it takes several forms, I remember it this way, "Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? So help you God." This was done with a hand on a Bible. Times change. This oath may no longer be common but it helps us understand some very significant facts about truth and lies.

First, it helps us understand that truth is important. Testimony given by witnesses whose honesty cannot be trusted is less than worthless.

Second, truth can be compromised when details are omitted. That is why witnesses must not only speak truthfully, they must speak the whole truth. Every parent knows how clever children can be in selectively reporting only the facts that place them in a favorable light.

Finally, truth mixed with lies is not truth. That is why witnesses must swear to speak nothing but the truth.

Truth is important to Jesus and His followers. The word truth appears over 130 times in the Bible. John uses it 21 times in His Gospel alone.

In our Gospel lesson for this week, Jesus calls the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth. In fact, Jesus uses this designation for the Holy Spirit on three separate occasions (John 14:17; John 15:26; John 16:13).

Jesus speaking about Himself says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). On the other hand, Jesus calls the devil the father of lies (John 8:44). While not everyone holds truth in high esteem (Pilate asked, "What is truth" in John 18:38.), it seems clear that Christians above all people would recognize the indispensable nature of truth.

I recently attended a conference where the featured speaker told an astounding story. He had been a guest preacher in a growing church. The local pastor prided himself in being "missional." He had chosen to hide the fact that his was a Lutheran congregation by choosing a trendy, non-descript name for it. He went so far as to tell his guest speaker not to use the word "Lutheran" in his sermon because many of his members did not know that they were Lutheran. Our conference speaker recounted this story with pride.

I was dismayed. By hiding the fact that this was a Lutheran congregation, in my opinion, the pastor was not telling the "whole truth." Deception by omission is not permitted in a courtroom. Should we expect anything less in the Church?

In one of the most-well known passages of Scripture, Jesus says, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32). Jesus' High Priestly prayer is recorded in the chapter that follows our Gospel lesson. In it, Jesus prays, "Sanctify them in the truth;

your word is truth” (John 17:17). This week, Jesus says, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13).

Truth is the currency of faith. Our faith is built by the truth of God’s word. God does not intend to build His Church on half-truths and omissions. Last week, we learned that Paul insisted on teaching the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

Jesus says of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, “He will glorify me.” The work of the Holy Spirit is teaching us the truth about Jesus. He points us to Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection for the salvation of sinners. There is no greater truth than this!

When we learn to trust this truth, we sing to the Lord a new song! His right hand and his holy arm have worked our salvation! By the Spirit of truth, all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Let us make a joyful noise to the Lord and break forth into joyous song and sing praises! (Adapted from Psalm 98).

God’s richest blessings to you in Christ.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:4-7).

L Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the new song of the resurrection to sing. Grant us true joy and gladness in our hearts for the gift of salvation that You have granted to us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

L O Lord, thank You for opening the kingdom of heaven to all people from every nation. Even as You sent Peter to Cornelius, move us to reach out with the Gospel to people with different backgrounds and cultures.

C Amen.

L O Lord, for a little while, we have sorrow in this vale of tears. Grant us a full measure of Your Spirit as we await the day when our sorrow will turn into joy and gladness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

L Almighty God, govern the kingdoms of this world according to Your holy and gracious will. Protect those in harm’s way because of the war in Ukraine that continues to cause innocent men, women, and children to suffer. Curb what is evil and promote what is good among us wherever we live in this fallen world.

C Amen.

L Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. We thank You for the protection granted to all who have attended to our needs during this pandemic. As we are experiencing an increase in the number of new infections, continue to strengthen all those who serve us in the medical field. Give Your comfort and peace to all who are suffering from this illness or others. Be with those who mourn. Grant to them the hope and assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

C Amen.

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

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.

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.

In Thee Is Gladness

Lutheran Service Book 818, Lutheran Worship 442, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a

1 In Thee is glad - ness A - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus,
2 Since He is ours, _____ We fear no pow - ers, Not of
sun - shine of my heart. By Thee are giv - en The gifts of
earth nor sin nor death. He sees and bless - es In worst dis -
heav - en, Thou the true Re - deem - er art. Our souls Thou
tress - es; He can change them with a breath. Where - fore the
wak - est, Our bonds Thou break - est; Who trusts Thee sure - ly Has built se -
sto - ry Tell of His glo - ry With hearts and voic - es; All heav'n re -
cure - ly; He stands for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are
joic - es In Him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for
pin - ing To see Thy shin - ing, Dy - ing or liv - ing
glad - ness, Tri - umph o'er sad - ness, Love Him and praise Him



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Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 16 – May 21, 2022

Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you meditate on what God has done for you.

Monday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Introit Psalm 98:2–6; antiphon Psalm 98:1

- L** Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.
- C** **The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**
- L** He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
- C** **Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**
- L** Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!
- C** **With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!**
- 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.**
- L** Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord,	C Have Mercy on us.
L O Christ,	C Have Mercy on us.
L O Lord,	C Have Mercy on us.

Oh, sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! I had the opportunity to sing to the Lord twice today. I hope you also have been able to sing to the Lord today.

What are the marvelous things that He has done for you? Martin Luther suggests that we can sing to the Lord because He has given me “my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil.”

But He has done something even more marvelous than that. “His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation.” To work salvation, He sent Jesus Christ, who “redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.”

With this in mind, read Psalm 98 in its entirety:

¹ Oh sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.

² The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³ He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

⁴ Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

⁵ Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!

⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

⁷ Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who dwell in it!

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands;
let the hills sing for joy together

⁹ before the Lord, for he comes
to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

- L** Let us pray. Lord thank You for the privilege of singing. Grant us the grace to sing to you the new song of salvation each and every day through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- C** Amen

Tuesday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Christ, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |

- L** Let us pray: O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

This is an amazing collect. On one hand, it underscores the true life and desire of Christians. On the other, it uncovers our failings.

God makes the minds of the faithful to be of one will. After over 40 years in active ministry, my experience has been that the people of God seldom exhibit one will. What causes this disconnect? Of course, the answer is sin. Ideally, all of God's faithful people do have one will. It is in full accord with God's commands. Unfortunately, in our fallen condition, we rebel against God and His holy will.

Do you love God's commands? In honesty, we don't. Without going through a list, when I am truthful with myself, there are a number of God's laws that I should but don't love!

But I surely desire God's promises! I look forward to eternal life! I enjoy forgiveness and God's love! But I haven't done anything to deserve this. It is only through Jesus' death and resurrection that these promises are real. Despite my unwillingness to love God's commands, God loves me and forgives me for Christ's sake!

We should never be deceived into believing that the world offers real joy and happiness. Long ago, I noticed that my opinion is often dismissed because of my age! I'm not only speaking about trendy social media influencers who would find my ideas to be quaint. Fellow pastors who are from the next and following generations consider my ramblings about the Church and ministry to be irrelevant and unnecessary.

Times have changed. What I used to think was important is no longer essential to the Christian life. The world has left me behind!

Therefore, we pray that God will fix our hearts on the place where true joys are found. Where is that? Our joys are found in Jesus and the salvation that He won for us on the cross! Everything else is passing away. Music changes. Our taste in art and entertainment is fickle. But what is eternal never changes. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory in Jesus Christ our Lord!

Let us pray: O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

L Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

Psalm 148

L ¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

C ²Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!

L ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!

C ⁴Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

L ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.

C ⁶And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

L ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,

C ⁸fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!

L ⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

C ¹⁰Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!

L ¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

C ¹²Young men and maidens together, old men and children!

L ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.

C ¹⁴He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him.

Praise the LORD!

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

There are five “hallelujah psalms” at the end of the book (146-150). Hallelujah means “Praise the LORD.” Notice that LORD is in all uppercase letters. This indicates that in Hebrew, the LORD is God’s personal name (YHWH).

Hallelujah is not just a word of praise or joy. It is not a word used to praise false gods and idols. Hallelujah is the word we use to praise the true God who created heaven and earth and all that is in them!

In Psalm 148, we see heaven and earth and all that is in them praise God! When we sing or pray Psalm 148, we are joining our voices to the voices of angels! We join with the grandeur of all creation in praising the LORD!

Why do we praise the LORD? We praise Him because He created us and all that surrounds us but there is much more.

The LORD so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. The LORD is not only the one who created the world. The LORD is the one who saves us!

During the season of Lent, our Hallelujahs were absent. Then on Easter and throughout this Easter season, we sing them again with passion and zest because the LORD has redeemed us. Through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, the LORD has opened the kingdom of heaven to us and to all believers.

HALLELUJAH!

O LORD, we join our voices with angels, archangels, with all the company of heaven. Grant that our joy in singing hallelujahs would never diminish. Let every hallelujah turn our eyes to Jesus who opened the doors of heaven for us through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thursday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

L Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Acts 11:1–18

¹Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ²So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, ³“You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” ⁴But Peter began and explained it to them in order: ⁵“I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. ⁶Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. ⁷And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ ¹⁰This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. ¹²And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; ¹⁴he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ ¹⁵As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us

when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" ¹⁸When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

Our reading from Acts chapter 11 is a retelling of the events that happened in chapter 10. This double telling of the Gentile Pentecost underscores the importance of this event that welcomed non-Jews into the Church.

Already in John 1:29, we learned that Jesus is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" Matthew ends with Jesus' commission to make disciples of all nations (Gentiles). In Mark 13:10, Jesus said, "The gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations." Jesus said in Luke 24:47 that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations.

The concept that God's plan of salvation would include all people is found throughout the Old Testament but it was difficult for Jewish Christians to accept. So God chose Peter to witness the Holy Spirit coming to the Gentiles.

One important verse in both chapters 10 and 11 says, "What God has made clean, do not call common" (Acts 10:15 & 11:9). It is spoken in reference to food but it applies to people.

You and I have been made clean through faith in Jesus. This "cleanness" doesn't come from what we have done. It isn't the result of obeying the dietary laws of the Old Testament or following the proper ceremonial rituals. This "cleanness" comes from having our sins forgiven for Jesus' sake. Under Jesus' cross, we are all the same. We are all the unclean made clean.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You that in our uncleanness You have made us clean through the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Grant that we would never fail to welcome people of every tribe and nation into the family of Your Church through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

L Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Revelation 21:1–7

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

⁵And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

Have you ever noticed how closely connected the word “new” is to the Gospel? These verses from Revelation highlight this connection.

Jesus died on the cross to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil. The final fulfillment of this redemption comes when we live in the time of the NEW heaven and the NEW earth! There is a NEW Jerusalem! This NEW Jerusalem is the dwelling place of God’s people who are adorned for her Husband! The Husband is Jesus who gave Himself up for His bride, the Church! (Ephesians 5:25-32).

The greatest blessing and the most astounding thing about this NEW heaven and NEW earth and NEW Jerusalem is that the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. This is something completely NEW. It is something that is impossible for us to experience in the old sinful world in which we live.

In this NEW heaven and NEW earth and NEW Jerusalem, God wipes away every tear from our eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. This is something completely NEW!

That’s what God does. He makes things NEW! The old way leads to sin and death. The NEW way is the way of life and salvation.

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for doing away with the old sinful ways of the world and making us all new in Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit to guide us to live new lives of faith and love through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saturday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Introit Psalm 98:2–6; antiphon Psalm 98:1

- L** Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.
- C** **The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**
- L** He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
- C** **Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**
- L** Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!
- C** **With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!**
- 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.**
- L** Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

Gradual adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

- L** Christ has risen from the dead.
- C** **God the Father has crowned him with glory and honor,**
- L** He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
- C** **He has put all things under his feet.**

Verse of the Day: Romans 6:9; John 14:23

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia.
- C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.**

Kyrie

- L** O Lord, **C** **Have Mercy on us.**
- L** O Christ, **C** **Have Mercy on us.**
- L** O Lord, **C** **Have Mercy on us.**

For our last day of the week of *Cantate* Sunday, I thought that it would be good to read the introit again. Specifically, I wanted to contemplate Psalm 98:1 one more time, “Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.”

Sometime around 1964, Herbert Brokering wrote what has become a well-loved hymn, “Earth and All Stars.” It is an expanded paraphrase of Psalm 98 and each of its seven stanzas ends with the refrain that echoes Psalm 98:1, “He has done marvelous things. I, too, will praise Him with a new song!” It is set to its own melody by David Johnson titled, “Earth and All Stars” and is a delight to sing.

Herbert Brokering wrote this text for the ninetieth anniversary of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, in 1964. You can pick up the educational overtones in stanzas that are intermingled with verses from Psalm 98. Stanza five begins, “Classrooms and labs! Loud boiling test tubes!” Stanza six starts with “Knowledge and truth! Loud sounding wisdom!” I found this hymn to be appropriate for graduation Sundays and often chose to sing it on those days. It is hymn 817 in Lutheran Service Book and 438 in Lutheran Worship. Due to copyright restrictions, it is not reproduced here but you may wish to read or sing through it as part of your devotions today.

Many people love this hymn, so I was surprised when a seasoned citizen in our congregation came up to me and complained about singing “Earth and All Stars.” She exclaimed, “Inanimate objects cannot praise God!” I suppose that she was right in a certain sense. But no one had bothered to tell this to the psalmist. He used his poetic license to declare, “Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together” (Psalm 98:8).

I ask for your patience. I have written all of this as a preface to another encounter I had regarding the same hymn. During my doctoral studies, I completed a class on hymnody. In this class, a fellow student proudly proclaimed that in his hymnal, he had placed a big red X over “Earth and All Stars” to prevent him from ever using it in worship!

While the hymn certainly praised God, I believe he felt that it didn’t clearly proclaim the Gospel. I’m sorry felt this way. Stanza seven begins with “Children of God, Dying and Rising.” This is clearly a reference to the salvation that is ours in Christ although Jesus is not mentioned by name.

But he missed something even more significant, the refrain, “He has done marvelous things. I, too, will praise Him with a new song!” The marvelous thing that God has done is sent Jesus to be our savior. Everything else is ordinary! Beyond that, this pastor would have done well to trace the concept of the “new song” through Scripture. The “new song” is the song of the Gospel. The old song is the song of sin and death.

If you want to know the words of the “new song” here they are from Revelation 5:9-10:

And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth.”

I, too, will praise Him with a new song!

Prayer: O Lord, thank you for the “new song” of salvation through faith in Christ. May we sing this “new song” now and in eternity through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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